



Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Office of the Bishop

A Message from Bishop Burkat

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. – Philippians 1:6

This rich promise of Scripture affirms the good work we have been doing as the church in Southeastern Pennsylvania. It also encourages us to accept the challenge of adapting to the ways in which God is working among us today.

As we survey the shifting landscape we see God's Spirit doing new things inside and outside the church -- even in the midst of declining church attendance, a growing "spiritual but not religious" population, and slipping trust in institutions.

We can't help but notice new patterns of faith and avenues for service developing in our congregations and in our culture as each new generation is born. Faithfulness to the Gospel demands that we find fresh ways to express God's message of grace and acceptance to the people God has placed in our midst.

In recent months we have listened carefully to the Spirit and to many clergy and lay leaders. We've heard you say that you want to be equipped for ministry in this transitional time. You long to be better connected to each other and to walk together collaboratively as a Synod.

This is why we are launching the ***Forward Together in Faith*** Campaign to generate resources to help make this vision a reality.

God has called us, together – as individual believers, as communities of faith and as the Synod organization – to be bold Lutheran witnesses to God's abundant love here in Southeastern Pennsylvania. As we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we, like Martin Luther, are called to adapt to tell God's story in new and creative ways right for our day and age.

I am excited about moving *Forward Together in Faith* with you as we reinvigorate our church and reach out to change lives and communities!

With and in Christ,

The Rev. Claire S. Burkat, Bishop