

# *Dios está aquí.*

## God is Here.



# Ministry Magazine





Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

*“Y nosotros hemos llegado a saber y creer que Dios nos ama. Dios es amor.  
El que permanece en amor, en Dios permanece y Dios en él” – 1 Juan 4:16*

Abril de 2025

Estimados amigos en Cristo:

Gracias por su dedicación y fidelidad, en tanto que juntos seguimos compartiendo el amor de Dios en todo el mundo.

Durante el pasado año y medio tuve el privilegio de reunirme con muchos de ustedes en nuestras conversaciones regionales de El Amor de Dios Hecho Realidad. El habernos conectado con ustedes durante estos eventos fue sumamente inspirador, ya que oímos de las muchas formas en que el amor de Dios se está haciendo realidad en las comunidades de esta iglesia.

Entre las historias que se compartieron, escuchamos sobre la decisión “audaz” que tomó una congregación de reconstruir una despensa de alimentos para ayudar a aumentar la capacidad de servir a más personas, una celebración de Navidad en julio para una madre soltera sin hogar y sus cinco hijos, un evento de micrófono abierto de poesía juvenil queer que un pastor describió como una experiencia tangible de El Amor de Dios Hecho Realidad, una casa parroquial parcialmente destruida que fue renovada para proporcionar vivienda a largo plazo a sobrevivientes de la trata de personas, y un grupo ministerial ecuménico que desarrolló un centro comunitario que alimenta a las personas con comidas y conexiones espirituales.

Nuestra visión de un mundo que experimenta la diferencia marcada por la gracia y el amor de Dios en Cristo en todas las personas y la creación está siendo manifestada en estos ministerios, pero estos son solo algunos ejemplos de lo que está sucediendo en toda nuestra iglesia.

Sé que este es el trabajo que sus congregaciones hacen todos los días, y les doy gracias por ayudar a las personas a conocer el camino de Jesús para que descubran la comunidad, la justicia y el amor.

El mundo a nuestro alrededor está cambiando, y nuestra iglesia también experimentará cambios con la elección de un nuevo obispo presidente y un nuevo secretario en la Asamblea Nacional de 2025 este próximo verano. Muchos de ustedes elegirán a un nuevo obispo sinodal y a otros líderes.

En medio de estos cambios, nuestro llamado sigue siendo el mismo: amar y servir a los demás como Jesús enseñó. Nuestra iglesia continuará su obra para proclamar el Evangelio y servir a todo el pueblo de Dios.

Ha sido un privilegio haber servido como su Obispa Presidente. Que Dios nos siga sosteniendo y guiando hacia el futuro.

En Cristo,

La Rvda. Elizabeth A. Eaton Obispa  
Presidente  
Iglesia Evangélica Luterana en América





*"We have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." —1 John 4:16*

April 2025

Dear friends in Christ,

Thank you for your dedication and faithfulness, as together we continue to share God's love throughout the world.

During the past year and a half, I had the privilege to gather with many of you at our God's Love Made Real regional conversations. Connecting with you during these events was extremely inspiring as we heard about the many ways God's love is being made real in communities across this church.

Among the stories that were shared, we heard about a congregation's "bold" decision to reconstruct a food pantry to help increase the capacity to serve more people, a Christmas in July celebration for a single mom and her five children experiencing homelessness, a Queer youth poetry open mic event described by one pastor as a tangible experience of God's Love Made Real, a partially gutted parsonage that was renovated to provide long-term housing for survivors of human trafficking, and an ecumenical ministry group that developed a community center that feeds people with meals and spiritual connections.

Our vision of a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation is being made manifest in these ministries, but these are only a few examples of what's happening throughout our church. I know this is work your congregations do every day, and I thank you for helping people know the way of Jesus to discover community, justice and love.

The world around us is changing, and our church will also experience change with the election of a new presiding bishop and a new secretary at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly this summer. Many of you will be electing a new synod bishop and other leaders.

Amid these changes, our call remains the same: to love and serve others as Jesus taught. Our church will continue our work to proclaim the gospel and to serve all of God's people.

It has been a privilege to serve as your presiding bishop. May God continue to hold us and guide us into the future.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America





# *Dios está Aquí*

## *God is Here*

**Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly**

**May 22–24, 2025**



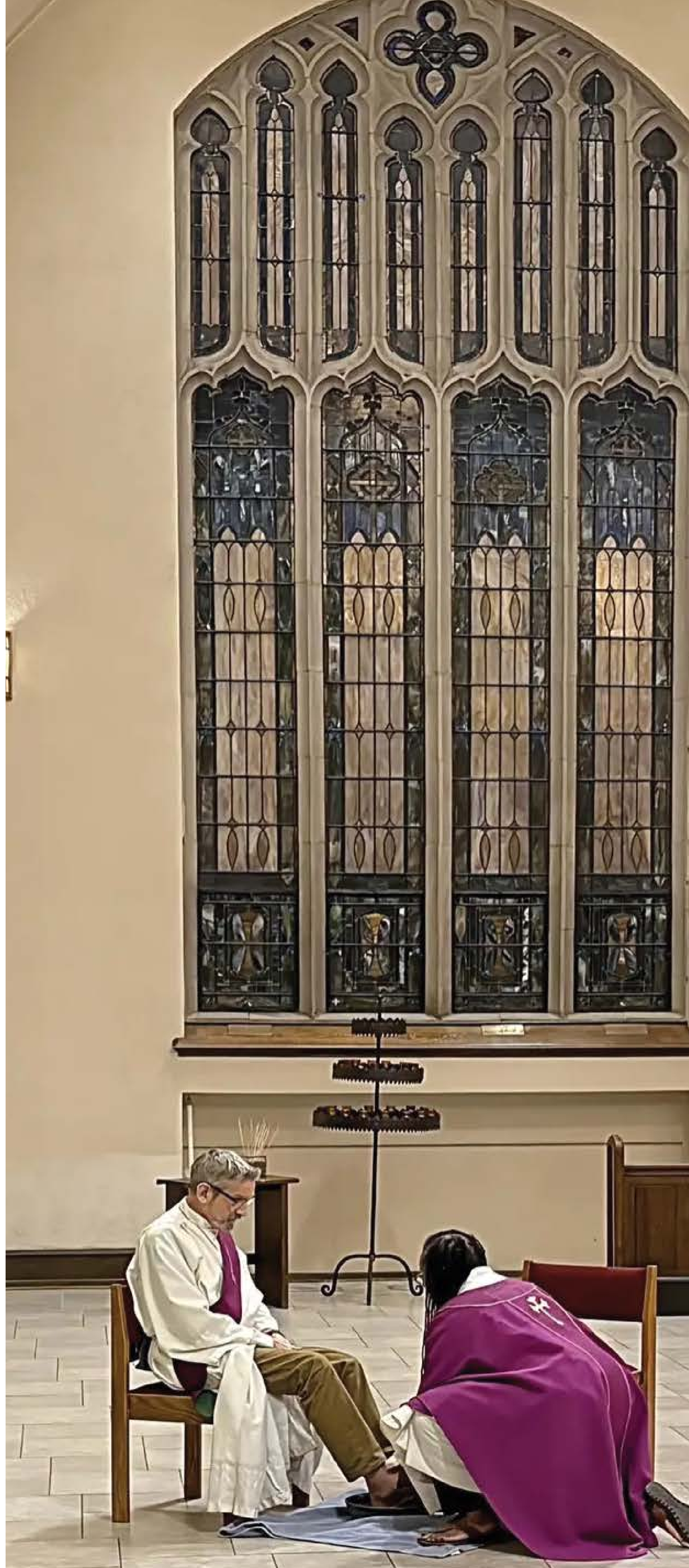


Although the ritual of washing feet, both feet, may not be a Maundy Thursday practice in all congregations, humble service is the obligation of every follower of Jesus. "You ... ought to wash one another's feet." (John 13:14) It was not a command, which is why it is not a sacrament. Rather, Jesus says it is a holy obligation.

At a time when all around others are losing their heads and blaming on the most vulnerable in our society, **now more than ever is the time to bend the knee in Jesus name and serve.**

**Pastor Barbara Berry-Bailey**

Special Assistant for Diversity,  
Equity, and Inclusion  
*Synod Staff*



***Dios está aquí.***

God is Here.







Join Bishop Meghan Johnston Aelabouni  
for a Rocky Mountain Synod  
**El Paso & Juarez Border Immersion**  
November 1-7, 2025

### ***You'll experience:***

- Hear personal accounts of immigration from members of Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey & Milagro de la Frontera
- Visit Border fence & discuss immigration with Border Patrol
- Visit Social justice organizations & ministries in El Paso
- Engage in conversation with an immigration lawyer
- Visit the *colonias* of El Paso and, if desired, Juarez, Mexico
- Worship & enjoy fellowship with the Cristo Rey & Milagro congregations

- Cost: \$600, not including travel to/from El Paso.
- To register go to: <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/9999011>
- Contact Pastor Brian Erickson ([brianerickson50@gmail.com](mailto:brianerickson50@gmail.com)) for more information.
- Registration deadline is October 15, 2025 or when capacity is reached.





Three words that describe how serving as a lay minister has impacted me is through transformation, excitement and resilience. When we surrender and humble ourselves before God and ask Jesus to take over our lives a wonderful thing happens—we are set free. So when I thought about how I was going to help our congregation, I didn't realize how much of an impact Jesus would have on my everyday life. Your faith defines you and causes an eruption within your soul. When you connect with the Holy Spirit it ignites a new light inside to help walk out your faith. I wasn't sure what I was getting myself into but, God was there every step of the way.

Christ was nudging me when things got difficult and guided me in my decision making. With each decision, we weigh the risk and the reward of our choice. Many decisions are repeated and subcon-

scious, but some decisions require analysis and a tap into faith. For this 2 year long process, I "tapped" into God's wisdom and guidance. God made it easier as he guided my way through this ministry.

**It is with Christ that I had the confidence to go through with this ministry and with Him, I feel stronger and closer to Him with everything I do in my every day life not only at church as a lay minister.**

**Jeanette Bartling**  
*Lay Minister*  
St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
*Calhan, Colorado*

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# El Paso, Texas

Congregations **+ four**

Rostered Leaders **+ four**

Retired Rostered Leaders **+ nine**



Rocky Mountain Synod

the Lutheran Church, ELCA in Wyoming, Utah,  
Colorado, New Mexico, and Western Texas



God's Work Our Hands  
has become a way of  
life in our church. Here,  
we mend a sofa cushion  
to deliver a much-needed  
piece of furniture to a  
church member.

**God continues to use  
us to help our church  
members and our  
community.**

**Vicar Thania Drake**  
[New Hope Lutheran Church](#)  
El Paso, Texas



***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# CAMPUS MINISTRY IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD



## CAMPUS MINISTRY SITES

### **ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO**

Luther House/The Open Table  
Connection

University of New Mexico and Central  
New Mexico Community College  
Pastor Rhonda Newby-Torres

### **FORT COLLINS, COLORADO**

LuMin

Colorado State University and Front  
Range Community College  
Pastor Paul Judson  
Victoria Burkett

### **BOULDER, COLORADO**

Lutheran Campus Ministry/Bread +  
Belonging

University of Colorado Boulder  
Pastor Monica Butler

### **GREELEY, COLORADO**

Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry  
University of Northern Colorado and  
Aims Community College

## CONGREGATIONS WITH CAMPUS OUTREACH

### **TRINITY LUTHERAN**

Laramie, Wyoming

University of Wyoming, WyoTech,  
Laramie County Community  
College  
Pastor Nathan Keith

### **PRINCE OF PEACE**

Logan, Utah

Utah State University  
Pastor William Ledford

### **AMERICAN LUTHERAN**

Grand Junction, Colorado

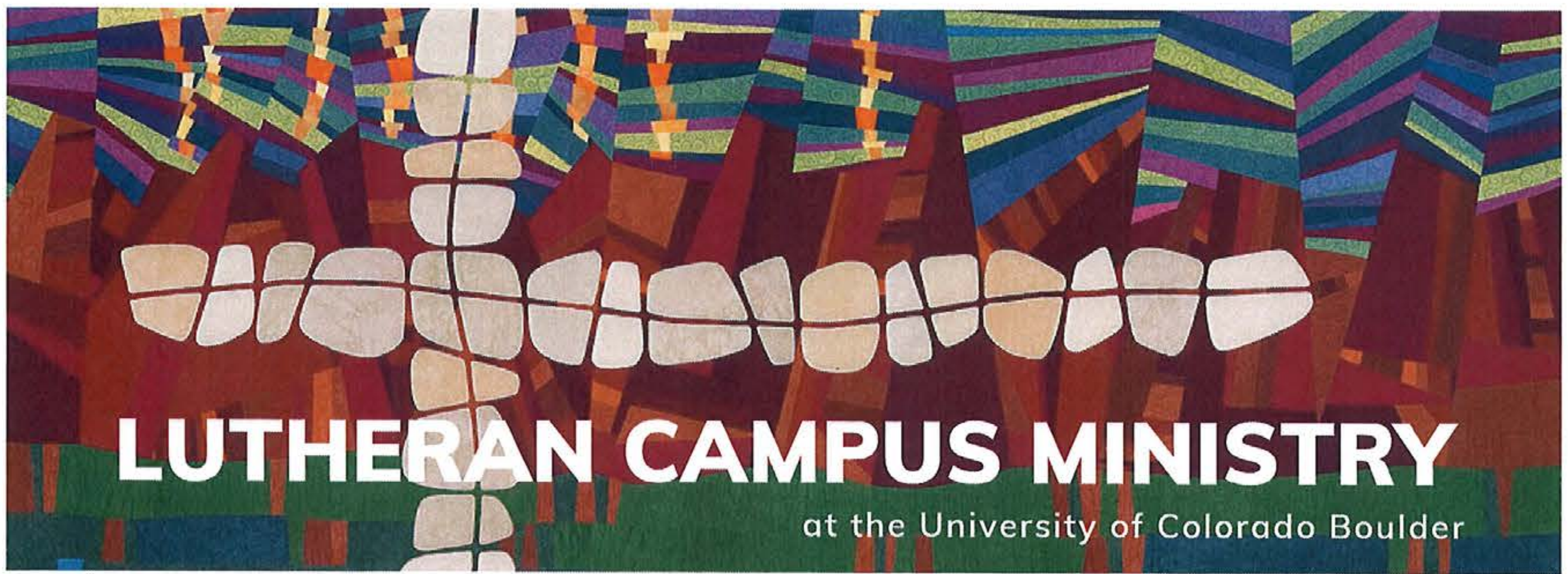
Colorado Mesa University  
Pastor Dan Carlson

## SUPPORT YOUR CAMPUS MINISTRIES TODAY

Your gift to the Rocky Mountain Synod Campus Ministry designated fund directly supports ministry with students and young adults. To give, scan the QR code and select "Campus Ministry Support" in the fund menu. Thank you for your generosity!







## **Bread+Belonging**

Lutheran Campus Ministry CU partners with St. Aidan's Episcopal Church to offer Bread + Belonging, a ministry of word, sacrament, and Christian hospitality with the tens of thousands of students, faculty, staff, and others attending the University of Colorado Boulder.

We gather Tuesday evenings for a weekly meal, grounded in the unqualified belonging and acceptance that we offer through God's unconditional embrace of us. Small groups, service opportunities, and retreats invite students to deepen relationships, explore questions of faith and meaning, and engage in the wider campus and Boulder community.

Our students come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some are Lutherans or Episcopalians. Some come from other Christian or faith traditions. Many have no particular relationship with faith. We welcome many international students and graduate students. Students are vital leaders across our programs, serving on the LCM Board, cooking meals, planning and leading events, preaching in local congregations, and more!



## **Support Campus Ministry**

### **PRAY**

For students, for the life of the campus, for Bread + Belonging

### **CONNECT**

Sign up for email newsletter updates



### **GIVE**

By check: LCM-CU  
2425 Colorado Ave, Boulder, CO 80302

Online:



**Thank you for your generosity!**







# Clergy Financial Resources

## Tax | Payroll | Bookkeeping | HR

Designed Exclusively for Churches and Clergy

## W-2 INCOME, 1099 INCOME, RETIREMENT INCOME, INVESTMENTS, SELF EMPLOYMENT TAX, HOUSING ALLOWANCES

Clergy Taxes are complex. We are here to help  
you navigate these complexities.

Download your free copy  
of our 2025 Housing Guide

Use Coupon Code RMS2025



### Church Payroll & HR Services

Unlimited number of payrolls each month

Free direct deposit

Electronic tax payments

Quarterly & year-end tax filings

W-2s

Live support by phone, chat & e-mail

Guaranteed accurate tax calculations

### Church Bookkeeping Services

Bill Pay

Monthly reconciliations

Record Expense and Revenue

Designated Fund Management

After the Fact Payroll Recording

Maintain a chart of accounts

Monitor fixed assets

Monthly Financial Reporting

GL Management

Benefit Balance Tracking

*Serving those who Serve*



There's a holy rhythm to shipboard life: waking, working, eating, resting—repeating. In that rhythm, I see how God meets us not just in the “recruitment worth” events like helicopter operations on the flight deck and firefighting drills, but in routine faithfulness. Whether I'm leading worship in a cramped room or offering a listening ear on the deck plates, I know God is present—guiding, sustaining, and comforting.



God's love is not limited by distance or duty. Even in the middle of the ocean, surrounded by steel and saltwater, God's presence is real, reminding me and others that we are never alone. I remember one evening after a long day of drills, a sailor quietly asked for prayer. There was no crisis, just a desire for peace and strength. In that moment, I was reminded how God meets us not only in dramatic rescues or spiritual highs, but in our daily need for hope and connection. I've seen God in the resilience of tired sailors, in the laughter shared over coffee, and in the silent prayers whispered throughout the day.

**These moments, woven together, tell a story of a God who is ever-present, ever-loving, and always at work—right here, whether that be in this assembly or in the middle of the ocean.**

**Kelsey Fauser**  
She/her/hers

*Navy Chaplain, Pearl Harbor, HI*

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# COMPANION SYNOD RELATIONSHIPS



## **FRIDAY INTEREST LUNCH**

Come learn about the October 2024 visit of our companion synod presidents from the Malagasy Lutheran Church!

## **SEEDS OF HOPE FUND**

Give in support of Betela Seminary, special projects, and future visits to our companion synods! (Scan QR code and select “Seeds of Hope” from the drop-down menu.)





# 5 Ways to Green your Congregation

- ✝ Create a congregation Green Team
- ✝ Advocate for climate, energy, and environmental justice issues
- ✝ Bring creation care worship and education to your congregation
- ✝ Make positive changes at home and encourage your community
- ✝ Join the ELCA RMS Creation Care Team

We meet every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday at 10 am by Zoom.  
Contact: [rmscreationcareteam@gmail.com](mailto:rmscreationcareteam@gmail.com)

Green Teams address energy efficiency, lighting, recycling, waste reduction, etc.

Advocate for legislation/policies in hunger relief, clean energy, climate change, environmental justice

Infuse creation-care worship, special services, & educational opportunities for members

RMS Creation Care Team puts a focus on changing how people treat the Earth, realizing that we are part of creation and what we do to the Earth we do to ourselves.

You can make green changes in your home and encourage others

#### Resources:

Lutherans Restoring Creation:  
Blessed Tomorrow:  
One Home One Future:  
Together Colorado:  
RMS Creation Care Team:

[lutheransrestoringcreation.org](http://lutheransrestoringcreation.org)  
[www.blessedtomorrow.org](http://www.blessedtomorrow.org)  
[www.onehomeonefuture.org](http://www.onehomeonefuture.org)  
[www.togethercolorado.org](http://www.togethercolorado.org)  
[www.rmselca.org/creation](http://www.rmselca.org/creation)





“I lift my eyes to the hills—  
From where will my help come?  
My help comes from the LORD,  
Who made heaven and earth.”

Psalm 121: 1-2

These powerful words have been a rock for two Tennessee kids who never imagined living west of the Mississippi River. And yet as many of us know, God has plans we cannot see and asks us to lean into the mystery and trust! In our case, God kept calling us back and forth between mountains, from the East to the West and reminded us to “lift our eyes” and remember that “God is here.”

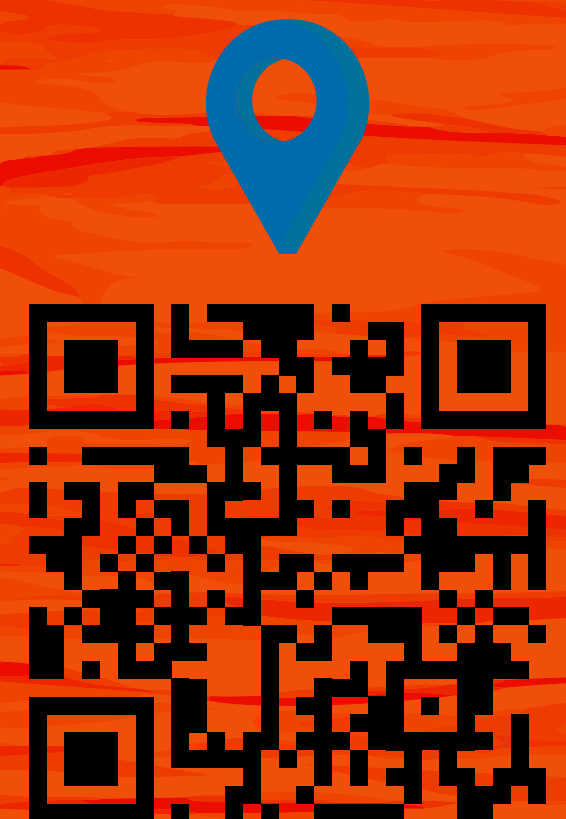
Following God’s lead into the “desert” of New Mexico when Nicole had just started Seminary was very hard, but we are both convinced that this back and forth allowed both of us to be connected to four wonderful churches, two amazing Synods, and the blessing of knowing again and again that God was and still is with us.

**We look forward as we “lift our eyes up” to follow God and see what God has planned for our future.** If you want more details of our 40 years of marriage, the “last 20 wacky years” and our journey, just ask!

**Ray Ferry &  
Pastor Nicolás Raddu Ferry**  
RMS Synod Council Member  
[Trinity Lutheran Church](#)  
*Monument, Colorado*



***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.







# EBEN EZER

Eben Ezer Lutheran Care has been a leader in caring for over 100 years! With spiritual care at the heart of what we do, Eben Ezer stands out among the rest.

## THE BEST KIND OF CARING

## WE OFFER

### CONTACT US NOW



970-842-2861



[info@ebenezer-cares.org](mailto:info@ebenezer-cares.org)



122 Hospital Rd  
Brush, CO



#### SPIRITUAL CARE SERVICES

Spiritual care is a priority for all who call Eben Ezer home, treating body and soul.



#### POST HOSPITAL REHAB

Stay in comfort and get home faster with post hospital therapy at Elim Rehab



#### ASSISTED LIVING

Maintain independence with all the care you need in one of several apartment options



#### LONG-TERM CARE & MEMORY SUPPORT

Entrust your loved ones to the best kind of care which focuses on individual needs, growth, and learning regardless of age or ability

[www.ebenezer-cares.org](http://www.ebenezer-cares.org)

**WHERE LIFE HAPPENS**





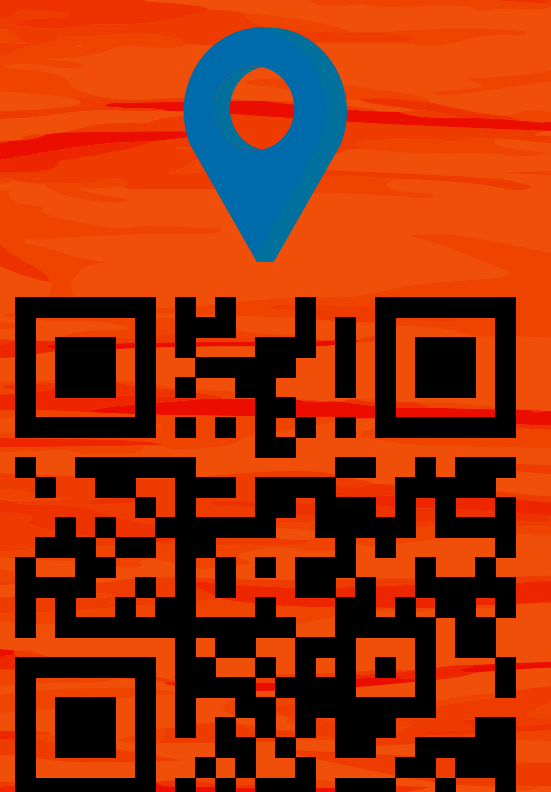
Through my church I became involved in [WhollyKicks.org](https://www.whollykicks.org) a 'shoe ministry' started and led by Pastor Tyg Taylor. At least once a month I work a shoe event where folks 'shop' for new shoes. Each year I also do a shoe drive to benefit whollykicks.

This ministry, which God brought me to, has consistently inspired my joy and belief that

**God is with us in our daily walk with life and provides opportunities to share God's love with others.**

**Lisa Guthrie**  
Rocky Mountain Synod Council  
*Treasurer*

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.







ELCA Federal Credit Union

**ELCA Federal Credit Union: Faithfully delivering financial services to ELCA members, congregations and ministries**



The ELCA Federal Credit Union provides a wide range of financial products and services to members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA across the country. **In addition to being the first of the ELCA's financial ministries to offer loans to individuals**, the Credit Union offers a rich variety of products including savings and checking accounts, CDs, loans, lines of credit and credit cards.

And now, we provide home mortgage loans for purchasing or refinancing and home equity loans and lines of credit.

**We serve ministries** with federally insured deposit accounts, a flexible credit card program, auto loans and unsecured ministry loans up to \$100,000 for small projects such as building repair and purchases. Our Workplace Banking program presents the opportunity for ministry organizations to offer our Credit Union products and services along with other exclusive perks to their employees.

In 2025, a new cohort will join the ELCA's Resourceful Servants program, **designed to improve financial wellness and assist rostered leaders in building emergency savings funds**. In this matching program, ELCA rostered leaders make ongoing deposits to their Credit Union emergency savings accounts, and our partner MIF matches those deposits up to an established amount. Together, we have served **more than 700 rostered ministers** who, collectively, have made emergency savings deposits of more than \$1 million.

Our strong online presence allows members to access their funds anytime, anywhere—as consumers expect.

**Why choose the ELCA Federal Credit Union?**

- **The ELCA Federal Credit Union supports the ELCA's mission of good stewardship.** We provide full services to all ELCA members, congregations and related ministries.
- **As a not-for-profit financial cooperative chartered to serve our church, we offer socially responsible banking solutions often priced more competitively** than traditional banks. We have demonstrated success in providing savings to our members.
- **With the church as our sponsor, we operate in ways that are consistent with the church's values.**

**Membership is open to every ELCA member, synod, congregation and ministry—and their employees.**

**For more information about the products and services of the ELCA Federal Credit Union, please visit our website, [elcafcu.org](http://elcafcu.org) or call us toll free at 877-715-1111.**





In June 2008, my life took an unexpected turn when my husband, Ivan, passed away. Struggling with the traditional ways of prayer, I found solace in having informal conversations with God. These heartfelt chats, where I felt His presence and received responses that inspired my thoughts, became a daily practice.

Over the past 17 years, alongside my regular morning and evening prayers, **these conversations have deepened my personal connection with God, making Him a friend and confidant in my journey through grief and healing.**

**Sharen Kamp**  
Rocky Mountain Synod Council  
*Secretary*

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.



# Colorado

Congregations **+ one hundred and five**

Rostered Leaders **+ one hundred and forty-five**

Retired Rostered Leaders **+ one hundred and fifty-four**



Rocky Mountain Synod

the Lutheran Church, ELCA in Wyoming, Utah,  
Colorado, New Mexico, and Western Texas





ELCA Foundation

## Updates from the ELCA Foundation | Synod Assemblies 2025

The ELCA Foundation doesn't just envision a future; it's building one where intentional generosity and stewardship have allowed the mission and ministry of the ELCA to grow beyond our expectations. Our goal is to create a vibrant culture where intentional giving fuels the expansion of the ELCA's ministries

With over \$1.2 billion in donor-designated gifts and invested assets entrusted to our care, we partner with individuals and organizations to thoughtfully steward these resources and maximize their impact. We're on a mission to grow ELCA ministries by empowering individuals, congregations, synods, and other entities with the tools they need to maximize their financial potential.

But what does that mean for you?

Imagine having a trusted partner who not only helps you navigate the complexities of gift planning and administration but also provides expert guidance on how to invest in the future of your ministry. That's where the ELCA Foundation steps in.

Whether you're considering leaving a legacy through an endowment, navigating estate planning, or exploring creative ways to support your congregation, we're here to make the process seamless and straightforward. Best of all, our gift planning services are completely free for you and your ministry.

Ready to take the next step in growing your congregation's culture of giving? Connect with your local ELCA Foundation representative today and discover how together we can make a lasting impact. Visit **Foundation.ELCA.org** to get started.

### 2024 AT A GLANCE

Our gift planning network walked alongside **199 donors/families** in developing their gift plans, which resulted in **\$59.9 million** in future planned-gift commitments. **More than \$13 million** of this will go to provide direct support to individual ELCA congregations.

The network generated **\$94.9 million** in total gifts and investment assets. This includes new planned-gift commitments, **\$6.2 million in current gifts**, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and **\$28.7 million in new assets** invested in the Ministry Growth Fund.

### CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL GIFT PLANNER:

Josh Kerney, Director of Gift Planning  
josh.kerney@elca.org  
(530) 520-0142



On my best days, I'm an energetic planner, mentally mapping out contingencies for unlikely events. On other days, I'm a worrier, nearly overwhelmed by the scenarios I've imagined. My kids are one way the Holy Spirit has invited me to just be here, in the now. Despite how I've worried (and prayed) about my kids' lives, development, health, and everything else, they go on, resiliently as ever.

One of my biggest parental fears was that they wouldn't get along. This picture shows their genuine love for each other and captures their unique personalities.

**It was a moment that reminded me, God does indeed work everything out.**



**Pastor Brittany Kooi**

[Holy Love Lutheran Church](#)

*Aurora, Colorado*

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# PLANNED-GIVING STRATEGIES *at your fingertips*

The ELCA Foundation is here to help you incorporate planned giving into your ministry's overall fundraising strategy. Whether you are jump-starting or fine-tuning your program, we can help you put the pieces together.

Visit our planned-giving resource hub to access:

- Step-by-step action plans.
- Gift planning education.
- Marketing best practices.
- Templates, resources, content and more.

**[Foundation.ELCA.org/plan](https://Foundation.ELCA.org/plan)**



ELCA Foundation



# Wyoming

Congregations **+ twelve**

Rostered Leaders **+ five**

Retired Rostered Leaders **+ eight**



Rocky Mountain Synod

the Lutheran Church, ELCA in Wyoming, Utah,  
Colorado, New Mexico, and Western Texas



Every day as I walk into the church, I can't help but notice how God's presence continues to show up day in and day out in abundance at our Little Free Pantry. These recycled old newspaper metal boxes rarely go empty. This ministry that began a few years ago with just a couple of people's vision, continues to encourage and inspire those who visit it.

We give thanks from the generous neighbors living around the church who drop things

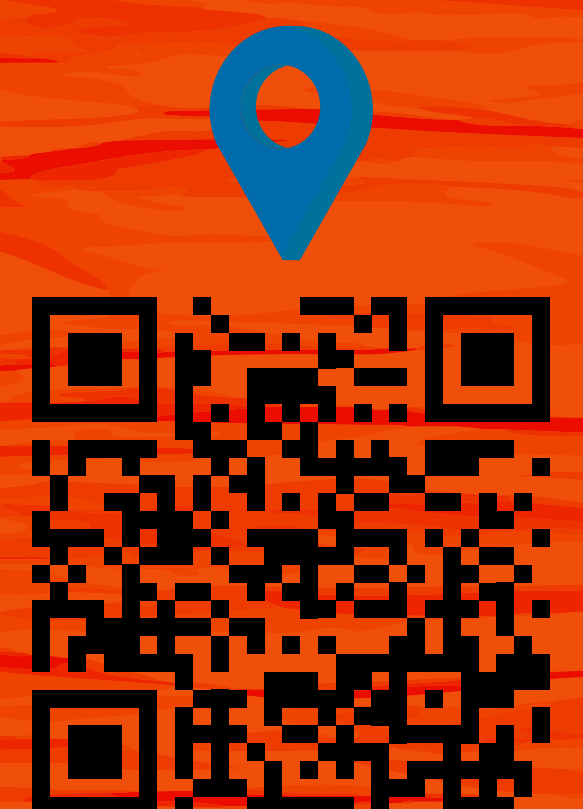
off, others in the greater community who randomly drive by to add to it, to St. Paul's members who faithfully volunteer to keep it stocked, and for those whom we have come to know by name that benefit from this act of love and service.

**God's presence is truly abundant every day in and around these three metal boxes.**

**Pastor Andrea Kragerud**  
[St. Paul's Lutheran Church](#)  
Cheyenne, Wyoming

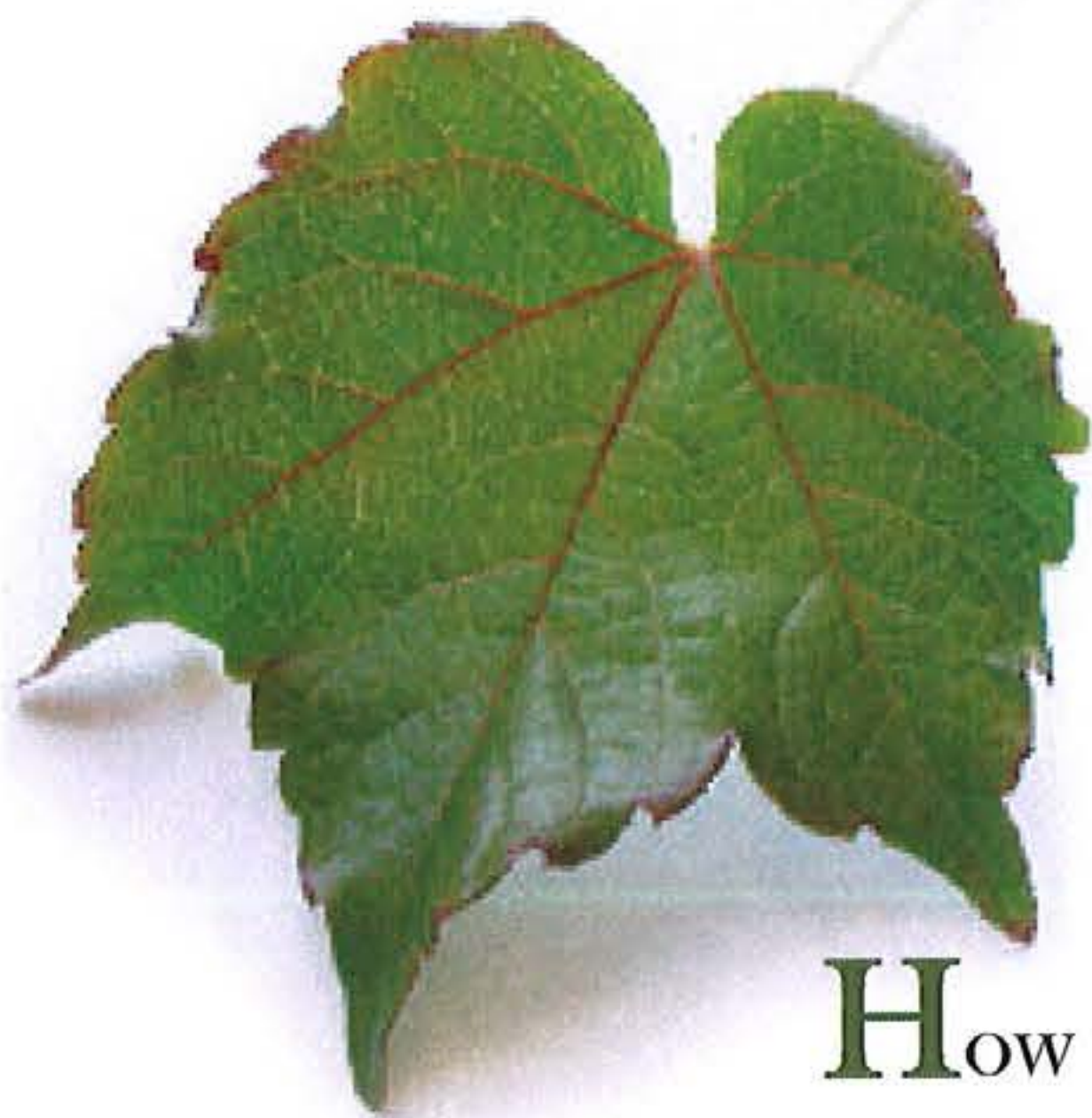


***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# Healthy Start *for* Congregations



**T**he congregation and search committee have worked long and hard to prepare for the arrival of a new pastor...

**T**he pastor has prayerfully concluded that they are called by God to serve this congregation...

**H**ow will pastor and people build on this new beginning?  
How will they grow together in a spiritual partnership grounded?  
How will challenges be met and conflicts resolved?

*The answer:* **Healthy Start**

**W**hat is **Healthy Start**? A leadership development process to build a strong foundation as the new pastor and congregational leaders become partners in ministry -- saving time and energy.

**I**n a **Healthy Start** congregation...

- Meaningful **ministry goals** are established and achieved
- **Misunderstandings** resulting from unclear expectations are **prevented**
- Congregational leadership is intentionally **united** in its ministry and mission
- New **relationships** are born or **strengthened**

**Is Healthy Start** right for *your* congregation?  
Let's talk!

Authorized RMSELCA facilitator  
**Create Real Growth**  
Carlene Goldthwaite (they/she)  
970-250-2927

<http://www.createrealgrowth.com/healthy-start.html>



I have learned so many new and life-changing concepts and ideas by being a member of the synod council. These last few months and possibly years have been trying for our world and have shaken my faith in trying to understand why such suffering and misery are allowed to take place. It has been a struggle to embrace the Gospel's message of love and unity when the world seems so intent on fostering hate and division.

But because of my time on the synod council, I learned to lean on the goodness and abundance of the Holy Spirit and in all the varied ways it expresses its Grace. I understand that I don't have to understand the big picture as long as I live out a life of service to others by offering them the precious gift of Grace.

**So while the world seems topsy turvy, I wish for us all to be able to bear witness to the ways the Holy Spirit manifests its Grace through the beauty of creation, through the gentle rains that extinguish raging fires, and through the simple love that we are called to hold for one another.**

### **Kenny Lajoy**

Young author, entrepreneur,  
& pizza store manager



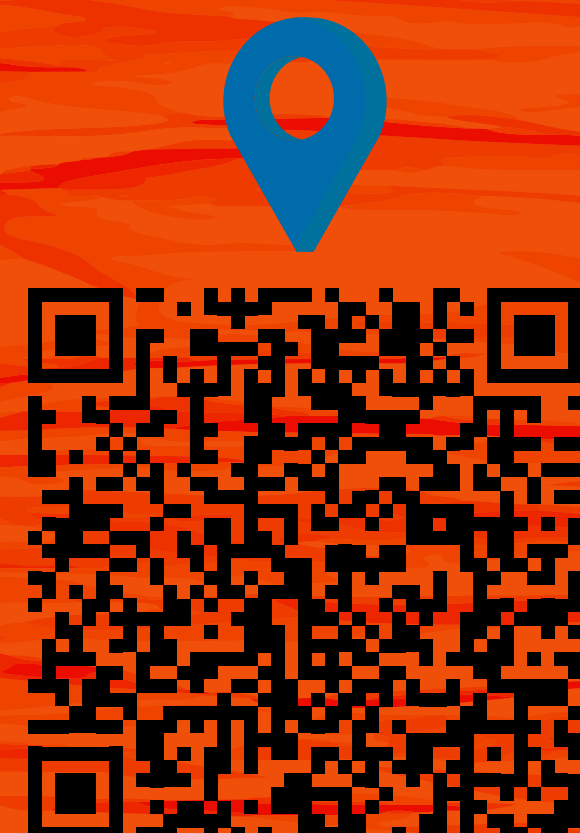
### About Kenny

*Kenny LaJoy is a young author, entrepreneur, and pizza store manager who lives with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and its challenges every day. His earliest years were spent in an orphanage in Kyrgyzstan, and it was there that he first began developing a reliance on God. At the age of eight, he was adopted into the LaJoy family and then began the homeschooling journey that, along with his grit and determination, would shape and mold him into the man he is today.*

*His life experiences and learning challenges have led him to write this book in the hopes that his story and the wisdom he has gleaned in the process might make growing up with a disability a little bit easier for someone else. In his free time, Kenny volunteers in many faith-based leadership roles with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and is currently enrolled in a Pathways Theological Education course of study.*



***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





## ***Lutheran Men in Mission***

### **Rocky Mountain Synod**

As an ambassador for Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM), and a member of First Evangelical Lutheran Longmont (in the Rocky Mountain Synod), I participate in monthly online meetings with LMM for fellowship and discussion about LMM activities. [LutheranMenInMission.org](http://LutheranMenInMission.org)

LMM puts out a quarterly "Ambassador Gram" that provides information on upcoming events, retreats, webinars, bible studies, book reviews, and the programming for men's ministry. These programs for men's ministry can be used by your congregation's men's group. LMM generates a quarterly "Foundations Newsletter" that provides articles about LMM men and programs throughout the country.

**BOLD GATHERING:** Is a day for men to come together, to learn, to network, and be equipped to BOLDY live out their faith! You can watch video of the speakers from Bold Gathering events from 2017 through 2024 online at <https://www.boldgathering.com/> and select the "Video" tab in the upper right corner. [Boldgathering.com](http://Boldgathering.com)

**PROJECT TWELVE - XII:** Encourages Men to see their full potential. Sometimes men need trail guides from those who have gone before them. Project-Twelve has great tools and resources that are brought to you by a group of passionate guys who want to help you live life to the fullest! [Projecttwelve.net](http://Projecttwelve.net)

**RETREAT, "ONE YEAR TO LIVE":** Is not your typical men's retreat! The *One Year to Live* retreat is designed to be a life-changing, lay-led event. <https://www.lutheranmeninmission.org/events/one-year-to-live/>

**BIBLE & BOOK STUDIES:** These are online weekly bible studies, and book reviews that are done via zoom, always at the same day and time. If you are interested in participating in these activities, please email LMM Discipleship Consultant Kevin Burke. [Kevin@Lutheranmeninmission.org](mailto:Kevin@Lutheranmeninmission.org)

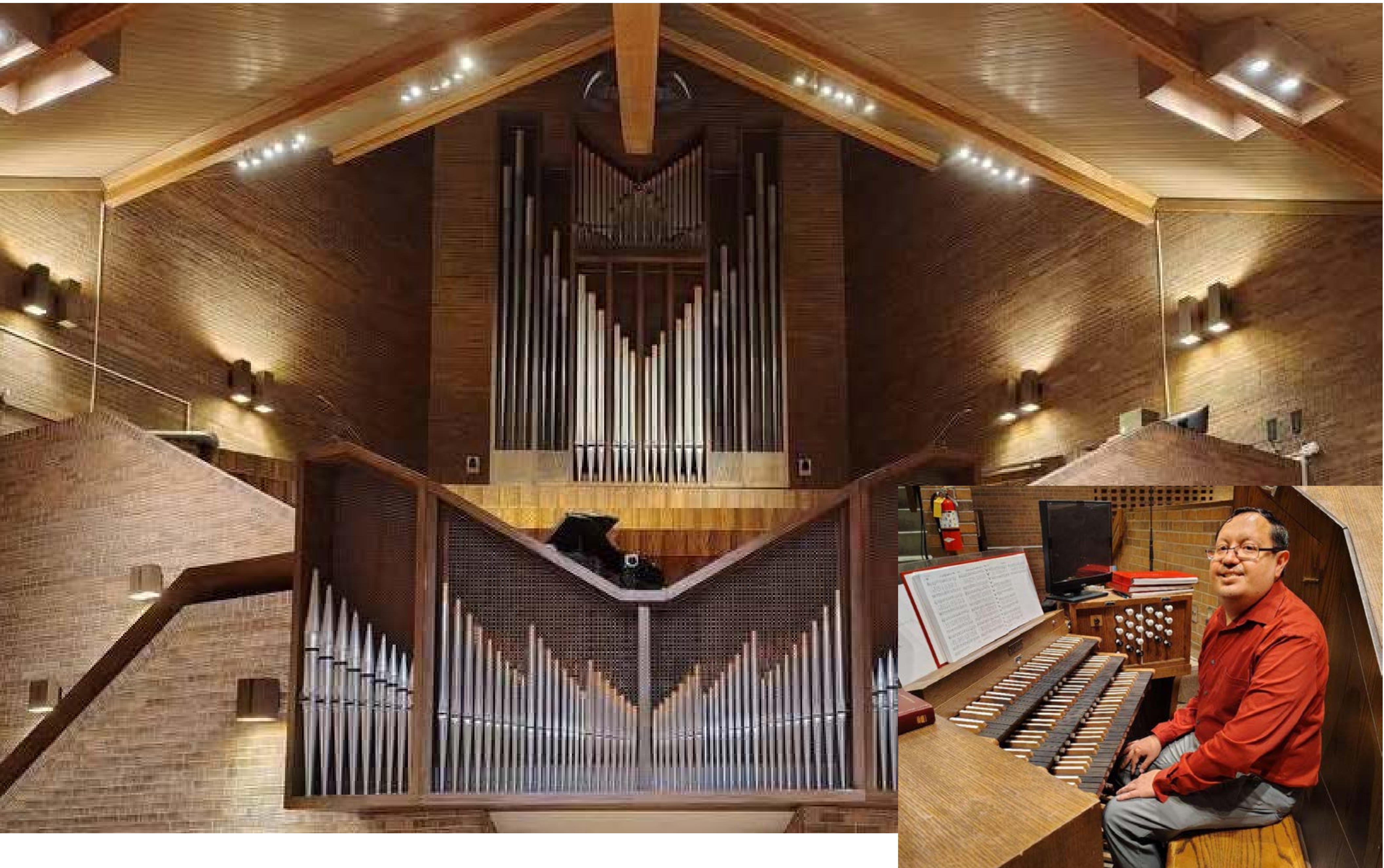
We provide access to the LMM publications and websites on the Rocky Mountain Synod website too. If you have questions about how LMM can support your Men Ministry, please contact me and we can discuss. We are looking for additional men to be LMM Ambassadors within the Synod, and let us know if you are interested. [rmselca.org/ministries/lutheran-men-mission](http://rmselca.org/ministries/lutheran-men-mission)

I send a personal email when sharing the quarterly Ambassador-Grams and Foundations Newsletters to a distribution list I have created from connections through retreats and events. If you would like to receive these email communications please let me know.

Herb Hergott, LMM Ambassador  
Email> [HLHusker5@gmail.com](mailto:HLHusker5@gmail.com)

Dave Newman, LMM Director of Networking and Communications  
Email> [Dave.Newman@lutheranmeninmission.org](mailto:Dave.Newman@lutheranmeninmission.org)





Being the organist at St. Paul is an honor. I am very much a music minister in this role and my hope is that I'm helping bring other people closer to God every Sunday.

I feel God's presence everywhere, but **I feel closest to God when I'm playing during worship.**

**Raul Manjarrez**  
Organist/Pianist  
[St. Paul Lutheran Church](#)  
*Albuquerque, New Mexico*

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# New Mexico

Congregations **+ twenty-one**

Rostered Leaders **+ twenty-one**

Retired Rostered Leaders **+ thirty**



Rocky Mountain Synod

the Lutheran Church, ELCA in Wyoming, Utah,  
Colorado, New Mexico, and Western Texas





Mission Investment Fund

## The Mission Investment Fund: Empowering communities with financial services



For more than 150 years, the Mission Investment Fund (MIF), *a financial services ministry of the ELCA*, has been a **steady and reliable financial partner** for congregations, ministries and individuals. Through times of growth and uncertainty alike, MIF has remained committed to strengthening ministries and communities through customer-centric support and flexible financial resources.

In 2024, MIF continued to support ministry growth across the ELCA. Your investments helped expand worship spaces, create new education and youth ministry areas, fund schools and programming for the next generation, start green projects and support accessibility remodeling for community spaces. These projects ensure that ELCA ministries remain welcoming, inclusive and equipped to serve their communities.

### By the Numbers:

- **Total Loans Outstanding:** \$610,534,000
- **Total Assets:** \$774,550,000
- **Total Investment Obligations:** \$547,491,000
- **Net Assets & Capital Ratio:** 27.5%

### Why Is MIF the Right Choice?

- **Proven Stability:** With over a century and a half of experience, MIF has weathered changing economic and political landscapes, maintaining financial strength for ELCA ministries.
- **Deep Expertise in Church and Ministry Financing:** We understand the unique needs of faith communities and have longstanding experience in congregation and ministry-building projects.
- **Competitive Rates and Terms:** Our financial offerings are structured to support ministries of all sizes.
- **A Full Suite of Financial Services:** In partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union, we provide a range of financial solutions for congregations, ministries, and individuals.
- **Faithful Stewardship:** Investments in MIF directly support loans that fund hundreds of capital projects across the church.

With 2025, MIF has entered a new era of modernization—enhancing our tools and financial services to better support ELCA ministries. While embracing innovation, we remain rooted in the trust and stability that have defined us for generations. Through every season, we stand with ELCA members, congregations, and ministries, walking together in faith and financial stewardship.

---

### ***MIF at work in the Rocky Mountain Synod (as of December 31, 2024):***

- 20 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$8,696,978
- \$9,681,584 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, [mif.elca.org](https://mif.elca.org)  
or contact your Regional Manager, Jerry Johnson: 773-380-1722     [jerry.johnson@elca.org](mailto:jerry.johnson@elca.org)



Since my retirement from campus ministry at UNM & CNM in 2017, I have been volunteering with the Magyarországi Evangélikus Egyház in Hungary. I currently serve the English Lutheran Ministry in Budapest. There are 36,000 international students studying in English in this city. Our congregation includes people from all over the world and from a wide variety of faith traditions. We are also one of the few ministries where the LGBTQ community can find a welcome.

**It's been a blessing to see the Spirit at work, bringing people to faith and guiding us all as we grow together in the Body of Christ.**

At Easter we baptized a young Turkish man who grew up Muslim. Our youngest member, age 10, quickly volunteered to be the Godfather. The whole congregation studied the catechism together. Many had been baptized under communism with no instruction or confirmation. It was a great blessing.

**Pastor Anne Morawski**

[Magyarországi Evangélikus Egyház in Hungary](#)

**"The joy of the Lord is our strength."**

Nehemiah 8:10



***Dios está aquí.***

God is Here.







Dear Friends in the **Rocky Mountain Synod**, where Mosaic provides services through locations in the Northern Colorado, Denver, Colorado Springs and Western Colorado areas.

You may have heard the common expression, "*May you live in interesting times.*" We are living in interesting times—times that highlight the importance of faith-based, nonprofit organizations like Mosaic and other Lutheran ministries.

In our 112-year history, we have never deviated from our faith-inspired purpose to love and serve others. We have always advocated for the marginalized, and we have benefited from a workforce that has included many immigrants over the decades (our founder, the Rev. K.G. William Dahl, was an immigrant).

As an ELCA-affiliated organization, we reach more than 5,000 people with life-enriching supports across 12 states. Everything we do is about empowering people to live the full life God intended for them—and we do it in your name.

What does that look like?

- Mark had been placed in a state institution when he was 7 years old. He lived there for more than 30 years before moving into a state-run community group home. During that time, Mark stopped speaking, as if what he had to say didn't matter, so he stopped saying anything. Six years ago, Mosaic began operating the group home. At first, Mark didn't speak. But then, one day, a definite "No" came out when he didn't want to take medicine. Now he speaks up for himself about what he needs, what he wants and more. He's gone from being silenced by an institution to rediscovering his voice at Mosaic.
- Joshua, a young adult, needs to be monitored 24 hours a day, and his mother Angie was exhausted. She could never truly rest because he got up during the night. He also could have violent outbursts, ripping his clothing apart, and buying new clothing was an added expense for Angie. Soreo, our subsidiary in Arizona, provided overnight care, so even when he is up and wandering, Angie can rest. Soreo also helped out by providing many new T-shirts so Joshua would have new clothing—a welcome gift. Angie calls the support "life saving."

These examples show how we live out our mission statement: "*Embracing God's call, Mosaic relentlessly pursues opportunities that empower people.*"

We also have an opportunity that can empower your congregation in new ways. Congregations tell us our Rejoicing Spirits program has brought a renewed sense of mission and enlivened the church. You can learn about it at [RejoicingSpirits.org](http://RejoicingSpirits.org).

I also invite you to learn about our advocacy group at [MosaicAlliedVoices.org](http://MosaicAlliedVoices.org). Today, more than ever before, the people we support need others to advocate with and for them. Please consider joining. It doesn't require much of your time, but it can make a difference in people's lives.

Thank you for being a partner in our mission to love and serve others. I'm thankful our organization was founded in faith and thankful we continue to be a serving arm of the Church.



*God bless you all.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Timmons".

Linda Timmons, President and CEO, Mosaic



God is here in the quiet moments when the cares of the world and the “To Do” list fade away. God is here, right now, as I sit on my deck, on this glorious, sunny day in Colorado. I find myself sitting in the presence of God. This is Holy time.

As I reflect upon my journey these past two years of caring for my aging parents, I realize that grief, pain, anger, doubt, and despair have been my constant companions. And yet, I know the Holy Spirit has also been right there with me, both in the pain and in the Holy Moments, offering me solace, comfort, and the courage to persevere.

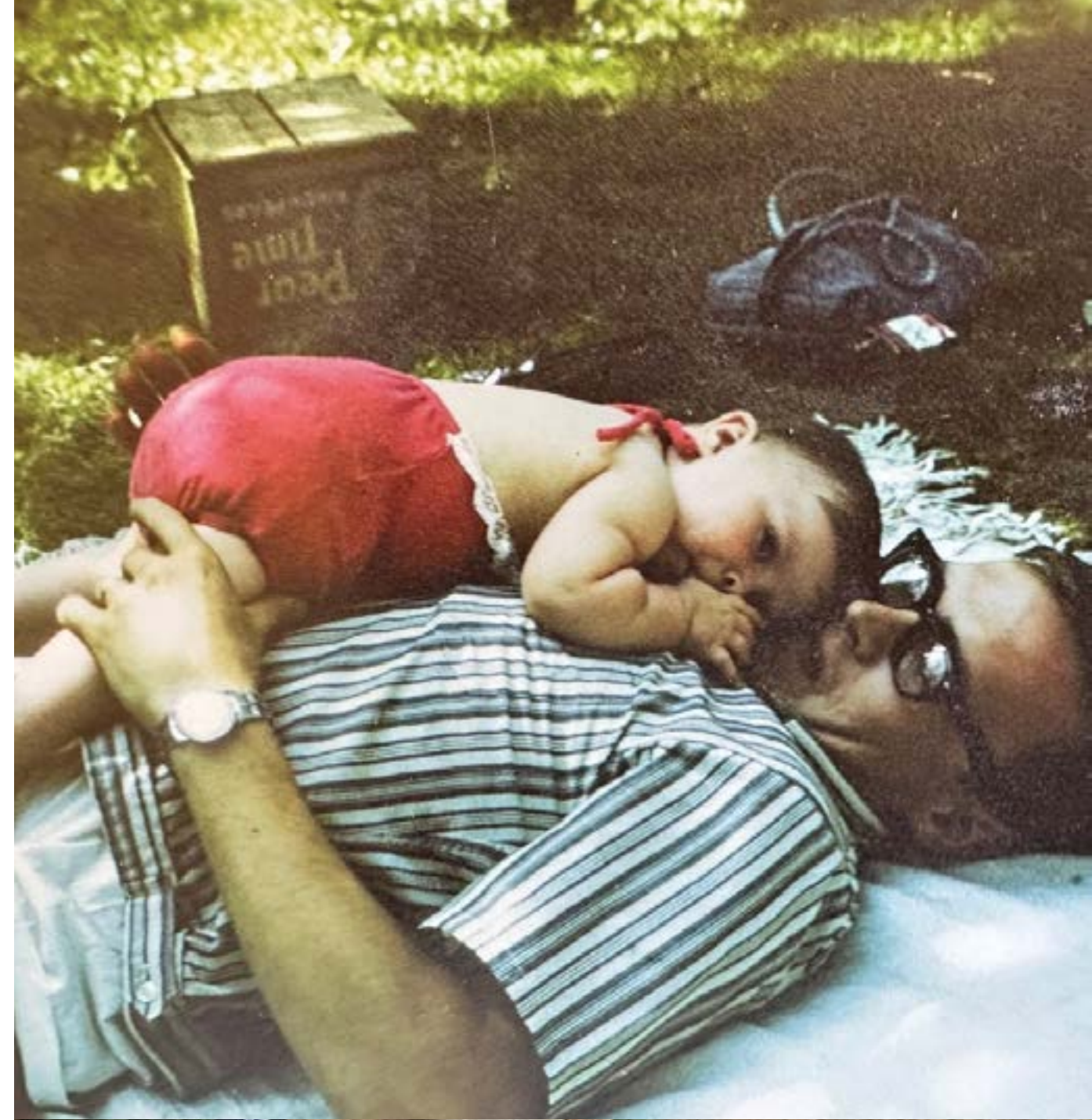
God is here as I felt God guiding my steps, giving me the courage, strength, and the faith I needed to accompany my parents as they faced tough end of life decisions.

God is here as I held my Dad’s hand and we sang “What a friend we have in Jesus” one last time together on December 6, 2024.

God is here as I am now writing these words, tears streaming down my face. God is here as I feel God wrapping me in the blanket of God’s Love, holding me close, reminding me that I am not alone. God is here in the warmth of the sun on my back, in the singing of the birds.

**God is here, as God always is, filling me with Hope and Peace which passes all understanding.** God is here and I know that I will see my Dad again in Heaven.

**Deacon Kristen Saathoff**  
Innovative Confirmation Ministry  
[Member at King of Kings](#)  
[Pueblo, Colorado](#)



***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# The Impact of Our Benefits

## Portico Benefit Services' Report to 2025 Synod Assemblies

As the ELCA's benefit ministry, Portico is dedicated to helping our rostered ministers and church professionals live holistically healthy lives, so they can serve others with confidence and grace. Here is a visual recap of what our community of over 52,000 plan members experienced in 2024.

**52,067**

*Members served by Portico*



**2,998**

**Text/Virtual Health Care Visits**

To 98point6®, and 699 of these were ELCA-Primary plan members new to our text-based primary care service.



**198**

*Births & Adoptions*

**10th**

**Consecutive Year**

Of our Customer Care Center being named a Center of Excellence by Benchmark Portal.



**518**

*Changes of Call\**

**1,199**

**Sword Health Enrollments**

And nearly 26K total sessions in their Thrive, Move, and Bloom digital physical therapy and mobility programs.

**15.17%**

**of Member Income**

Saved for retirement, on average, by members sponsored in the Traditional Benefits Program, thanks to employer and member contributions.\*

**\$199K**

**Debt Paid Off**

By members via LSS of Minnesota Financial Counseling, with over \$2.4M paid off since 2008.

**16K**

**Members and Employers Invited to Participate**

In our Benefits reExamined surveys, with more than 4,100 responses.\*



**39**

*Beginning Disability Benefits\*\**

**\$209M**

**Made in Annuity Payments**

And 515 retirements.



**Nearly 10% of Our 10K ELCA Medicare-Primary Plan Members**

Participated in the SilverSneakers fitness program with an average of 8 visits to a fitness center per month.\*

We design our benefits to align with the needs of the church and seek to provide accessible support that enhances and improves everyday living and brings value to those who serve.

\*Source: Traditional Benefits Program. All other numbers and percentages are drawn from across Portico's benefit programs.

\*\*Total as of 2023; 2024 disability claims numbers have not been finalized.



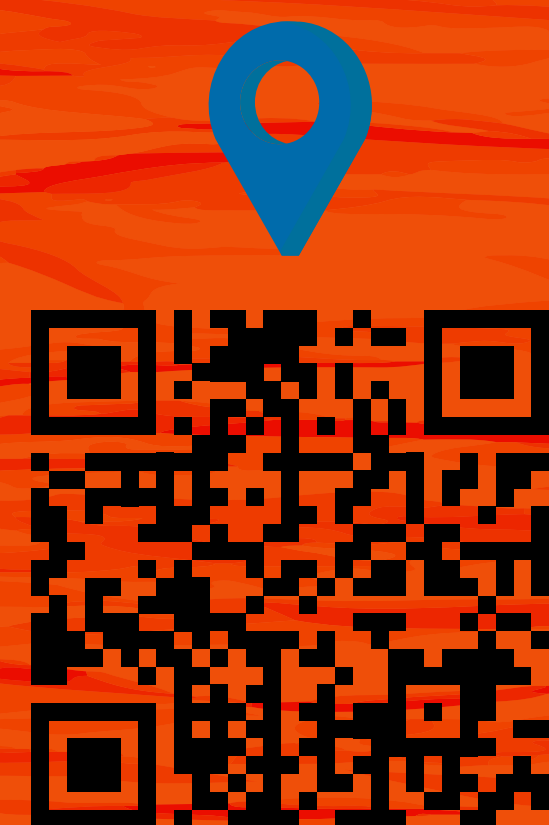


God bless me so many ways most recently has blessed me with two beautiful grandchildren they bring so much joy in my life. God has got me through a lot of things. He has shown me, grace in many ways through my addiction to drugs and alcohol through my sentencing with the law going to jail just being a very terrible person.

God has directed me to Saint Marks Lutheran Church nine years ago and I have been there ever since God has got me through these addictions for nothing else worked and now I get to spend every day anytime I want with these beautiful grandchildren. **God is good all the time.**

**Susan Saeugling**  
[St. Mark's Lutheran Church](#)  
*Denver, Colorado*

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.







Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." **Matthew 16:24**

[rainbowtrail.org](http://rainbowtrail.org)

**2025 Summer Registration  
Begins November 1**

## Come Home to Rainbow Trail...

Retreats	Bridging Borders	On-Site	Day Camp	Compass Points
<p>Relax, rejuvenate, and refocus at Rainbow Trail during Retreat Season. Throughout non-summer months, RTALC hosts and leads dozens of retreats. Whether you are a Confirmation student, a high school youth group, a family looking for a getaway, or a ski group wanting to hit the slopes, there is a retreat at Rainbow Trail for you!</p>	<p>Spend a week alongside RTALC staff, serving brothers and sisters in Christ in locations both domestic and abroad. Despite cultural and language differences, love is universal. Through the physical work you will do and the relationships you will build, Bridging Borders trips aim to share the love of God with all people it touches.</p>	<p>Rainbow Trail's On-Site program is centered on faith in Christ and focused on campers. Through the "Village System" at RTALC, campers get to select their counselors, create their schedules, and participate fully in leading worship and other camp activities in a safe environment. Week-long summer camps are available for all ages, including Family Camps!</p>	<p>Rainbow Trail's Day Camp program brings camp to congregations within the Rocky Mountain Synod and beyond. Teams of RTALC staff lead elementary-age campers in a week of Bible study, crafts, games, and song. Day Camp brings Christ's message of unconditional love into communities through a fun and energetic program.</p>	<p>Adventure into the Rocky Mountain wilderness with a Rainbow Trail guide leading the way. Experience a rewarding week of physical and spiritual challenges in God's wild country. Through Bible study, conquering mountain peaks, and preparing delicious on-trail meals, you will love your week on Compass Points!</p>

*Home of the Mountaintop Experience!*



The way that God works in and through our youngest among us never ceases to amaze me. This amazing young man, Ian blessed our community by very strongly expressing his desire to receive his First Communion this year. When he took his class with Pr. Kate Schlechter and I, he let us know that as well as his family and friends, he desired Darth Vader to be at the table.

And so on Maundy Thursday, Darth was also there (an action figure brought to the altar), present and forgiven!

**God's abundant capacity for love and grace at the table are brought to energized and colorful life through the words and actions of our children.** They are God's church; full of life, wonder and love.

**Deacon Amy Schmuck**  
[Bethlehem Lutheran Church](#)  
*Los Alamos, NM*



***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# A GUIDE FOR RAISING UP ELCA ROSTERED LEADERS



## ENCOURAGEMENT

The ELCA is enriched by leaders with diverse backgrounds and experiences. When you meet someone with gifts for ministry leadership, encourage them to consider becoming a pastor or deacon in the ELCA. Share with them about the joys and challenges of ministry, pray with and for them, help connect them to resources, and walk alongside them in the process of discernment.

## DISCERNMENT

There are many resources available for individuals discerning a call to rostered ministry!

Encourage those interested to explore:

- Online discernment groups and/or one-on-one conversations with a discernment advocate. To sign up visit: <https://elcaseminaries.org/>
- Journi, a self-paced online tool to help focus your faith, your actions, and your relationship with the Lutheran church: <https://www.journi.faith/how-it-works>



## FLEXIBILITY

Seminarians don't have to quit their jobs and move to seminary anymore to follow their call! Most ELCA seminaries offer distance learning, hybrid, in-person, part and full time options for study. Explore ELCA seminaries at: <https://elcaseminaries.org/>

## FINANCES

The ELCA Fund for Leaders offer full-tuition scholarships for candidates attending ELCA seminaries. Learn more at:

<https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Leadership/ELCA-Fund-for-Leaders>.

Application deadline is Feb. 24, 2025.

Many congregations, seminaries and synods also offer scholarship opportunities.



## CANDIDACY

Candidacy continues to be part of the process to become a rostered leader in the ELCA. If someone is considering going to seminary, encourage them to connect Rev. Diana Linden-Johnson, Synod Minister for Rostered and Lay Leadership at [dinden-johnson@rmselca.org](mailto:dinden-johnson@rmselca.org).



Last August, my son Peter and I headed out in his car for the 1800 mile trek to Lakeland, FL, where in a matter of days he would begin playing baseball for Southeastern University. We had a wonderful road trip, swapping stories, music, and driving duties. Our first stop was in Arlington, TX to catch a game between the Texas Rangers and Houston Astros. It was one of the most exciting baseball games either of us had ever seen, because we saw Astros pitcher Framber Valdez lose a no hitter with two outs in the bottom of the ninth.

Everyone in the stadium was on their feet. Even though there is no love lost between the Rangers and Astros, Rangers fans gave Valdez a standing ovation as he left the field. Baseball fans collectively recognize something incredible that's bigger than team allegiance. This was a perfect

thing for Peter and me to witness together. For him, as a college baseball player moving 1800 miles from home to a new and strange place, far from family, with a completely new set of teammates and coaches he hadn't yet met, this was a grace given in a liminal moment, a moment of transition when it becomes clear that the way things have been is now over and the way things will be is still unclear.

A needed grace for me, too, as I let the leash out a little longer. **In Peter I see a maturing young man held in God's gracious hands. And so even though what has been is no longer, and what will be is not yet known, in that moment I asked God to help me trust.**

**Pastor Michael Tassler**  
[Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church](#)  
Salt Lake City, UT



***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





# Utah

Congregations **+ nine**

Rostered Leaders **+ ten**

Retired Rostered Leaders **+ eight**



Rocky Mountain Synod

the Lutheran Church, ELCA in Wyoming, Utah,  
Colorado, New Mexico, and Western Texas





# Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp

**"We ought always to thank God for you, siblings in Christ, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing"**

**2 Thessalonians 1:3**



## **Facilitating an Encounter with Christ on the Mountaintops!**

Last summer, we once again welcomed Sky High Hope—a camp for kids living with cancer—back to their beloved mountaintop home at Sky Ranch. We look forward to their return this summer!

We welcomed youth from across the Midwest, Southwest, and Western states. Thanks to your continued support, Sky Ranch can touch countless lives, preserve our sacred space, renovate our facilities, and enhance the programming that makes camp such a transformative experience.

Here are some of the projects we accomplished:

**Trails & Worship Space:** Service teams made a great impact on restoring the use of the nature trail and labyrinth area.

**Assisi Cabin Remodel:** A ramp and renovations made this an accessible cabin to the Pavilion and Shower House.

**Scholarships for outreach ministries:** We welcomed several groups, new and returning!

**Kitchen:** We replaced our two commercial ovens and repaired our sanitizing dish washer.

**New Pavilion!** What a blessing to be able to enjoy our pavilion. After being placed under fire restrictions, campers were still able to enjoy campfires and s'mores utilizing the fireplace in the Pavilion.

## **2025! We have so much to look forward to!**

We added a new program week, July 6-11, unique to our middle and high school campers, called Mountain Movers! We are excited that our newest adventure program *Ropes, Rafts & Rockies!* filled to capacity this summer.

We welcomed Deacon Missie Bonser to our staff as our interim **Youth and Outreach Program Director**. She comes to us with youth and family ministry experience. Missie has a passion for outdoor ministry from serving on summer staff as a counselor, and more recently as Program Director. She and Tyler, our High School Program Director, have partnered together to plan for what is certain to be a transformative summer. In fact, our biblical theme this summer is **"Another Way"**. Being at camp, we find another way, apart from the trappings and distractions of home. In the peace of this space, we will explore what would change if we lived as our authentic selves and respected the truths of others. In this humility, we will imagine how growing changes the way we live. In this potential for transformation, we will imagine how our personal change meets the change we seek in the world.



Our 2025 Summer Staff are an amazingly gifted group of young adults who we cannot wait to welcome and have sharing their faith story with our campers. This year we welcome **3 international counselors** to our family!

Sky Ranch is grateful to partner with congregations in strengthening ministry, inspiring youth, and guiding young adults to lead in the church. Together, we build intentional Christian communities and send out young leaders to share the good news with compassion and justice. Your generous support helps keep camp accessible for families, making faith-forming experiences possible.

***Thank you for walking with us—Sky Ranch: forming faith and changing lives, one camper at a time!***

## **BPC (Backpack Center) Renovation!**



Our beloved and historical Backpack Center needs structural renovation, including a new fireplace. To help us reach our goal of raising \$100,000, visit our giving page on our website.

<https://www.skyranchcolorado.org/donate>

Or use the QR Code above.





As the Pastor to New Beginnings Worshipping Community and a Chaplain at the Denver Women's Correctional Facility, I have often felt closest to God during Communion, as do many members of our congregation. The Eucharistic liturgy takes on new meaning when they are spoken over a congregation of people who are incarcerated.

One of our members, Charlynn, shared that communion is the only time that all of the social rules that come with being in prison melt away. While there are people who won't sit with her in the Chow Hall or make eye contact with her in the Yard, they will take communion from her on Sundays. She speaks of discovering that God's grace is for her and the impact this has had on her life.

As she prepares to leave prison after seven years, she goes believing in a God who names her as God's beloved. She carries the words of the Eucharist and the grace discovered with her into a daunting world.

**At the Table, we pray to a God of Freedom, proclaiming that "He breaks open prisons, frees slaves and captives, feasts with the out-cast and celebrates strangers." May these words empower and sustain Charlynn in her transition.**

**Pastor Samm Melton–Hill**  
[New Beginnings Worshipping Community](#)  
*Denver, Colorado*

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





## Congregations in Transition

Transitions are a part of life, filled with both challenge and opportunity. For communities of faith, transitions are fertile ground for God's transformational work.

When your congregation begins this journey of transformation, we want to assure you that the Rocky Mountain Synod Office of the Bishop is here to accompany you along the way.

Here is a snapshot of what you can expect this process to look like.

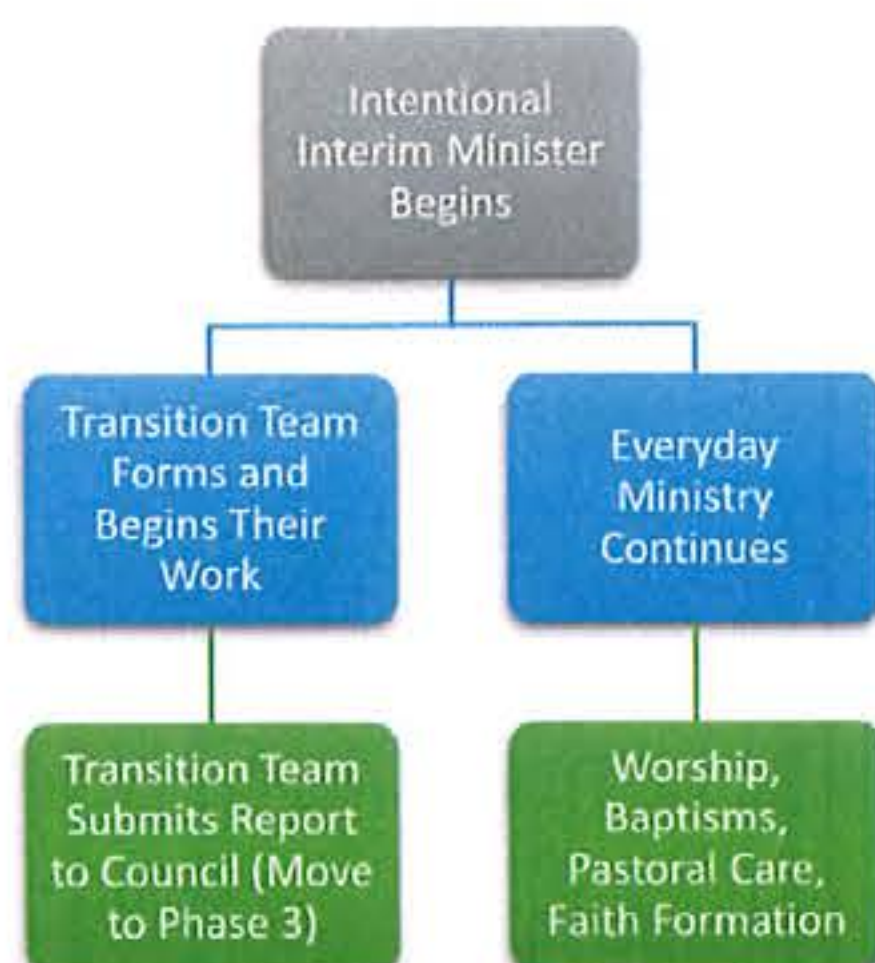
Please reach out to Interim Director of Congregation Transition for more information:

Pastor Sara Wirth  
swirth@rmselca.org  
303-970-0259

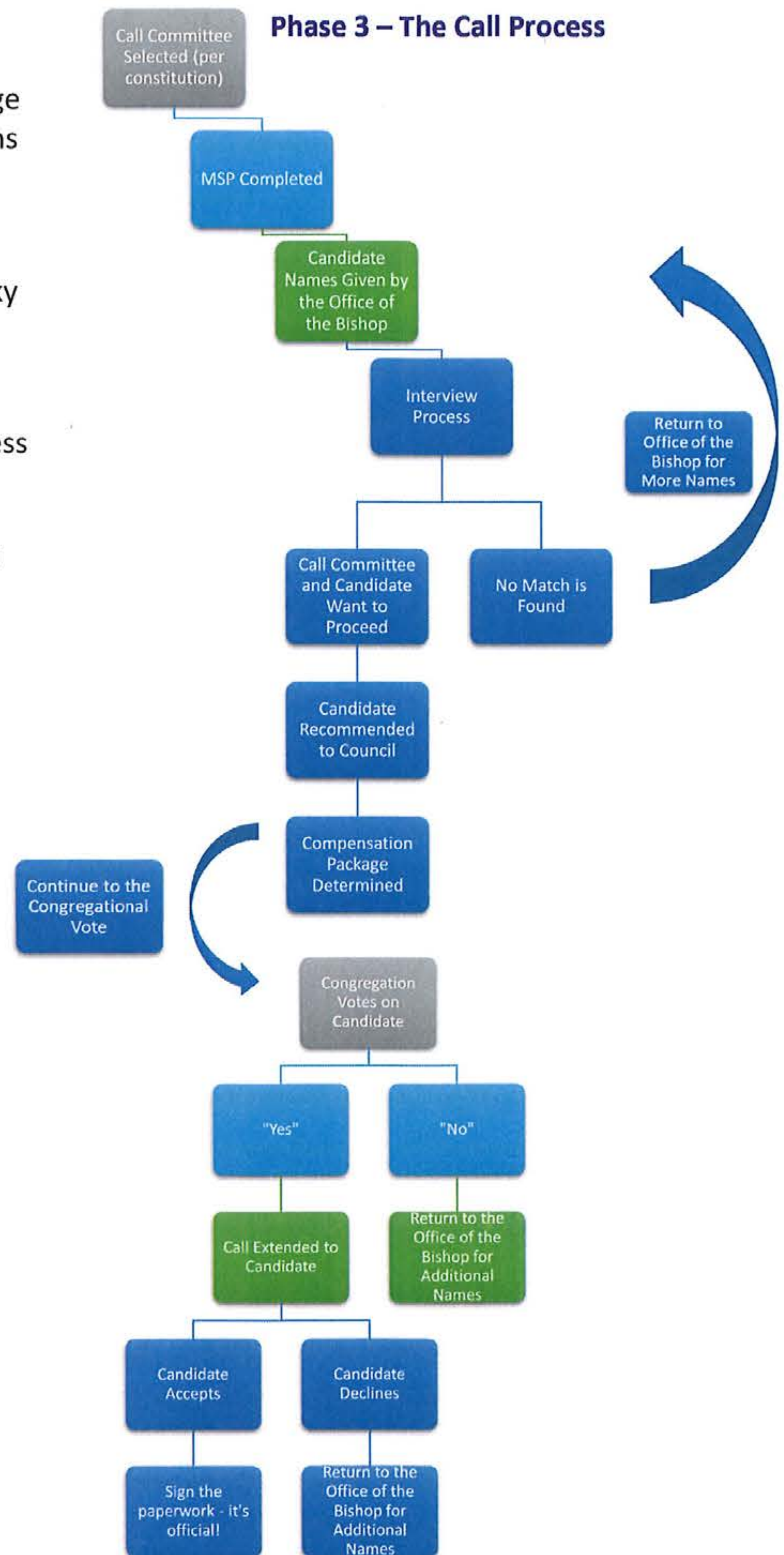
### Phase 1: What Do We Do?



### Phase 2: Intentional Interim and Self-Study



### Phase 3 – The Call Process



### Phase 4 – Now You Have a New Rostered Minister!





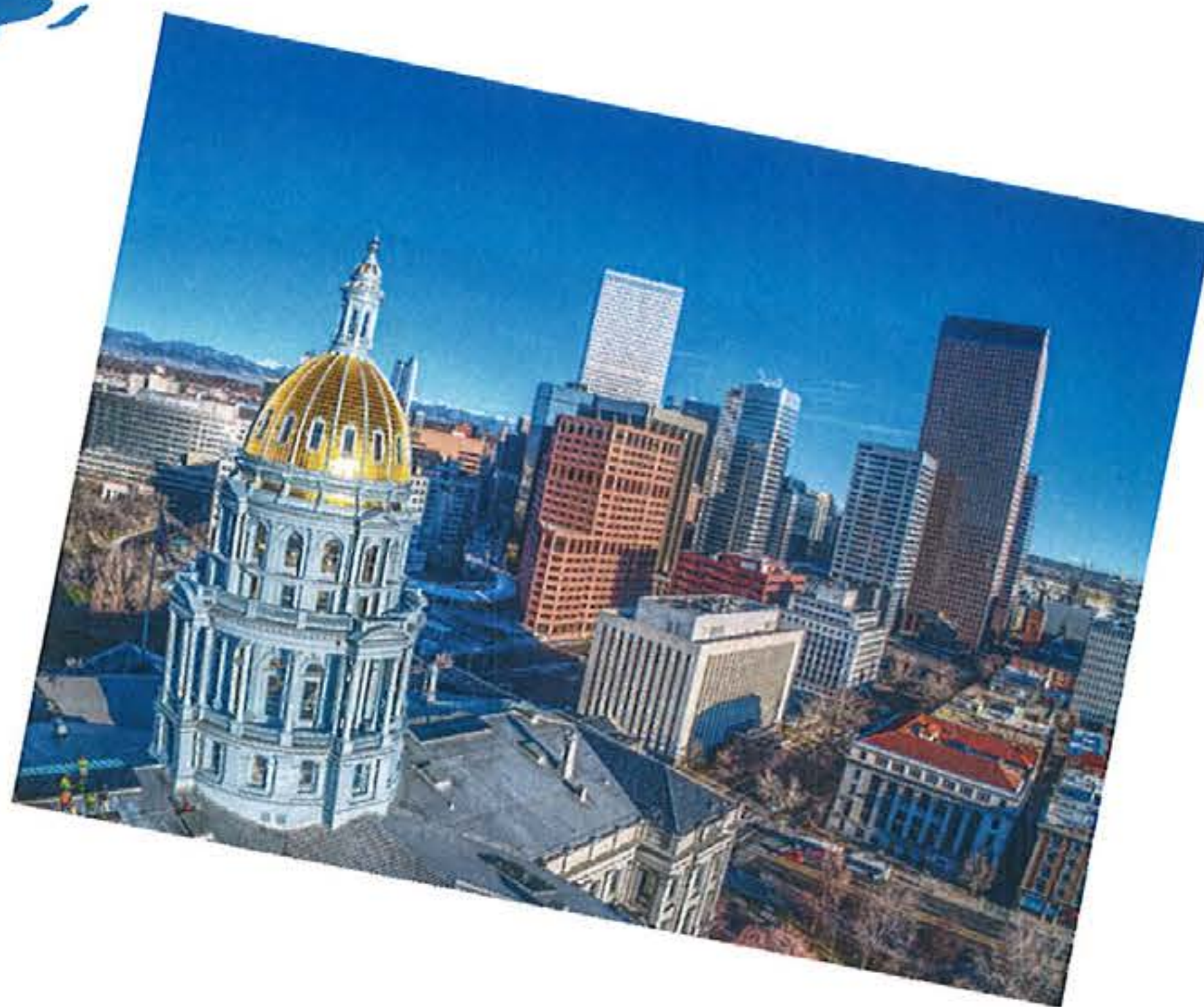
# URBAN SERVANT CORPS

## Denver



### Full-time Volunteers

We believe that in community, we are able to live more faithful, simple lives that are in service to one another. Our full-time volunteers live in an intentional community house in downtown Denver for one year with others who are committed to social justice, racial justice, and accompanying vulnerable populations.



### Urban Education

Learn about urban issues through experiential service projects at non-profit organizations and engaging cultural events in the community. (Formerly known as "Urban Plunge.")



### Learning Beyond our Living Room

Expand your understandings of the world (and city!) around you. An invitation back to servanthood and social justice. A way of engaging with other like-minded folks for a better community. Gatherings are held over the lunch hour on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month.



### FOR MORE INFO:



1660 Ogden St. Denver



303.894.0076



[krista@servantcorps.org](mailto:krista@servantcorps.org)



Urban Servant Corps (USC) is a faith-based, intentional community of full-time volunteers who seek to live simply while serving and accompanying those most in need at non-profit partner organizations in the heart of Denver.

USC is affiliated with the ELCA and a social ministry of the Rocky Mountain Synod.



**URBAN  
SERVANT  
CORPS**

SIMPLICITY  
SPIRITUALITY  
SERVICE  
INTENTIONAL  
COMMUNITY



# Veterans Servant Corps Project of RMS

## Article Title

# VETERAN Servant Corps PROJECT

The Veteran Servant Corps Project is a ministry of the Rocky Mountain Synod. This ministry exists to support military members/veterans and their families.

Veteran Servant Corps Project in the Rocky Mountain Synod is part of the ELCA's Memorial to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for returning military personnel to effectively provide healing ministries to military veterans and their families.

This mission will:

- Provide training for ELCA clergy and pastoral support staff to understand veteran's issues.

- Provide no-cost retreats at ELCA camps for veterans and their families.

- Provide worship services at Veteran Homes in the Rocky Mountain Synod.

- Provide support for homeless veterans.

Interested in having Vicky Daub visit your congregation to preach and/or teach about Veteran Servant Corps Project? Contact her at

[director@veteranservantcorps.org](mailto:director@veteranservantcorps.org)

To donate, please go to the RMS web site, click the Ministries tab at the top, go to Servant Corps and select Veterans Servant Corps Project, and scroll to the bottom of the page for the "Donate" button.

**How can you and/or your congregation support veterans and their families?**



## ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

The Rocky Mountain Synodical Women's Organization (RMSWO) is the women's ministry organization for all women throughout the Synod. RMSWO offers opportunities and support to the congregational women's units of the Rocky Mountain Synod churches as they grow in faith, participate in service projects, and enjoy fellowship with each other.

The Synodical Convention is held in the fall every two years on the even numbered years. Dates, location, and registration information for the 2026 convention will be posted on our website, ([bit.ly/rmswo](https://bit.ly/rmswo)) when it becomes available. On the alternate years (the odd numbered years) a fall gathering is held. This year, the **fall gathering** will in **Arvada, Colorado at King of Glory on September 25-27, 2025**. More information will be coming on our website and in the **Views from the Rockies** newsletter.



The new RMSWO board from left to right are: Sarah Ogle, Arlene Mathiesen, Signe Gabrielson, Anne Rivers, Nancy Jenkins, Diana Brauer, Anna Thompson, and Deb Haar. Deb completed her term as treasurer, Feb 1, 25 and Jan Young began her term



as treasurer the same day. All donations and offerings are to be sent to Jan at: **1567 Eastwood Dr., Price, Utah 84501**.

Our newsletter is Views from the Rockies and is published four times throughout the year. It provides information about programs, projects and events of the synodical and churchwide organization. It is distributed electronically to congregations, synod pastors, churchwide executive board members and all individuals who join the electronic mailing list.



Activities from the 2024 Fall Convention. Pumpkin doodling, Bible Study by Pastor Andrea Kragerud. Hearing about resources for women needing help for mental health and also for these experiencing domestic abuse.







(The Salt Lake Tribune) The Rev. Brigitte Weber speaks at First Presbyterian Church in Salt Lake City during an interfaith prayer service to demand justice and safety for immigrants and refugees on Thursday, May 8, 2025.

One of the revelations I've had in the past few years is the extent to which our whole society is created to ensure isolation: a going it alone attitude, and the sense that "no one is going to help me but me," ethos. It's a lie, of course. But it's a lie that is very believable when there are powerful structures of finances, nuclear families, and meritocracy support it. But a lie it is, and I find the need to open windows of reality to peek out from behind the curtains of delusion.

One such window is my ecumenical colleagues in Salt Lake City. I am part of the SLC Progressive Clergy group, and we meet once a month for lunch, but many of us are in regular communication.

We come from different traditions, this is an interfaith gathering, but we share a firm belief in the God, Yahweh, the Divine. And not just as an intellectual concept, or in dogma or doctrine, but in how we live each day. Our faith binds us together in a tight community, and we share our highs and lows of life together. Divorces, kids going to college, illness, milestone birthdays (we've had some kickass 50th celebrations complete with a ukelele band!), we babysit each other's children (which as an empty nester I LOVE!), share meals, events, books, rallies, protests, Pride worship, prayer vigils, and love. God is ever present for me in this community.

God's presence blows in through this window when I need it the most. A colleague reminding me that I'm taking on too much. Or bringing me fabulous dairy free cheese from their travels. **God is ever present, because these beloveds are ever present. God is ever present in my heart, because these dear ones are in my heart. Community is always how the lie of self-reliance dies, and how God's truth of belonging and interconnectedness flourishes. Thanks be to God!**

**Rev. Brigitte Weier**  
[St. Matthew Lutheran Church](#)  
Taylorsville, UT

***Dios está aquí.***  
God is Here.





In our  
lives,  
community,  
&  
world...

**Dios está aquí.**  
God is Here.



**Share Your Story**

