

Biographical Information Form

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod

NOMINEE FOR BISHOP OF THE

Karl M. Richard

1. Name:
Sr. Pastor, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Springfield, PA, 2008 - present
2. Current Position:
St. Matthew Lutheran, Springfield, PA
3. Congregation Membership:
07/07/1960
4. Date and Year of Birth:
07/24/1987
5. Date and Year of Ordination:
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Applebachsville PA Pastor 1995 - 2007
6. Previous Positions:
Evangelical Lutheran Church, Raymertown NY Vice Pastor 1994 - 1995

Evangelical Lutheran Church, Poestenkill NY Pastor 1987 - 1995

Rensselaer County Lutheran Parish, Vice Pastor 1992-1993
7. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):
Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, M.Div. 1982-1987

SUNY Coll. of Env. Science & Forestry/Syracuse U Environmental Studies 2 B.S. 1980-1982

Herkimer County Community College Environmental Studies 2 A.S. 1978-1980
8. List up to five (5) current or past synod or churchwide activities that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.
Secretary, SEPA Synod, 06/2015 - present

SEPA Synod Council, since 05/2010, Finance Committee chair 01/2014 - 05/2015

LTSP Alumni/ae Board, 05/2005 -05/2011

Dean, Upper Bucks Conference, SEPA Synod, 11/1997 - 10/2003 (2 terms)

member/ past convener, Quakertown Area Lutheran Churches, 11/1995 - 12/2007

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

Member, Springfield Ministerium (ecumenical group) 2008 - present

Springfield Ministerium Treasurer from 2018 - 2023

Charter Organization officer, Troop 503, BSA, 2008 - present

Member/ former treasurer, Quakertown Ministerium (ecumenical group) 1995 - 2007

Member, Ethics Committee, Phoebe Richland Nursing Facility 2001 - 2007

10. What gifts would you bring to the office of bishop of this synod? (1,000 characters maximum)

From the list in the Rostered Ministers Profile, I would list my top five gifts as: Teaching, Interpreter of Theology, Establishing an Interpersonal Climate, Participation in the Larger Church, Administration. I believe I have skills in understanding, and presenting, concepts of scripture and Lutheran Theology in a way that is approachable and understandable. Further, I believe I can articulate how and why these concepts inform, and are needed, for how we structure the Church - its life and its ministry. My whole approach to ministry, and life, is summed up in Relationship - with God, with each other, with noticing who is not participating, and intentionally bringing them into the conversation.

11. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (1,000 characters maximum)

The largest challenge we have is the struggle of congregations to see hope as they feel the shrinking of both their congregation and the broader church. This is seen and felt in the struggle to staff congregations with clergy leadership, and leaves congregations feeling lost and alone. I believe we need to dig deeper into the need for cooperation and collaboration, but in ways that call us to truly be in relationship and mission with each other to witness to Jesus, building genuine community, not just sharing costs. Sharing secretaries and buying paper in bulk is helpful, but not NEARLY a step toward rethinking genuine partnership that is deeper than collaboration over "nuts and bolts." We need to see each other as siblings and partners in ministry, not competitors for resources and clergy.

12. Describe your leadership style. (1,000 characters maximum)

I am collegial and relational. While I definitely have my opinions and perspectives on issues, I believe we are all in this together, and we need to support and learn from each other in the journey. This is true for clergy, whom I feel need to meet together for support, prayer, and encouragement. This is true for congregations, as we need to recognize we are not alone, but have each other. At installations, Bp. Burkat used to say to the newly installed minister, "All that we have is yours. And all that you have is ours." We are in this together. We are the branches that need to stay connected in, and through, the vine that is Jesus. It is by intentionally listening to and engaging others, that I prefer to lead.