ELCA Natural Systems Academy

Background

The ELCA Systems Academy is a four year structured engagement with family systems theory, theology, and clinical work.

Participants are expected to be present at all seminars throughout the four years. As work progresses, participants will develop programs within their own synod that support bishops, pastors, leaders, and congregational ministry.

Past presenters have included
Ms. Kathleen Wiseman, Dr. Roberta Gilbert,
Dr. Walter Smith, Dr. Daniel Papero,
Rev. Dr. Peter Steinke, and Dr. John Haught.
All Academy sessions are held at the ELCA Churchwide Office in Chicago.

Leadership

- **Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe**
  ELCA Natural Systems Coordinator
- **Rev. Dr. Larry Foster**
  Curriculum & Development Coordinator
- **Deacon Pamela Czarnota**
  Spiritual Formation

"This theory and its application promotes and benefits a better future by lowering people's sense of responsibility from 'fixing the whole thing' to focusing on self...It is not about 'fixing' It is about managing one's self as part of a much larger system of interconnectedness."
-Academy Participant-

Dates

- October 12-14, 2020
- January 11-13, 2021
- March 22-24, 2021
- June 21-23, 2021

Vision and Purpose

As we manage change while moving ahead, we are called to mature and less anxious relationships that handle differences, enable thoughtful listening, and pursue the capacity to deal with difficult topics and decisions. In our congregations as within all our lives, the way we treat one another is the significant factor in witness and service.

Required Preliminary Reading

- *Generation to Generation*
  by Edwin Friedman
- *Failure of Nerve*
  by Edwin Friedman
- *Extraordinary Relationships*
  by Roberta Gilbert

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