

# Bishop Patricia Ann Curtis Davenport

*Fifth Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod,  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

The Rev. Patricia Ann Curtis Davenport assumed office as bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) on August 1, 2018.

Overwhelmingly elected by the Synod Assembly on May 5, 2018, she is the first African-American woman to be elected a bishop in the 3.8-million-member ELCA. She currently serves as Vice-Chair of the ELCA Conference of Bishops

“Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod is already a great Synod, and our mantra is we can do more together than we can alone,” Bishop Davenport says. “I believe I was elected because I lifted up: *We can do more, and we can do it together.* How do we move from the mentality of ‘the church is declining, the church is declining,’ to building up the kingdom of God? That’s what we’re called to do.”

Bishop Davenport is leading SEPA Synod in making disciples through information, education and inspiration that leads to transformation. She believes this is the way the Synod makes a difference in the five-county area she is called to serve.

At the time of her election, Bishop Davenport served the Synod as Director for Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop, with responsibilities for new and redeveloping congregations, congregational vitality, and urban ministries.

Bishop Davenport is a member of Spirit and Truth Worship Center, Yeadon, which she served as its founding pastor/developer. She received the master of divinity degree from the former Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, now United Lutheran Seminary. She received a Certificate in Black Church Concentration from the seminary’s Urban Theological Institute and is a certified ELCA Level One Coach.

She has served the national church in a variety of capacities, including co-chair of the ELCA’s Guiding Coalition, member of the Congregational Vitality and African Descent Strategy teams, and secretary of the board of Lutheran Services in America. She is a lifetime member of the Philadelphia chapter of the African Descent Lutheran Association and is active with the Black Clergy of Philadelphia, Metropolitan Christian Council, the Religious Leaders Council of Greater Philadelphia and Vicinity, and Christians United Against Addictions.

She is the widow of Joel Davenport, with three adult children: Joel, Shanena and Jamar; and seven grandchildren, Joel III, Dominic, Chance, Cristian, Kayden, Justice and Kaleb, who are her heart’s delight.

