Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Profile - 2018

Activated by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we equip the saints and congregations for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.
Synod Overview

General Information about our Region and Synod
The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (SEPA) is comprised of the people of God in 151 congregations and a variety of other ministries, all doing God’s work together.
Synod Overview

SEPA Synod Territory includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties.
This region is divided into 8 conferences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th># of Congregations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Philadelphia</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Bucks</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Montgomery</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast/Northwest Philadelphia</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Bucks</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Montgomery</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2017 Annual SEPA Assembly Report
Quick Facts:

- Covers 2154 sq. miles
- 69,180 baptized members in 2016
- 32 members per square mile
- 151 Congregations
- 156 Active Pastors
- 124 Retired Pastors
- 12 Active Deacons
- 17 Retired Deacons
- 17 Pastors and Deacons On Leave from Call or On Medical Disability

Synod Overview

Quick Facts:

- 4 Languages used for Worship: English, Spanish, German, and ASL
- 3 Mission Congregations
- One campus of United Lutheran Seminary is on SEPA territory
- We give 50% benevolence to the ELCA
- Two Companion Synod relationships
  - ELCTanzania – North-Eastern Diocese – over 20 years
  - Southeast Michigan Synod – just raised $23,000 for Flint water crisis

Source: 2017 Annual SEPA Assembly Report and Synod Staff
Synod Overview

General Population of our Region

- 2000: 3,849,642
- 2010: 4,008,994
- 2016: 4,101,129

ELCA Baptized Members

- 2000: 101,959 (2.64% of population)
- 2010: 85,105 (2.12% of population)
- 2016: 69,180 (1.69% of population)

Yellow numbers = Members as percentage of general population.

Source: September 2017 MissionInsite Report
Synod Overview

Corporate Congregation AWWA = 351-800
Program Congregation AWWA = 151-350
Pastoral Congregation AWWA = 51-150
Small Congregation AWWA = 1-50

*These terms are used and defined by the ELCA.*

Source: 2015 ELCA Statistics
SEPA Congregations are...

- **Declining**: 115, 75%
- **Stable**: 17, 11%
- **Growing**: 16, 10%
- **Other**: 6, 4%

Stable = Change between -3% and +3%
Growing = Attendance grew by more than 3%
Declining = Attendance shrunk by more than 3%

Source: 2015 ELCA Statistics as reported between 2009-2014
At the end of 2016, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod had 150 organized congregations; at the end of 2010, the synod reported 158 organized congregations, and in 2005, the synod had 172 congregations. At the end of 2000, there were 178 congregations in the synod. Overall, the number of congregations has declined 16 percent since 2000.

Source: ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation December 2017
Synod Overview

Difference Between Members Received by Baptism and Baptized Members Lost to Death

Members Received by Baptism
Members Lost to Death

Source: ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation December 2017
Synod Overview

Population Diversity 5 County Region

- White: 63%
- Black: 22%
- Hispanic/Latino: 8%
- Asian: 5%
- Other: 2%

Source: September 2017 MissionInsite Report
Diversity in SEPA Synod

- White: 50,365
- African American/Black: 2,244
- Other Groups: 1,966

Breakout of “Other Groups”:
- African National/African Caribbean: 404
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 451
- Arab Middle Eastern: 543
- Asian Pacific Islander: 438
- Latino American: 272
- Other: 29
- Multiracial: 107

Based on 2012 ELCA Statistics
Synod Overview

Intentional Diversity in SEPA Synod

- ELCA=>10%; SEPA=>20% representation of persons of color
- Gender equality intentions on synod council
- Intentional diversity on the Candidacy Team
- Anti-racism Team
- LGBT+ inclusion
- Reconciling in Christ Synod
- Youth Representation
- Young Adult (under 25) Representation
Social Ministry Organizations Connected to SEPA Synod

• Artman Lutheran Home
• Bethesda House Corporation (Lutheran Knolls)
• Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries
• Good Shepherd Penn Partners
• Kencrest Centers
• Liberty Lutheran Services
• Liberty At Home
• Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (with the other PA synods)
• Lutheran Settlement House
• Manatawny Manor
• The Hearth at Drexel
• Paul’s Run Retirement Community
• Silver Springs – Martin Luther School
Giving Patterns in SEPA Congregations

Annual Giving per Attendee – SEPA Synod Congregations

2010 - $1881.00
2016 - $2382.00

increase of $501.00

Source: ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation December 2017
### Giving Patterns

Mission Support compared to ELCA and neighboring synods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission Support</th>
<th>Aggregate Worship Attendance</th>
<th>Undesignated Giving</th>
<th>Per attendee</th>
<th>As % of undesignated giving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6E</td>
<td>$1,360,225</td>
<td>14,175</td>
<td>$26,157,963</td>
<td>$95.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6F</td>
<td>$1,582,551</td>
<td>18,747</td>
<td>$34,502,589</td>
<td>$84.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>7E</td>
<td>$2,237,713</td>
<td>21,936</td>
<td>$36,282,922</td>
<td>$102.01</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7F</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,830,064</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,001</strong></td>
<td><strong>$30,120,706</strong></td>
<td><strong>$122.00</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8D</td>
<td>$2,541,838</td>
<td>20,988</td>
<td>$41,274,764</td>
<td>$121.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELCA</strong></td>
<td><strong>$97,463,395</strong></td>
<td>935,583</td>
<td><strong>$1,755,274,518</strong></td>
<td><strong>$104.17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation December 2017
Synod Leadership

Information about Pastors, Deacons, Deans and the Bishop
Pastors and Deacons

Pastoral Presence in Congregations

Source: 2017 Annual SEPA Assembly Report and Synod Staff
Pastors and Deacons

Ages of Pastors in SEPA Synod

- Below 40: 33
- Between 40 and 64: 34
- Over 65: 105

Source: 2017 Annual SEPA Assembly Report and Synod Staff
Pastors and Deacons

Ages of Pastors in SEPA Synod

- Between 45-59: 18%
- Below 45: 17%
- Between 60 and 69: 24%
- Between 70 and 92: 41%
- The large number of pastors in the 60-69 cohort will likely mean many retirements in the first term of the new bishop.

276 Pastors on the roster of the ELCA and associated with SEPA Synod

Source: Synod Staff
Pastors and Deacons

Deacons in SEPA Synod

- Active: 12, 39%
- Retired: 17, 55%
- On Leave: 2, 6%

Source: 2017 Annual SEPA Assembly Report and Synod Staff
The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The bishop shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

As this synod’s pastor, the bishop shall preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church; provide pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ministers of Word and Sacrament, and its ministers of Word and Service; ordain and consecrate and provide letters of call, etc.

The bishop shall exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing: Interpret and advocate the mission and theology of the whole church; Lead in fostering support for and commitment to the mission of this church within this synod; Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church’s life and witness in the areas served by this synod;
The Bishop shall (continued):

- Submit a report to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly concerning this synod’s life and work; and
- Advise and counsel this synod’s related institutions and organizations.
- Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing: including oversight, conflict resolution, ecumenism, consultation with the Conference of Bishops, etc.
- Oversee and administer the work of this synod, serving as president of the synod corporation and be the chief executive and administrative officer of this synod; presiding at all meetings of the Synod Assembly and provide for the preparation of agendas; ensuring that the constitution and bylaws of the synod and of the churchwide organization are duly observed within this synod, and that the actions of the synod in conformity therewith are carried into effect; etc.
The Role of the Bishop

- United Lutheran Seminary – Bishops take turns serving
- Muhlenberg College Board – required by the college’s constitution
- LAMPa – Region 7 Bishops take turns serving for 6 years
- Religious Leaders’ Council of Philadelphia – the new bishop will be expected to represent Lutherans as often as the schedule allows
- Companion Synod Relationships
- Conference of Bishops
- Others as chosen by the new bishop and/or requested by the ELCA

Source: 2017 Annual SEPA Assembly Report and Synod Staff
Committee of Deans

- Currently in SEPA Synod, our leadership includes 9 pastors – 1 from each of the 8 conferences – and 1 from among Intentional Interim pastors.

- These deans convene their conferences, provide pastoral care, attend public worship services and events, and advise the bishop in areas of mobility and congregational capacity.

- Deans also assist the Bishop by installing newly called rostered leaders in their conference.

- Deans may only serve two consecutive terms of three years each.

- Deans are given a stipend in return for their work in their conferences.

Source: 2017 Annual SEPA Assembly Report, SEPA Synod Constitution, and Synod Staff
Synod Finances

Basic Information about SEPA Finances
### Year ending January 31, 2017:

- **Income** - $2,722,744
- **Expenses** - $2,248,878
- **Net Assets** - $1,903,049
- **Mission Support to ELCA** - $925,565
  - This represents 50% of the unrestricted partnership support sent in by congregations.

Source: 2017 Annual SEPA Assembly Report and Synod Staff
Forward Together in Faith Campaign

Through December 31, 2017:

- Income of $488,746
- Expenses of $235,167
- Pledges Outstanding: $149,229
- Distributions: $44,395

Source: Synod Council Meeting Reports
- We are a diverse synod, but not as diverse as the region in which we live.
- We are a generous synod, with increased giving per member to congregations. However, overall giving has declined.
- We have a large percentage of pastoral-sized and/or declining congregations.
- While the geographical region’s population has increased slightly, our attendance and membership has decreased significantly.
- The expectations and responsibilities of the Bishop are monumental.
- The Bishop’s Office staff has shrunk significantly in recent years; Financial resources available to the Bishop’s Office have also been significantly reduced.

These summary statements were formulated by the Transition Team of the Bishop Election process.
SEPA Survey Summary

Results of the Questionnaire: November 7-December 8, 2017
SEPA Survey Summary

- 270 responses
- 47% were between 41 and 65 years of age
- 57% were female
- 80% identified as ‘white’
Survey Participants

- 36% Rostered Leaders
- 9% Other
- 55% Congregational Members (not on Councils)
- 26% Congregational Council Members
- 29% Lay Members
SEPA Survey Summary

What is the best joy or ministry in your congregation?*

- 31% - outreach
- 16% - worship
- 12% - music

*this was an open-ended question; top responses are summarized
What is the best joy or ministry in the synod?

- 27% - synod-wide event or program
- 14% - I don’t know
- 14% - inclusive nature of the synod
- 13% - the synod staff

*This was an open-ended question; top responses are summarized*
What skills/gifts will be needed in our next bishop?*

- 35% - wisdom, vision, knowledge, and/or patience
- 14% - a pastor to pastors
- 10% - consensus building

*this was an open-ended question; top responses are summarized*
Prioritize the roles of the incoming Bishop:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles of the Bishop</th>
<th>Importance Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CASTER OF VISION</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIONSHIP BUILDER</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSCIENCE OF THE SYNOD/SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADER</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONFLICT RESOLVER</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECUMENICAL/INTERFAITH LEADER</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEADER IN ADDRESSING RACISM</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGUREHEAD</td>
<td>6.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 = Most Important  7 = Least Important
Where should we focus our efforts to strengthen “love of neighbor” as a synod?

- 20% anti-racism
- 19% hunger/homelessness
- 18% economic justice
- 16% cultural diversity
- 15% gender equality
- 11% immigration
- 9% criminal justice
- 5% other
What will success look like in our synod three years from now?*

- 42% - growing, thriving, yoked or fewer at-risk congregations
- 16% - more diverse/social justice-minded congregations
- 11% - cohesive Christian communities working together

*This was an open-ended question; top responses are summarized
How is God at work in our synod?*

- 19% - mentioned the synod’s ministries and/or the people of the congregations
- 16% - spoke about the outreach efforts of the synod and its congregations
- 14% - indicated that they saw God at work “everywhere” they looked

*This was an open-ended question; top responses are summarized
In summary, the next bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod should focus on being a “caster of vision” and relationship builder. Additionally, the new bishop should have wisdom, vision, knowledge, and patience, be a pastor to pastors and be a consensus builder. For the synod to show “love of neighbor”, it should make efforts toward “anti-racism”, focus on issues around hunger and homelessness, and economic justice. Success in the synod in three years’ time would manifest as congregations growing in average worship attendance, becoming more diverse and working for social justice. Finally, for the synod to be a cohesive Christian community is important as well.

Source: ELCA Office of Research and Evaluation December 2017, based on Survey Data
Thank you!

This Mission Profile has been developed by the Transition Team of the Bishop Election Process:

Co-Chairs: Ms. Julie Kinzel and Ms. Patricia Robinson

Dr. Addie Butler, Pr. Lynette Chapman, Pr. Jim Goodyear, Pr. Paul Neff, Mr. Doug Parry, Ms. Karen Paulus, Pr. Donna Wright

Please reference our full report for sources and more information.