

# 2019 Synod Assembly

## BISHOP Candidate Information Form

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**Candidate Name:**

The Rev. Nathan Snell Swenson-Reinhold

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**Current Position:**

Lead Pastor

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**Congregation Membership:**

Lorde of Life Lutheran Church, Fairfax/Clifton, Virginia

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**Previous Positions:**

Lead Pastor, St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Longwood, Florida (2008-2015); Pastor, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bloomfield, Nebraska (2005-2008)



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**Date and Year of Ordination:**

September 16, 2005

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**Education and Earned Degree**

Doctor in Ministry, Portland Seminary, Portland, Oregon (2011) - Leadership in the Emerging Culture Cohort; Master of Divinity, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio (2005); Bachelor of Science, Psychology, McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas (1998).

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**List up to five (5) current or past synodical or Churchwide activities that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.**

Coach Trainer, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (2015-Present); Coach Coordinator, Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod (2015-Present); Board Chair, Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Florida (2012-2015); Board Member, Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Florida (2011-2012); Transforming Leaders Initiative, Board Member, ELCA, (2006-2010); Haitian Timoun Foundation, Board Member, 2008-2010; Natural Church Development Coach, ELCA (2006-2015)

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**List up to five (5) current or past community-related activities that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.**

Ruritan National, Member (2006-2008); Longbranch Community Pool, Board Member (2017-Present); Boy Scouts of America, Various Positions (2006 - 2015)

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**What gifts would you bring to the office of bishop of this synod?**



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I have a love for our leaders and passion for their ongoing equipping, development, and empowerment with the training to be legitimately and heavily involved in these things.

I have a passion for our "local" congregations as the hope of the world, Jesus communities that are an embarrassment of people riches that need invitation and challenge in proportion to the gifts they bring.

I have a belief that though times are hard, the church is more necessary than ever, and her voice must be louder, and her actions bolder than ever.

I have grown congregations in declining demographics like rural Nebraska, and regentrifying demographics like Orlando, Florida, and Centreville, Virginia.

I bring a history of successful large church staff leadership, development, empowerment, and deployment, with commensurate gifts around team building.

Most importantly I bring a vision of the Kingdom that causes me to see and lead through the lens of the resurrected Christ, through his lordship, and with an abiding commitment to the reality that Christ has come to save the world, and save it entire.

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

I have no idea. I suspect that this is an answer that can only be provided by someone who is actively wrestling with the challenges and opportunities of the synod at the level of Bishop. However, all the things that are important to us as a people of God -- Gospel witness, advocacy, service, care for the poor and marginalized, broader issues of justice for all people, etc., boil down to healthy congregations with embedded healthy pastoral leaders. The ELCA at large is in a crisis of leadership development. We will continue to have congregational calls that will come open with no leaders to fill them. This is an existential crisis for the church. So in addition to development of processes that continue to raise up leaders of all varieties for our congregations and especially pastors, we need to have an alternative way to grow the congregational leaders we need. There are many models of this from other synods across the church. Developing one that honors the needs for justice, theological integrity, change management, and overall leadership arts is essential.

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**Describe your leadership style.**

I lead through vision, through the establishment of clear goals, through resource development, community organizing, and through developing organizational cultures that are equipping, empowering, and permission-giving.