



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Rev. Dr. Donna J. Simon to be installed as bishop of the ELCA Central States Synod

Kansas City, MO (September 4, 2025) – The Rev. Dr. Donna Simon, Kansas City, MO, will be installed September 28, 2025, to serve a six-year term as bishop of the Central States Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. (ELCA). Simon will become the fifth bishop to hold the position. Simon was elected during the Synod's annual assembly, which took place June 5-7, 2025, at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Kansas City, Olathe, KS.

The installation will take place at 5:00 p.m. on September 28 at Atonement Lutheran Church in Overland Park, KS, with Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, conducting the installation.

As bishop, Simon will preside over 148 congregations spanning the states of Kansas and Missouri with active participation of nearly 24,000 people. Central States is one of 65 synods in the ELCA working with congregations on candidacy, transition, leadership development, stewardship, evangelism, congregational vitality, administration, and conflict resolution.

The bishop-elect has served as pastor of St. Mark Hope and Peace Lutheran Church in Kansas City, MO, since 2000 and as the Central States Synod's Director of Evangelical Mission since 2016.

Simon earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from San Francisco State University (CA) in 1991; a Master of Divinity from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS) in Berkeley, CA, in 1999; and a Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Mission and Leadership from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN, in 2016. PLTS and Luther are two of seven ELCA seminaries.

Simon is married to Colleen Simon; together, they have three sons, two of whom are adults, and their third is nearly nine.

Information about the Central States Synod is available at css-elca.org/.

About the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with nearly 3.5 million members in more than 9,100 worshipping communities across the 50 states and in the Caribbean region. Known as the church of "God's work. Our hands.," the ELCA emphasizes the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, unity among Christians, and service in the world. The ELCA's roots are in the writings of the German church reformer Martin Luther.

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