



2016 Synod Assembly: Many Voices, One Song
Loveland, Colorado
April 28-30

Assembly Fact and Figures



- ▣ 414 voting members and 75 visitors joined in worship, business and fellowship
- ▣ Worship was led with a variety of worship leaders and styles:
 - Bishop Gonia
 - Kaitlyn Winter-Eulberg
 - ▣ Recent ELCA Fund for Leaders Scholarship Award recipient
 - ▣ Intern in Seattle, WA
 - Young adults, youth and children in the style of Rainbow Trail and Sky Ranch outdoor ministries
 - Beer and Hymns Evening
- Assembly Offerings totaled \$12,781 :
 - ▣ \$2099 to Betella Seminary in Madagascar
 - ▣ \$5940 to seminary scholarship fund
 - ▣ \$3012 to Aurora Area Strategy Ministries
- For more fact and figures, go to <http://rmeselca.org/assembly>





Bishop Gonia

- Expressed Gratitude for the joys and celebrations as well as the “tough stuff” of our lives together with the Holy Spirit
- RMS is better together
- Challenged RMS congregations to reflect and identify what makes our ELCA voice unique and distinct
- Focused on our voice as a “both/and” church
 - Inclusive/never divisive
 - Community gathered around **both** Word **and** Sacrament
 - Scriptures are Christ’s living word proclaimed **in both** Law **and** Gospel
 - We live simultaneously as **both** sinner **and** saint
- Mission Support : Recommended congregational giving is 10%, encouraged giving 15%, actual average giving is 5%
 - Mission Support offerings from RMS congregations and shared with ELCA Churchwide to be reduced from 50% to 46%
- Quotable Quote: “God doesn’t need money, God’s Work needs money”

Keynote: Rev. Shauna Hannan

Professor of homiletics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

- ▣ Led the Assembly through Scripture Readings
 - God's creative voice
 - ▣ Genesis 1-2 (Creation)
 - ▣ Psalm 19 (particularly Ps 19:4 – “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.”)
 - ▣ Isaiah 55:12 – For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall **burst in song** and all the trees of the field **shall clap their hands**.
 - ▣ Mark 2:1-12 (Jesus heals a paralytic at Capernaum) – Selected Assembly participants performed in tableau form.
 - Quotable Quotes:
 - ▣ “The tree has preached by, well, being a tree. I give thanks that humans are not the only ones called to preach.”
 - ▣ The voicebox is midway between the brain and the heart”





Mikka McCracken

ELCA World Hunger Campaign Director for
Planning and Engagement

- ▣ Addressed Assembly on the theme: “We are Church for the Sake of the World.”
- ▣ Told a very touching personal story of gender inequality in her homeland South Korea
- ▣ Describe the interconnectedness of the ELCA in its three expressions
 - Congregations
 - Synods
 - Churchwide ministries
- ▣ Quotable Quote: “It is possible to end poverty and hunger because every day we believe in something that everyone else thinks is nuts. We believe in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and because of that grace we are completely free to serve. No one else in the world is going to say that if we don’t.”

Memorials

- ▣ Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery
 - ELCA repents complicity in the evils of colonialism in the Americas
 - Calls for a renewed strategy for ministry with native people in the ELCA
- ▣ US aid to the State of Israel
 - Call for Congressional action to make US aid contingent on halt to Israel's settlement-building in the West Bank
 - Calls on congregations to study and contact congress persons



Rocky Mountain Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Resolutions

- ▣ Official RMS Statement of Welcome
 - Adopted this statement of welcome: “We as the Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA invite all into the fullness of God’s love. This invitation is inclusive of people of every race, national origin, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, physical or mental ability, sex, or station in life. We pledge to use our differences as gifts for our work together.”
 - Calls for ongoing education and training on building an inclusive church
 - Encourages congregation and other ministry sites to becoming Reconciling in Christ communities
- ▣ Encouraging Social Purpose Investments
 - Encourages (not mandates) rostered RMS persons to consider allocating their pension funds to these funds
- ▣ Creation Stewardship Reformation Observances
 - 500th Anniversary of the Reformation to incorporate the call to faithful stewardship of creation into the education and worship materials and other resources.



Elections

▣ SYNOD COUNCIL

- Border: Susan Mitchell
- Boulder/Broomfield: Janice Kibler
- Metro West: Jay Voth
- Southeast Colorado: Dianna Biggs
- Wyoming: Todd Herreid
- at Large Clergy: Julie Brooks
- Youth Magdalyn: Claire Nieberger
- Young Adult: Melanie Ferarro
- Ethnic Specific Ministry: Hendrik Dapot Samosir

▣ CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES BOARD

- Jennifer Jesse
- Tim Orłowski

▣ COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINE

- Wendy Krull
- Meg Spencer
- Michael (Ray) Ferry
- Larry Davis
- Paul Rosin

▣ CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

- Brendon George
- Keith Langford
- Dave Cruson

Ron's Takeaways

- ▣ Expected “stodgy” group speak, found openness and challenge to thinking and unexpected inspiration and energy.
 - A constant din of laughter was present when not in session
 - Reassuring to see the number of youthful pastors and rostered leaders at work in RMS
 - Diverse representation: (60% lay/40% clergy; 50% men/50% women; multi-ethnic; multi-LGBTQ; multi-lingual)

- ▣ Worship in multitudes:
 - Many Voices, One Song
 - Witnessed a variety of worship styles and traditions within the same service
 - Felt emotions at unemotional settings

- ▣ Another Quotable Quote: (In regard to “both/and”) “Martin Luther would probably not entirely approve of what we call the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America today, but he would approve of our progressive thinking and the fact that we continuously challenge the Church’s stance on issues.” -- A paraphrase from one of the breakout discussion sessions

- ▣ I would do it again.