

## **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM**

### **NOMINEE FOR BISHOP OF THE** Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod

1. Name: Heidi Rodrick-Schnaath
2. Current Position: Interim Pastor, Good Shepherd, Coatesville, PA
3. Congregation Membership: St. Luke, Devon, PA
4. Date and Year of Birth: September 18, 1960
5. Date and Year of Ordination: August 27, 1988
6. Previous Positions: Interim Pastor, Christ's, Oreland, PA; Senior Pastor, St. Matthew's (Keller's Church), Perkasio, PA; Director of Student Services, United Lutheran Seminary; Minister of Christian Education, Trinity, Narberth, PA; Manager of LTSP Books & Gifts and Augsburg-Fortress, Philadelphia, PA; Associate Pastor, St. Timothy, Naperville, IL; Associate Pastor, Living Lord,
7. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):  
Doctor of Ministry, United Lutheran Seminary, 2022  
Master of Divinity, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1988  
Bachelor of Arts, University of Colorado, 1983
8. List up to five (5) current or past synod or churchwide activities that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.  
Member, Candidacy Committee, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod  
Co-chair of the synodical Transition Team for the 2024 Election of the Bishop, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod  
Member, Synod Council, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and Central States Synod, (Missouri and Kansas)  
Seminary representative to ELCA Regional Assignment  
Title IX Investigator & Coordinator, ULS and LTSP. (Designed and led boundaries training and sexual harassment prevention training as well as investigating harassment complaints.

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

Contributor to the RevGalBlogPals' website and Facebook Page. (The RevGals was an ecumenical organization supporting women clergy and other women in ministry.)

Volunteer shift coordinator for Hesed House Homeless Shelter, Aurora, IL

Board Member for the East Mt. Airy Neighbor's Association, Mt. Airy, PA

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

I bring a diversity of experience, having served in 3 regions and 7 synods. I worked for rural and suburban congregations as well as ELCA institutions. I have been a solo, associate, specially called and interim pastor. This has given me a valuable perspective on the nature of the church and the ELCA.

I am at my best when I can be creative which includes being resourceful and innovative in daily life. Problem solving means looking beyond the past and present to find a solution that is inspired by the needs of today and tomorrow.

I am passionate about story, which is exemplified in my preaching, teaching, and the ways that I connect with people. Madeleine L'Engle wrote, "Stories make us more alive, more human, more courageous, more loving." For me this is most true when I share the story of God.

My enthusiasm for serving the church has not diminished with age. I believe we are in a time of discovery and opportunity. What the future will bring is unknown, but it is certainly blessed by God.

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)

One of the challenges we face is the belief that the church is dying. Grieving over past programs and smaller attendance numbers gets in the way of our moving forward to see what the church can truly be. We need to face the future with a hopeful vision of renewal, remembering that God is all about resurrection and new life. With that in mind I would hope to do the following.

Establish an honest, compassionate means to evaluate the resilience of churches, knowing that closure, yoking or merger might be the healthiest option.

Creatively engage people in conversations about racial equity. It's important for both personal and corporate well-being.

Explore how the synod and congregations can better use technology. I would love to develop a 21st century circuit rider. Each week, a gifted preacher would be at one of the partner churches. The sermon would be streamed to the others. Trained lay people would lead the rest of the service. Worship would be planned jointly by the collective staff.

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

At eye level above my desk is a 1 by 3 inch sign that says, "What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?" We are living in a time when it is important that the church be willing to experiment, even if the experiments fail. I hope that my leadership reflects this attitude on a regular basis.

As a leader, I am attuned to interpersonal and group dynamics. I am committed to collaboration and building mutual trust. I think consensus is important but unanimous approval is not necessary to move forward. I'm not afraid to state hard truths or make difficult decisions.

I like to know what is at the heart of a problem and will work to seek the truth at the center of a dilemma. I am motivated to put systems in order and gifted at processing the details necessary to do so.

My personal prayer life consists of ongoing chatter throughout the day. It's not formal or tidy, but it's a constant overarching connection.

I believe that joy is the most infallible sign of the presence of God.