

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:  
NOMINEE FOR BISHOP OF THE CENTRAL STATES SYNOD**

- 1. Name:** Susan Candea
- 2. Current Position:** Bishop's Associate and Director for Evangelical Mission of the Central States Synod of the ELCA
- 3. Congregation Membership:** Atonement Lutheran Church, Overland Park, KS
- 4. Date and Year of Birth:**
- 5. Date and Year of Ordination:** September 25, 1983
- 6. Previous Positions:**  
Co-pastor at St. John's, Ellis, KS and Immanuel, Wakeeney, KS; pastor at Our Savior's, Topeka, KS; pastor at King of Glory, Loveland, CO
- 7. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):**  
Masters of Divinity, Wartburg Theological Seminary, 1979- 1983  
BA in Political Science, California Lutheran College, 1977- 1979  
University of Northern Colorado, 1975-1977  
High School Diploma, Wasson High School, Colorado Spring, graduated 1975
- 8. List up to five (5) current or past synod or churchwide activities that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.**  
Synod Council Member  
Consulting Committee for the ELCA Director for Justice for Women  
Advocacy Committee of the Rocky Mountain Synod  
Campus Ministry Team  
ELCA Lay Schools of Theology Task Force
- 9. List up to five (5) current or past community-related activities that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.**  
Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer  
Doorstep – Community Food Bank and Social Service agency  
Homeless Shelter Network  
Topeka Center for Peace and Justice  
School Board Community Member
- 10. What gifts would you bring to the office of bishop of this synod? (1,000 characters maximum)**  
I have thirty years of experience as a parish pastor serving three congregations in different settings and almost six years serving on the synod staff. I know and deeply care about the church and the variety of ways in which ministry happens throughout this synod. At the same time I am open and eager to continue learning, to listen, to try new things, aware that I do not know everything. I am organized and attentive to details while keeping the larger picture in view, understanding that good structure can enable flexibility and creativity. I have good communication skills, able to listen as well as ask sometimes difficult questions and give direct feedback. My greatest gift is the Lutheran understanding of grace, that God came down to us in

Christ, which centers me, emboldens me, humbles me, and enables me know that everyone has a place at the table and that we are all called to participate in God's reign of justice and peace.

**11. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (1,000 characters maximum)**

I believe the principal challenge is to get clarity about our purpose and mission as the church in a changing culture with diminishing resources and not let fear and anxiety define who and what we are as the people of God, but to remember that God is active and present in the world and that our role as the church is to participate in what God is already doing. To address this challenge we need to raise up and support leaders, both rostered and lay working together in partnership, to assist congregations to listen to God, to one another, and to the community around them in more intentional ways, and discern how the Spirit is calling them to share and live out the grace and hope of the gospel. We also need to assist individuals as well as communities to deepen their own discipleship as followers of Jesus. We cannot reach out to meet the challenges our church is facing unless we are deeply rooted and reliant upon the one who has called us into faith.

**12. Describe your leadership style. (1,000 characters maximum)**

I am flexible and open as well as direct and decisive. Those may seem like contradictions, but different situations call for different styles and I believe a good leader must listen well, be self-aware, and discern what style is needed most whether it is more direct intervention or a less involved, supportive role. I take seriously the concerns and feedback of others, aware of my own growing edges, able to own my mistakes while also having the confidence to step up to make decisions when needed, to set boundaries and expectations as well as give clear directions which makes it easier for others to more fully participate. Direct, open communication that addresses the real issues in a respectful and caring way is key to my style of leadership, enabling me to tend to relationships while still moving forward to make plans and accomplish tasks.