

SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

Growing Young & Vital: June 4&5, 2021

Registration for the 2021 Virtual Synod Assembly will run from the beginning of April through May 17, 2021. Our theme for this year is "Growing Young and Vital," which engages three different lanes: loving the land, healing the hurt, and engaging the stranger. We are a church in three expressions, Churchwide, synods, and congregations. In each expression of the church we seek to find joy and vitality in ministry with people of all ages.

This year we'll welcome Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton to participate in the installation of our Bishop, Christopher deForest! We'll also elect members of our synod to attend the Churchwide Assembly (CWA) as voting members in 2022.

Along with electing voting members to the CWA, we will be engaging important issues



"So then if any person is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things are gone away, and look, new things have arrived".

2 Corinth. 5:17, CEB

New Life and Vital Signs

We are resurrection people living in the hope and promise of eternal life in Christ. For us as Christ's followers, new life follows death, and there are signs of new life everywhere!

Sometimes, it feels as if we have been in a place between sleep and waking for these past twelve months, but new life is happening! If last spring was a time when we experienced more closely than ever the kind of fear and sadness the disciples may have felt at the death of Jesus, this year, while there is still much grief and weariness of these difficult days, we are also experiencing the newness of life, in powerful ways, as we head toward the empty tomb and lives of liberation, aliveness, and joy of the resurrection!

Some of the most moving moments of new life for me in recent weeks has been visiting people in local nursing homes for the first time since last year. It was wonderful to be physically present and spending time with God's people.

There is much energy and new life at **Christ Lutheran**

and topics, attending to the business of our synod as outlined in the constitution, and participating together in festival worship.

While we talk about, wonder about, and carry out our theme: Growing Young and Vital, we'll be setting the stage for asking congregations and ministries throughout our synod to identify their vital signs and places they're healing the hurt, engaging the stranger, and loving the land!



BISHOP INSTALLATION

You're invited to worship with us as we install our Bishop, Christopher deForest. This will take place after the synod assembly. Whether you attend the synod assembly or not, you're invited to participate fully in the Installation Worship! We will broadcast the installation worship live for all to participate and witness this truly joyous occasion. More information will follow letting you know how to connect to the worship and specific start time. Please plan to attend as we connect all three expressions of the church!

Conyngham, and it feels exciting, like when the beautiful spring flowers pop out of the thawing ground in spring. Some of the new and renewed life, includes getting started with **Growing Young**, and having our first get together this week to dive into the book and the six essential strategies so that we might continue to engage people of all ages in the life of the church. We hope to create excitement and vitality for people of every age on the disciple's path engage in leadership, and God's ministries in action. For Easter there are various exciting things happening... Among them, Christ Lutheran will have its first Outdoor Sunrise Easter Service, and stations of the cross set up in the outdoor areas. We've invited people from the congregation and community to pick up a devotional, and take a self-guided prayer walk any day during Holy Week. **We are also re-establishing a congregational care team** and adding some new ways for folks to minister to one another. We also experience new life in getting back to many of the already established life-giving ministries here! Thanks be to God for new life, new creation, and new beginnings!

Meet Eric Gombert

I was born and raised in the Lehigh Valley where I graduated from Whitehall High School. College years found me at Westminster Choir College, completing my degree in Sacred Music with a concentration in organ. During the thirty plus years since, I've taught both piano & organ, directed a community chorus, performed with regional ensembles, worked in business with roles including payroll, accounts payable, & technology, and served both part-time and full-time as musician for Lutheran congregations. All of this has come together to a place in my life when I am actively utilizing my gifts in both the musical & administrative areas. As **Director of Operations at the Synod**, I am responsible for overseeing building resources & technology, & the functions of bookkeeper and financial administrator. My husband, Matthew, and I have been together since 2000 & married since 2015. We are actively involved with raising our Great Dane puppy, wiping dog drool from everything, including the ceiling, roasting coffee, and tending our organic garden.

