Associate to the Bishop for Candidacy and Faith Formation Report

Grand Canyon Synod Assembly 2019

The church is in good hands. Our church is in good hands. Our churches are in good hands. I know because as the Associate to the Bishop for Candidacy and Faith Formation, my most major responsibility is to develop leadership throughout our synod and encourage people to use their gifts for the betterment of our church. We have great people stepping up to take on leadership in our church.

The first few months of this job have been filled with meetings; meeting people, meeting deadlines, and meeting my own personal expectations to excel. I have been in 10 different churches preaching and introducing myself in this new capacity. I have met with candidates from Vegas, to Flagstaff and all across our Grand Canyon synod, reviewing the guidelines for candidacy and encouraging them along the way to let the process work. I have met with Campformation planners, Lutheran Campus Ministry directors, and the developers of our young adult network.

So far, the most enjoyable part of my new role is being out in our congregations across the synod, meeting with future pastors and deacons, and to talking with our young people in our congregations and reminding them that God indeed calls all people to do God’s work.

With the help of our fully formed Candidacy Committee we have met the deadline of getting 6 new people ready for seminary and additional 6 people on track to be in the process to get ready to attend seminary Fall 2020. Many people are stepping forward from various phases in their lives to take on leadership in our church. We’re in good hands. We have moved from 3 active people in the process for candidacy to 21. People from the first steps of discerning to one candidate we have anxiously awaiting her first call and a newly ordained first call pastor as of April.

We have implemented process to have two candidacy panels per year accessing up to 10 candidates a session. Our candidacy committee is filled with 10 amazingly capable people ready to walk with candidates through the maze getting to consecration or ordination. The candidacy team is made up of a mixture of five Rostered leaders, a deacon and pastors, and five lay people. Obviously male and female, from all parts of our synod and hopefully reflective of the varied beauty our synod has to offer. The newly formed Candidacy Committee will take a more accompaniment approach to the whole process of candidacy allowing individuals to understand the process better and for them to have successful touchpoints along the way to get the candidates to their goal of consecration or ordination.

My responsibilities with First Call Theological Education (FCTE) continues. Currently as a synod we have 5 people who are within their first 3 years of ministry and must complete the churchwide mandate of FCTE. Pr. Mateo Chavez, Pr. David Sivecz, Pr. Kimberlee Law, Pr. Kathleen Lotz, and Pr. Abel Arroyo – Traverso are our new pastors. Our next event will be in Northern California with Sierra Pacific Synod as host. This event occurs twice yearly rotating between the five synods that make up Region 2. The other A2Bs across Region 2 are a joy to work with and have been invaluable in their support and encouragement of advisement of me to get this job done well.

Soon after this assembly I will head to Campformation this year representing the synod office and being able to remind our Jr. high and high school age youth that there is a place for them in this church and we are glad to have them. This years’ camp will be at Camp Pine Rock in Prescott and our theme is “A Love That Never Ends.” It is a blessing to have a job with the responsibility of encouraging young people to follow their calls and never let their love for God end just as God loves for us is always and forever.

The synod staff is reading Brene Brown, Dare to Lead. The book is meant to encourage us individually and as a team to grow and stretch our definition of leadership and how we lead. Rumblings with self- trust is my most major take away and hoped for outcome after reading the book. Surely, we can all continue to rumble with self-trust and make this one of the strongest synods of our church filled with leaders from every walk of life ready to communicate, care, and create Jesus love to all.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jacqueline Pagel