



ASSOCIATION OF SYNOD VICE PRESIDENTS

Annual Report 2025-2026

Officers

Chair: Barbara Nugent, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

Vice Chair: Chuck Thomas, Northern Great Lakes Synod

Planning Team

Barbara Nugent, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

Chuck Thomas, Northern Great Lakes Synod

Kay Edgerton, Northwest Washington Synod

Tracy Gayer, Western Iowa Synod

Al Arndt, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Christopher Vergara, Metropolitan New York Synod

Terry Henderson, Metropolitan Chicago Synod

Don Heller, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod

Gatherings of the Association of Synod Vice-Presidents and its Planning Team meetings from Initiation, July 28, 2025, to the end of First Term of the Officers, August 31, 2026

July 28, 2025: At Churchwide Assembly: First meeting of the new Association of Synod Vice Presidents

Elected Chair and Vice-Chair

August 1, 2025: Planning Team Meeting

Planned topics for September and October 2025 monthly gatherings via Zoom.

August 2025: no gathering

September 27, 2025: Monthly Gathering on Zoom

Paul Edison-Swift provided training on using TEAMS software.

Planning team shared other available communication tools

October 13, 2025: Planning Team Meeting

Moved the previously decided training topic for Oct to Jan 2026

Determined a new topic for October and a topic for November

Explored possible topics for February and March 2026

Talked about the Zoom account sustainability– need to switch from Barb's Zoom acct. to a Churchwide supported one

October 25, 2025: Monthly Gathering on Zoom

Learned about NEPA synod's innovative way to tackle the problem of small congregations inability to afford a pastor along with the shortage of pastors with their "6-2-1" program model.

November 22, 2025: Monthly Gathering on Zoom

Representatives from selectlearning.org shared about their program of expanding access to theological education to everyone and what their current course offerings are.

Disseminated web information on other ways to gain learning

December 2025: no gathering

January 24, 2026: Monthly Gathering on Zoom

Received dates from MaryAnn Schwabe for the upcoming synod assemblies so that we can pray for each assembly; the churchwide transition to new leadership; and the plans for a Synod VP meeting in March 2027.

Learned from guest speakers about Lower Susquehanna Synod's "Small and Mighty Church" program to enhance rural ministry. Also discussed what other synods may be doing to raise up lay leaders.

February 28, 2026: Monthly Gathering on Zoom

Welcomed the ELCA Innovation Lab, sharing information on their programs to help raise up lay leaders and support synods and congregations to think outside the box.

March 9, 2026: Planning Team Meeting

Prepared plan for upcoming annual Association meeting in June
Developed process and timeline for preparation of a governing document for consideration.

Learned that the needed amendment to the churchwide continuing resolution regarding the terms of Association officers will occur at the spring churchwide council meeting

Planned topics for the March and April monthly gatherings

March 28, 2026: Monthly Gathering on Zoom

Open discussion on leadership transitions, specifically transitioning over to new Vice Presidents.

April 25, 2026: Monthly Gathering on Zoom

Mary Campbell from AMMPARO gave us the history and current work of AMMPARO.

May, 2026: No gathering

June 1, 2026: Planning Team Meeting

Finalized plans for the June 27 Association meeting

Did final review of the governing document draft

Made plans for the regular July monthly gathering

Decided to do orientation for new VPs in September and have a

“listening session” regarding churchwide strategic planning process

And in October the topic will be communication strategies

June 27, 2026: Annual meeting of the Assn of Synod VPs via Zoom

Elected Chair - Tracy Gayer and Vice-Chair – Don Heller; adopted governing documents

July 25, 2026: Monthly Gathering on Zoom

Rev. Tim Brown presented on Stewardship in our synods.

August 2026: no gathering