

# Our Synod Welcomes All



...and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.  
— Revelation 22:2c

In the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we feed the hungry as we have been fed by Christ. In 2016, our synod became a Reconciling in Christ Synod. We welcome with full participation and inclusion all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Jesus Christ.

The Collaborative Mission Center (CMC), a partnership between the Episcopal Diocese of Central PA, The Dean T. Stevenson School for Ministry, the Lower and Upper Susquehanna Synods of the ELCA, is essential to the success of the Gospel work of forming spiritual leadership engaged in the mission of Christ's church. Our work together as the CMC is a cultivated collection of learning experiences designed for congregational use; modules and courses designed to support ministry and spiritual formation in the ELCA and Episcopal Church. The coursework and faculty are guides, mentors, as well as teachers who intend to support a variety of ministries within the church: spiritual formation, evangelism, stewardship, preaching, pastoral care, and educational ministry.

It is our continued hope to build and strengthen partners who work and pray together for the Gospel of Christ and who share experience and commitment to developing disciples committed to furthering the kingdom of God. Our vision is to continue to grow into an ecumenical theological formation center equipping leaders with the necessary spiritual training and essential ministry tools to address the urgent and practical realities of ministry. We believe that each person is created in the image of God. Jesus calls us to be a diverse and inclusive church caring deeply for all children of God. As part of our synod's commitment to justice formation, and in support of our vision to birth a Justice Academy, we are excited to partner with the Stevenson School for Ministry to offer a new Social Justice Missioner Certificate engaging the fundamental issues at the heart of racial justice. For more information about this certificate, and to check out the learning opportunities in 2022, please visit: <https://diocesecpa.org/stevensonschoolforministry/resources/racial-justice-missioner-offerings/>.

Loving our neighbor means seeking justice and equity where it is absent by addressing harmful prejudice and the exclusion of traditionally marginalized people. By partnering with the SSFM, we strive to equip leaders to live out our baptism, listen with respect, and partner as diverse communities to build a culturally competent church. We are thankful for the opportunity to be church together for the sake of the Gospel and look forward to our continued partnership.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marsha Roscoe".

Deacon Marsha Roscoe

Collaborative Mission Center Director and Assistant to the Bishop, Lower Susquehanna Synod