

TRUST GOD. LOVE ONE ANOTHER. SERVE OUR NEIGHBORS.

ASSEMBLY OFFERS INSPIRATION FOR THOSE “CALLED TO SERVE”



Meeting under the thematic banner “Called to Serve,” members of the Pacifica Synod heard plenty of encouragement along those lines at the this year’s annual Synod Assembly, held online June 20, 2026 over Zoom. But all this encouragement focused less on the *what* of the phrase and more on the *who*.

“Society places people in categories like race, gender, sexual identity, refugees, undocumented folks, and sorts them into ‘strangers,’” said Rev. Perla Flores of Our Savior’s Lutheran in San Diego in her opening devotional remarks. “But in Christ there is no ‘us vs. them,’ just Christ in all. Worldly divisions are removed and we are united as one.”

“How we respond and stand with our neighbors in challenging times dictates whether we truly say, ‘You are welcome here; come as you are,’” Rev. Flores continued. “It begins with seeing people as Christ sees them, to look beyond the labels that divide us.”

Pacifica Synod Council Vice President Jeff Cours carried on this theme during his brief address. “If things are feeling a little bit wobbly, know that it’s not just you,” Cours said. “But people are stepping up [and] the wobblier things get, the more these groups appear.”

Bishop Dave closed out the remarks by encouraging the synod to focus on three action steps: trust God, love one another, and serve our neighbors. But he also encouraged those gathered to look for new, fresh ways to enact these principles.

“There are new ways to reach across what’s happening to our neighbor congregations, to other faith and spiritual communities, to those working on behalf of God on the other side of the world,” Bishop Dave said. “Seeing the gifts in others and then putting in the resources, time, and attention so they can do what God’s called them to do—that’s love in action.”

ALWAYS CHANGING

REGIONAL GATHERINGS HIGHLIGHT COMMUNITY, CHALLENGES



For four consecutive Saturdays, April 25 through May 16, 2026, Pacifica Synod hosted four regional gatherings as a prelude to the Online Synod Assembly on June 20, 2026. Members of the synod were offered the opportunity to gather in Honolulu, Hawai'i, and in Riverside, Los Alamitos, and San Diego, California for a time of community, mutual appreciation, fellowship, and collaboration both with each other and with the synod at large.

Each gathering had its own regional flair, with scriptures proclaimed in a variety of region-specific non-English languages, musical worship from the host churches, and a lunch sampling the local flavor. But even with all this variety, the overall message was the same: we are all called to serve those both within and outside our synod.

Perhaps the most differentiating component of each gathering was a time when attendees could meet in small groups according to their particular ministry emphasis, like finances, youth and children's ministry, social justice, and others. They were able to share their victories and challenges

with one another within the group, and then in the next general session, the group leader would share with everyone the types of things that came up during their discussion.

Interestingly, across all the gatherings, certain key words kept bubbling to the top during these discussions. Words like collaboration, sharing, community, and change became common themes synodwide.

Each gathering concluded with a message from Bishop Dave acknowledging the reality of this present moment while looking ahead to the future not just of the synod, not just of the ELCA, but of the American church. "The gospel is the same, but the conditions under which we preach the gospel are always changing," he said. "What if God called us to this time for a specific reason and has something for us that's never been seen before?"

"You have a place at this table with your name on it. You're welcome here and we love you for who you are." –The Rev. Perla Flores



SYNOD ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Synod Committee Election Results

Discipline Committee

The Rev. Robert Waworuntu

Consultation Committee

Dr. Michael Ditsky

The Rev. Brian Foxworth

Mr. Kyle Tweet

2025 Synod Council Election Results

Synod Council Secretary

Ms. Kathy Hartl elected to second term

Member at Large (Person of Color of Language Other than English)

The Rev. Perla Flores

Orange County Representatives (Female or Non-Binary)

The Rev. Jennifer Zahnow (rostered)

Ms. Kay Fielder (lay)

Inland Empire Area (Rostered, Female or Non-Binary)

The Rev. Jenifer Brown

2025 Synod Council Off-going Members

The Rev. Jennifer Shaw

The Rev. Diana Gultom

Ms. Dana Westphalen

2026–2027 Pacifica Synod Council

Officers

The Rev. David Nagler

Mr. Jeff Cours

Ms. Kathy Hartl

Mr. Allen Easley

Synod Council

Ms. Kathi Anderson

The Rev. Steve Anderson

The Rev. Jenifer Brown

Mr. Larry Dodson

The Rev. Jay Egenes

Mr. Mark Farrin

Ms. Kay Fielder

The Rev. Perla Flores

The Rev. Amanda McGlynn

The Rev. Marcus Lohrmann

Mr. James Lovell

Ms. Shawn Lowell

Mr. Landon Tweet

The Rev. Juli Patten

Mr. Tyler Robinson

Mr. Curt Spiller

Ms. Sarah M. Tees

The Rev. Jennifer Zahnow

Votes and Outcomes

(all resolutions and amendments were approved)

- 2027 Baseline Salary for Rostered Ministers
- Bylaw S10.07.01 Amendment
- 2027–2028 Synod Budget Approval

THANK YOU!

CHAIR

David Nagler, Bishop

PARLIAMENTARIAN

Ms. Pauline Getz

VICE PRESIDENT

Mr. Jeff Cours

ACTING SECRETARY

Ms. Rachel Line

TREASURER

Mr. Allen Easley

RESOLUTIONS CHAIR

Rev. Jay Egenes

SYNOD STATISTICIAN

Ms. Carol Youngman

CREDENTIALS

Ms. Terri Robertson

ASSEMBLY MANAGERS

Rev. Laura Ziehl

Ms. Carol Youngman

REGISTRATION

Ms. Terri Robertson

LOGO

Rev. Steve Anderson

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Ms. Lori Herman

Ms. Sarah Tees

Mr. Jeff Cours

Rev. Darryl Kozak

Rev. Ben Sheets

AUDIO/VISUAL

Big Dog Sound

Mr. Tom Hoegel

Mr. Adam Klopfenstein

Special thanks to all our gracious hosts for the Regional Gatherings and Synod Assembly this year:

- St. Andrew's Lutheran, San Diego (The Rev. Sarah Sumner-Eisenbraun and The Rev. Manuel Retamoza)
- Lutheran Church of Honolulu (The Rev. Lesley Radius)
- Trinity Lutheran, Riverside (The Rev. Kent Tuohino)
- Bethlehem Lutheran, Los Alamitos (The Rev. Jennifer Schultz)
- Clairemont Lutheran, San Diego (The Rev. Manuel Borbón and The Rev. Elena Enriquez)