

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM

### FOR BISHOP OF THE SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD

Please include a digital head shot with this completed form. The form will not be accepted without a head shot.

1. Name: Patricia Davenport

2. Cell phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Current Position: Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM)/Assistant to the Bishop

4. Congregation Membership: Spirit and Truth Worship Center, Yeadon PA

5. Year of Birth: 1955

6. Date and Year of Ordination: September 30, 2001

7. Previous Positions:

- Acting Bishop (3 months during Bishop's sabbatical)
- Pastor/Mission Developer, Spirit and Truth Worship Center
- Administrative Assistant, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
- Administrative Assistant, American Cancer Society
- Church Office Manager, Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church

8. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):

- Certified ELCA Level One Coach, Certificate, 2018
- Urban Theological Institute, Certificate in Black Church Concentration, 2007
- Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Master of Divinity, 2007
- Community College of Philadelphia, Computer Science
- Katherine Gibbs School of Business, Certificate

9. List up to five (5) current or past synodical or Churchwide activities that would inform your service as Bishop of this synod.

- Current: Co-chair with Bishop Tim Smith, Guiding Coalition, Churchwide
- Current: Congregational Vitality Team, Churchwide
- Lutheran Services in America, Board Secretary, Churchwide
- African Descent Strategy Team, Churchwide
- Lutherans in Fellowship Exchange (LIFE) SEPA Synod

10. List up to five (5) current or past community-related activities that would inform your service As Bishop of this synod.

- Sacred Places: Infill Ad Hoc Board
- African Descent Lutheran Association, Philadelphia Chapter (Life-time member)
- Christians United Against Addictions
- Black Clergy of Philadelphia
- Metropolitan Christian Council

## PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

### **1. What gifts would you bring to the office of the Bishop of this synod? (1,000 characters maximum)**

I have served positions in our three expressions of church from Council, Conference President, Developer/Pastor, Social Ministry Boards, Interfaith Boards, Generosity/Stewardship Team, Youth Ministry Coordinator, and Women of the ELCA ambassador to Liberia, Churchwide ambassador to Peru and synodical ambassador to Tanzania. To each of these leadership positions, I come with an open mind and spirit to learn as well as lead. I am a devoted disciple, faithful steward and a humble servant of God who in my role as pastor accompany lay people in the ebb and flow of daily life. In my role as DEM, I supervise mission developers in forming new or redeveloping ministries, some have borne fruit and others have not, causing me to make hard decisions of termination for our process and mission plans to achieve our goals. All gifts are rooted in my faith exhibited in my resilience as I preach the Word, preside at communion, pray at beds or gravesides, jump rope with or cheer for our youth at football or basketball games; however, even more so my gift to speak truth to power in difficult situations of injustice.

### **2. What personal leadership challenges do you foresee as Bishop and how do you anticipate meeting those challenges? (1,000 characters maximum)**

It seems our societal unrest has seeped into our churches/communities of faith, seminaries, and institutions of higher learning, causing us to see a lack of diversity and inclusiveness, prohibiting participation in our congregations and the larger church. As the first African Descent female bishop in SEPA and the ELCA, I will use community organizing principles to empower people to ensure what you care about is reflected in our synod mission efforts. Also, in the spirit of partnership, your willingness to develop, support, and maintain affiliations that will bring physical, financial and spiritual growth in Kingdom of God.

The NONES, DONES, and many of us are seeking cross-generational and cross-cultural faith formation venues that connect from the cradle to the grave. By means of our theological Lutheran roots of catechist and Luther's Common Chest model, these resources and tools equip and affirm us to live into Micah's call, **"to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."** Today, we seek to increase digital missionaries who will share the gospel of Jesus, drawing and nurturing disciples into our Lutheran tribe of the Jesus movement.

### **3. What do you see as the greatest gifts of this synod and how would you help grow these areas (1,000 characters maximum)**

Our cross-generation of lay leaders and rostered ministers which highlight our diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and our LGBTQIA+ community. Our communities of faith are blessed with many gifted lay leaders. Our Diakonia graduates, Directors of Christian Education, Youth Ministers, Camp Counselors, Ministers of Music and our talented millennials telling God's story face to face and on-line, **#unchartedterritory**, all supported by our clergy/chaplains, deacons/sisters and synod staff. We will utilize our great leaders, along with our full-communion partners and historic Black churches in our five county area through spiritual collaboration to strengthen the body Christ. To accomplish this goal, we pray, gather teams who through active listening, asking bold and powerful questions will set visionary goals. Our objections are met by action steps created to encourage partnerships from

the pew, and the pulpit to our communities, through open space venues for cohorts to learn and teach. Holy innovation at work!

**4. 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)**

Physical and financial resources have moved to the top of our priority list over the years: our Committee of Conference Deans has intentionally worked to draw and keep gifted leaders in our synod; nonetheless, the statistical data forecast increase in the number of rostered ministers that will be retiring vs. the decreased number of persons moving through seminary that will fill these ministries. Many of our congregations/communities of faith across our synod are facing change through decline in attendance, deferred building maintenance, dwindling resources and lack of outreach.

A movement of spirit-filled leadership drawing people into a personal relationship with the living God that is reflected in their daily life. We can look at a multiplicity of options to address the opioid crisis, the digital divide from an intergenerational approach to engage our churches and public/private organizations in partnership to create hubs to strengthen the local economy. We creatively invest in our rostered ministers and laity, equipping the body of Christ for the work of ministry in our neighborhoods and in congregations, that will cause a ripple effect in church and society that will bring hope in despair and light into the darkness. Education and information rooted in a spiritual reformation founded on biblical principles of prayer, bible study, worship, service, and stewardship with practical applications, creating an infectious faith movement within SEPA Synod.

**5. Tell us a favorite story about Jesus and how you use it in your daily life (1,000 characters maximum)**

Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, John 4:1-42 “Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony... They said to the woman. “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.” I am this woman, I am the one that Jesus found on an alternate route. Yes, Jesus went out of his way to reveal the truth of who I am, gave me living water that I will never again thirst. Jesus created in me a joy, an excitement and cause to be a disciple. My experience compels me to share my testimony with anyone who will listen but especially those in the margins. Spirit and Truth Worship Center, where as the mission developer and founding pastor, people are able to draw living water from the One who does not judge or condemn but goes the alternate route of the Cross that they too can experience a personal relationship with Jesus and tell others come see a man, that we know is the Messiah. The One who reconciled us with God and one another through the cross.

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