



Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Dear Members of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod,

The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

Available on the following two pages is a position description for a full-time Synod Communicator. I invite you to share this position description widely in your local communications. Expressions of interest may be sent to the synod office, along with the applicant's resume, either by mail ([9625 Perry Highway, Pittsburgh, PA 15237](#)), or by e-mail, office@swpasynod.org. The deadline for applications is Friday, August 10, 2018.

This new position on the synod staff is intended to address our Synod Council's first strategic initiative: *to invest in improved communications throughout our synod*. I am confident that our shared return on this investment will also help us to achieve the Synod Council's other strategic initiatives: *to create a culture where vocation is discerned and affirmed; to rekindle a passion for the Gospel; and to foster creativity and openness to change*.

Our Lord Jesus teaches us that the light of the Gospel is not to be hidden, but held up for all to see. It is my prayer that together as a synod, we may bear a public witness to the love and grace we have encountered in Jesus Christ so that many may come to faith.

With you in Christ,
+Kurt

Synod Communicator (Full-time), Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

Overview

The Synod Communicator will communicate the story and mission of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In consultation with the Bishop, the Synod Communicator will set and guide the strategy for all communications and public messages of the synod. The Synod Communicator will be responsible for the synod website, publicizing events, synod e-news, social media, and other forms of communication. The communications ministry of the synod is intended to build relationships between congregations, congregation members and the ministries of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA.

Responsibilities

- + Create and maintain all general communication mechanisms for the synod, including the synod website and news publications
- + Work with the bishop and synod staff to create and review all communications to the general public that represent the “public face” of the synod and the ELCA
- + Work with the bishop, synod staff and ministry leaders to develop communications processes and define priorities to create an environment in which messages can be communicated clearly, creatively and effectively
- + Work with the communications specialists in the churchwide office to connect public positions of this synod with the work of the ELCA
- + Develop communication pieces such as newsletters, releases, email announcements, planned publications, on-line, video, special projects and assignments
- + Create rich and creative content that is optimized for search engines
- + Keep ears open to mission stories within the synod. Develop ways to creatively communicate those stories via video, interviews, newsletter, and/or eNews
- + Manage the response to media inquiries, proactively working with the media, and maintaining all digital communication assets of the Synod
- + Consult with congregations to improve or enhance their electronic and print media communications
- + May cultivate, lead and manage a team of communications ministry volunteers (e.g., writers, photographers, videographers, designers)
- + Relates to the Communications Committee
- + Relates to the Synod Assembly Planning Committee as an advisor on matters of media and communication
- + Support Synod committees and organizations

Specific gifts and skills desired

LEADERSHIP: Leader, big-picture planner, ministry partner, coach and motivator. Provide leadership and management in the area of external/internal communications and marketing through print and electronic vehicles.

RELATIONAL: Sit at the table with leadership and act as an advocate for creative and clear communications. Connect with ministries on a personal face-to-face and regular basis to understand their ministries’ needs.

ORGANIZATIONAL/PLANNING: Understand vision cast by leadership and organize communications messages in a way that best reflects the synod’s priorities.

CREATIVITY: Continually look for ways to communicate existing churchwide and ministry programs in creative ways that will evoke a response from congregations of the synod.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Assess and determine the most effective ways to communicate a message to its intended audience.

MENTORING/TRAINING: Educate people about procedures and processes for communicating messages from the synod.

Desired Attributes for this Ministry

- + Collaborative style: experience developing and implementing communications strategies
- + Relational: works collaboratively and communicates with the Bishop, synod staff, officers, Synod Council members, rostered and lay leaders, and partners in ministry across the Church
- + Strong set of values consistent with church culture
- + Visionary with a contagious spirit to see how the church can be concise, clear and creative in its communications
- + Ability to take knowledge and transform it into exciting and useful messages, and disseminate it to the right audiences through the best distribution channels
- + Proficient in writing/editing, graphic design, communication, strategy and multi-tasking
- + Self-starter: able to work independently, and entrepreneurial; enjoys creating and implementing new initiatives
- + Strong writing, editing and proofreading skills. This individual serves as the “eyes” for all things print and electronic, looking for clear communication, brand presence and consistency
- + Current on creative communications and technological trends and looks for opportunities to use this information to more effectively communicate with the community and church family

Desired Experience for this Ministry

- + Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent experience
- + At least three years’ experience in a communications role
- + Experience managing and executing across several communications media
- + Strong written communication skills, required
- + Experience with Microsoft Office Suite, required
- + Experience with website content management systems (for example WordPress)
- + Familiarity with Adobe Creative Suite
- + Willing to execute day-to-day tasks and work independently
- + Capable leader, manager and mentor for volunteer talent
- + Entrepreneurial work ethic and a desire to “get the job done”
- + Ability to prioritize and follow through effectively

The Synod Communicator is a

- + Manager
- + Facilitator
- + Creative thinker
- + Problem-solver
- + Gatekeeper