

## **Assembly Welcome**

Welcome to the Central States Synod Assembly! Yes, it will be different this year. Instead of gathering in person in one location, driving the many miles of the territory of our synod, we will be gathering from our living rooms, kitchen tables, home offices, etc. to engage with one another online as the voting members of the assembly. Others, who are not voting members, will also be able to join us by watching the Assembly on Facebook live.

We will gather under the theme: **United with Christ in Baptism. One Body, Many Members**, recognizing and affirming that diversity is a wonderful gift of our creator, that diversity enhances and enriches our life together, and that diversity does not mean there are divisions because we are one body. We are all united with Christ in baptism. That is a radical message of good news in a time and culture that has experienced so much division, brokenness, hurt and violence.

We will gather on Friday night to first worship together, grounding our words and actions in the gospel, and then be challenged, educated, engaged, and inspired to wrestle with racial justice. How might we be people who both confess the sin of racism and move into actions that reflect God's reign of justice?

We will gather again on Saturday to do the "business" of the synod, to elect synod council members, members of the discipline and consultation committees, as well as churchwide voting members for 2022. We will discuss and approve a budget and amendments to our synod constitution. We will receive and debate resolutions that call us into commitments and actions. We will receive reports and learn about the many aspects of our ministry together. All the material and information you need to fully participate in the assembly is posted on the synod website.

And we will do all of this **united with Christ in baptism, as one body with many members**. We will have different perspectives and opinions. There will be opportunities to "come to the microphone" and speak to the whole assembly, as well as vote on the different items so that as one body we continue to engage in the work of the church. I am looking forward to gathering with you!

Peace and Hope,



The Rev. Susan Candea, Bishop  
Central States Synod, ELCA

## **Synod Bishop and ELCA Representative**

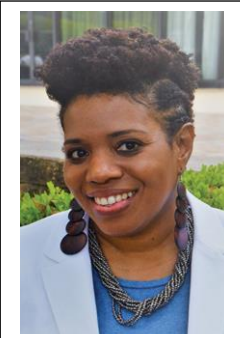


**The Rev. Susan Candeia, Bishop, Central States Synod, ELCA**

The Rev. Susan Candeia graduated from California Lutheran College, Thousand Oaks, CA in 1979 with a B.A. in Political Science and then attended Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, IA where she received her M.Div in 1983. She was called to be a co-pastor at a two-point parish in western Kansas, St. John Lutheran Church, Ellis and Immanuel Lutheran, WaKeeney, and was ordained on September 25, 1983. In 1989, she accepted a call to be the solo pastor at Our Savior's Lutheran in Topeka, KS where she served for 17 years. She then was called to serve as the pastor of King of Glory Lutheran Church, Loveland, CO in 2006. She returned to the Central States Synod in 2013 to serve on the synod staff as a Bishop's Associate and later as a Director for Evangelical Mission. On June 8, 2019 she was elected to serve as the Bishop of the Central States Synod and began her term on September 1, 2019.

In May of 2020 Bishop Candeia received an honorary doctorate degree from Wartburg Theological Seminary, her alma mater. She currently serves as the chair of Leadership Committee of the Conference of Bishops, on the executive committee of the Board for Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, and on the Boards for Bethany College and Select Learning. She participates in the Lay School Network of the ELCA.

Over her 30 years of parish ministry in addition to her seven and a half years serving on synod staff, Rev. Candeia has been involved in many aspects of ministry throughout the church including advocacy work, campus ministry, youth gatherings, community organizing, interfaith and ecumenical work. She is passionate about preaching the gospel and connecting the radical and inclusive good news in ways that challenge us to live out our faith in public ways. She has three grown sons and a granddaughter, enjoys spending time with family and time outdoors.



**Judith E. B. Roberts, Sr. Director for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)**

Judith Roberts serves as Sr. Director for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) within the ELCA churchwide office. The Sr. Director for DEI is responsible for articulating and championing a comprehensive approach and vision for diversity, equity, inclusion within the ELCA.

Judith is the former ELCA, Director for Racial Justice and co-convener for the National Council of Churches (NCC), Joint Action and Advocacy working group and a task force member of the NCC's Truth and Racial Justice Task Force.

Judith is an alum of Springfield College in Springfield, Massachusetts, and a graduate of the University of Mississippi. She was raised in the Lutheran faith and worships at Grace Lutheran in Evanston, IL. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, visiting museums, cooking, and travel.