

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:

NOMINEE FOR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA SYNOD

1. Name: Darcie Bien
2. Current Position: Publications Secretary & Sunday School Administrator at Ascension
3. Congregation Membership: Ascension Lutheran Church, Brookings, SD
4. Date and Year of Birth: 4/7/70
5. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):
 - B.A. Business Administration & Accounting, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, 1992
6. List up to five (5) current or past synodical or churchwide activities that would inform your service as vice president of this synod.
 - Board Member, Lutherans Outdoors in SD; 4/2006 - 6/2013;
Past President
7. List up to five (5) current or past community-related activities that would inform your service as vice president of this synod.
 - Board Member, Brookings Foundation
 - Leader and member of various PTA and school related committees
 - WELCA member, Youth Group leader at Ascension
8. What gifts would you bring to the office of vice president of this synod?
(1000 characters maximum)

My gifts include organization, financial understanding, faithfulness, dedication & loyalty. I have a genuine concern for the church and its people. Through my work with the Lutherans Outdoors in SD Board of Directors I have been able to network with members of the SD Synod from around the state

9. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (1000 characters maximum)

I've heard it said that, "Our faith is one generation away from extinction." In our culture of declining Christianity and declining participation in ELCA congregations, in particular, it is becoming increasingly challenging to pass on our faith in Christ to the next generation and raise up future leaders in the church. Reaching beyond our walls to youth and young families, meeting basic needs (food, clothing, shelter) of our neighbors, providing opportunities for

leadership and service to our youth and adults alike, and creating cross-generational opportunities for people to share their faith stories are all ways we can intentionally spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and show God's love to others. Funding a budget that supports those aforementioned programs is a secondary challenge and one in which we rely greatly on faith!

10. Describe your leadership style. (1000 characters maximum)

I am a leader who leads by example. I work with many volunteers, and my job is to recruit the right people, motivate and train them to do their work, and thank them for their service. In times of conflict, I generally understand both sides of an issue and enjoy the discussion that leads to consensus (or not). I am not afraid to "agree to disagree," and will support decisions made by the larger body.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:

NOMINEE FOR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA SYNOD

1. Name: Carla Borchardt
2. Current Position: Director of Professional Nursing Practice, Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center, Sioux Falls (1997-present)
3. Congregation Membership: Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls
4. Date and Year of Birth: 11/07/61
5. Previous Positions:
 - Unit Supervisor, Staff RN, Avera McKennan (1987-1997)
 - RN, Hendrick Medical Center, Abilene, TX (1984-1987)
6. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):
 - Enrolled in Doctor of Nursing Practice program, American Sentinel University (graduate 2015)
 - MS, Healthcare Administration, University of South Dakota (2001)
 - BA, Nursing, Augustana College (1984)
7. List up to five (5) current or past synodical or churchwide activities that would inform your service as vice president of this synod.
 - Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls: President, yearly Nicaragua Medical Mission trips (coordinator and participant)
 - South Dakota Synod: Secretary, Strategic Planning Task Force, Churchwide Assembly voting member
8. List up to five (5) current or past community-related activities that would inform your service as vice president of this synod.
 - Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota volunteer
 - Junior Achievement classroom volunteer
 - Feed My Starving Children
 - Food to You Mobile Food Pantry, Sioux Falls
9. What gifts would you bring to the office of vice president of this synod? (1000 characters maximum)
 - Grounded in the knowledge that I am a Child of God and have been marked with the cross of Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit through my baptism.
 - A passion for the church, the work of the church and the inter-relatedness of

- congregations, the synod and ELCA.
- A desire to make a positive difference in people's lives.
- Organized and detail oriented, with the ability to also see the big picture.
- The ability to solicit and listen to differing perspectives and facilitate discussion leading to common understanding.
- Serve in leadership roles in the church and professional organizations. Over 15 years of leadership experience in the health care setting, working with people from various backgrounds, professions and viewpoints.
- The ability to coordinate and manage complex projects to successful completion.

10. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (1000 characters maximum)

There is much to celebrate in our synod – over 50 new rostered leaders have entered the ministry in the last five years, youth are actively engaged in varied ministry and service opportunities, and there is a revitalized sense of energy around faith practices.

- Moving past the turmoil and divisiveness of the past four years -- addressed by focusing on the many opportunities for mission and ministry
- Decreasing population in some areas -- addressed by seeking out ways to creatively share resources and best practices for ministry including use of technology
- Continued economic uncertainty -- addressed by fostering relationships with church related and secular partners such as Lutheran Social Services and Feeding South Dakota
- Finding ways to share the Good News and meet the needs of the unchurched and those who have left the church -- addressed by actively listening to each other

11. Describe your leadership style. (1000 characters maximum)

I believe in servant leadership. Those affected by decisions should be involved in the discussion and decision making process. I strive to ensure the opportunity for all voices and perspectives to be heard in a respectful manner leading to better understanding and solutions. I do not micro-manage, believing if clear goals are set and the right people are involved, the best decision will be made. I seek out information and make decisions based on data rather than emotion. While my primary leadership style is decision making by consensus, I am able to act decisively in critical situations.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:

NOMINEE FOR SECRETARY OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA SYNOD

1. Name: Susan Leddy
2. Congregation Membership: American Lutheran Church
3. Dates and Year of Birth: 1-21-64
4. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):
 - SDSU 1991-1993 - Master of Science Degree in Nursing
 - SDSU 1982-1987 - Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing
5. List up to five (5) current or past synodical or churchwide activities that would inform your service as secretary of this synod.
 - Board member of Lutheran Outdoors - 2007-2013
 - Task Force to develop strategic plan for the synod – 2012
 - Served on local church council - 1993-1996
 - Medical Mission trip to Nicaragua - February 2013
6. List up to five (5) current or past community-related activities that would inform your service as secretary of this synod.
 - President of the Grant County Heart Board
 - Board member of the Milbank High School Education Foundation
 - Committee member on Dean's Development Council College of Nursing SDSU
 - Leading youth from American Lutheran Church to Nicaragua for a mission trip-summer 2013
7. What gifts would you bring to the office of secretary of this synod?
(1000 characters maximum)
 - Relationship development - I like to develop new relationships and engage with others. I have a dynamic outgoing personality and look forward to new situations and challenges. I like to network with people and develop relationships that facilitate growth for others. Making connections and utilizing resources from others is a great asset.
 - Decision making - I use critical thinking skills to process information and then make the best decision for the situation. I work as a family nurse practitioner in a rural health clinic that I am the sole provider for the past 18 years. We are 25 miles from the closest emergency room. This job has strengthened my ability to make decisions and helped me grow. It has taught me to make difficult decisions, utilize all resources available, and communicate. I have taken these experiences and use them for everything that I am involved with.
 - Passionate - I have passion for my church and the members that I worship with. I take that passion with me everyday to my job, my family, and community. I volunteer locally in the community and the church because of this passion.

- Prepared - I read all materials ahead of scheduled meetings and come fully prepared to discuss and take action if necessary.
8. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (1000 characters maximum)

I believe the principle challenge facing the synod is declining church attendance and membership. One of the contributing factors influencing this is that young adults and families are noticeably absent in church on Sundays. Connecting with young families and understanding their needs should be a priority of the synod.

Another major factor impacting attendance is that rural congregations are losing members due to declining population and advanced ages of the members. As these demographic changes shrink these congregations, finding pastors to serve them is going to become more difficult than it already is. In many areas, reversing these demographic changes is probably impossible, so the challenge for the synod is finding innovative ways to help these congregations effectively serve their shrinking congregations.

9. Describe your leadership style. (1000 characters maximum)

My leadership style is a team member working to empower others. I have read the book, "The Corporate Person" by Harold Everson for my role on the Lutheran Outdoors Board. He states, "Without the board, you're not the board". I am one person serving in a group and rely on the opinions and values of those serving with me. Trust, communication, integrity, and clear understanding of functions are essential elements for a highly functioning organization. Empowering other board members strengthens the core of the board and allows for higher functioning and productivity.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:

NOMINEE FOR SECRETARY OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA SYNOD

1. Name: Sara Greff Dannen

2. Current Position: General Counsel

3. Congregation Membership: Gloria Dei

4. Date and Year of Birth: 10/11/75

5. Previous Positions:

- General Counsel, Advanced Asset Alliance, 2012
- Corporate Counsel, Northwestern Energy, 2008
- Woods, Fuller, Shultz & Smith, 2006

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

- Juris Doctorate, University of South Dakota, 2001
- BS, Major Economics, University of South Dakota, 1998
- High School, TF Riggs, Pierre, South Dakota, 1994

7. List up to five (5) current or past synodical or churchwide activities that would inform your service as secretary of this synod.

- Constitution Committee
- President, Lutheran Memorial, Pierre
- Vice President, Lutheran Memorial, Pierre
- Secretary, Lutheran Memorial, Pierre

8. List up to five (5) current or past community-related activities that would inform your service as secretary of this synod.

- Judge for Teen Court
- Teen Court Board
- State Bar in-house counsel committee member
- Various community projects volunteer
- Vietnam Memorial Dedication Committee Member

9. What gifts would you bring to the office of secretary of this synod?

I bring many gifts to the Office of Secretary. I bring experience from being a secretary of a congregation. I bring dedication and devotion. I bring a desire to improve the ELCA and the drive to do the job.

10. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it?

The principal challenge we face in the next 6 years is unity. The Synod is only as strong as its weakest members and it is incumbent upon all of us to rally around, support, and uplift every Synod Member this year, next year, and in the next 6 years.

11. Describe your leadership style.

I try and lead first through example. The best leaders have paved the way by setting a standard to which others can look to as the customary way. I also believe in open and honest communications between yourself and others.