

2018 Bishop's Colloquy Speakers



The Rev. Robert C. Saler, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Center for Pastoral Excellence, Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis

Robert Saler came to Christian Theological Seminary in the fall of 2012. Prior to joining the seminary staff, he was Visiting Lecturer in systematic theology at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church in Gary, IN. He was previously interim pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Merrillville, IN. He is an ordained minister of Word and sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

He received his BA *summa cum laude* from Valparaiso University, an MA in theology from the Divinity School at the University of Chicago, and the M.Div., Th.M. and Ph.D. (with distinction) from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. He has pursued additional study at the University of Notre Dame.

Saler's research interests encompass both historical and systematic theology. He has published numerous scholarly articles in areas such as hermeneutics, early modern theology (particularly around the European Reformation and its legacy), ecological theology, and ecclesiology. He served as contributing editor for Fortress Press' revised editions of the textbooks *The Christological Controversy* and *The Trinitarian Controversy* (Fortress Press, 2012). His articles and reviews have appeared in such publications as *Pro Ecclesia*, *The Christian Century*, *Currents in Theology and Mission*, *The Cresset*, *American Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, *Expositions*, and *The Lutheran Forum*. Most recently he authored *Between Magisterium and Marketplace: A Constructive Account of Theology and the Church* (Fortress, 2014). He is a member of the American Theological Society (Midwest Division) as well as the American Academy of Religion.

As executive director of the Center for Pastoral Excellence, he is committed to exploring how attention to the long arc of ministry (from discernment to theological education to the living out of vocation) can be resourced to the benefit of the church and the world.



The Rev. Kevin L. Strickland

Assistant to the Presiding Bishop and Executive for Worship, ELCA Churchwide, Chicago

Pastor Strickland was born and raised in Lexington, S.C. and is an honors graduate of Newberry College (Newberry, S.C.) with a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Philosophy with a minor in History. He also obtained a Masters of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (Columbia, S.C.).

Pastor Strickland served as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran, Maryville, Tenn. and has served at Incarnation Lutheran (Columbia, S.C.), St. Philip's Lutheran (Newberry, S.C.), Lutheran Church of Redeemer (Newberry, S.C.) and Mt. Tabor Lutheran (West Columbia, S.C.) in the area of youth and family ministry. Most recently, serving as pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran, Nashville, Tenn.

Pastor Strickland has served as chair of the Southeastern Synod, ELCA Worship Team, president of the Board for Lutheran Services in Tennessee, member of the Southeastern Synod, ELCA Immigration and Refugee Task Force and the Southeastern Synod, ELCA Synod Council.

Pastor Strickland has served on various local non-profit boards and has a heart for justice and advocacy ministry. Presently, Pastor Strickland serves on the Consultation for Common Text, Resource Management Team with Augsburg Fortress, the North American Academy of the Catechumenate Planning Team and other Churchwide committees.

Pastor Strickland is humbled and honored to have been called into the position of assistant to the presiding bishop, executive for worship of the ELCA. He states, "It is a true joy for me to accept the call to this position and to work with brothers and sisters around the ELCA; in what is central to our mission: worship. Worship is at the heart of our mission as Christ church and provides an opportunity for us to be made whole and encounter the holy. Worship equips us to be disciples in this world, striving for justice and in doing so, we return often to the heart of our mission to be re-charged and fed."