



Office of the Bishop
New Jersey Synod, ELCA
God's work. Our hands.

August 18, 2025

Dear Friends,

On Saturday, August 23, we will gather to celebrate the installation of Bishop-Elect Christa Compton as our synod bishop. It will be a day of celebration which will include making promises to care for, serve, love, and pray for each other as God's people of the NJ Synod. The last time we had such a celebration was 12 years ago when I was installed.

The promises we made to each other on that day in 2013 have stayed with me every day as I served in this role. Your prayers, care, admonition at times, and constant support have allowed me to experience this calling as one of joy. I trust you will share those same gifts with our next bishop.

As my term concludes at the end of the month, I need to say thank you one more time.

Thank you for inviting me into your congregations for worship, fellowship, learning, and service. My faith life is richer for having spent the last 12 years gathered with you around the word and sacraments, singing praises, and lifting our prayers to God. While no two congregations worship exactly the same way, we stand united under the cross of Christ.

Thank you for all the ways we have been church together for the sake of the world, especially for our small corner of the world. We proclaim the grace of Jesus in our words and deeds. We continue to love our neighbors, especially those most vulnerable, during a time of political divisiveness and despite hateful rhetoric. We stand up for just policies that protect and uplift others while standing against that which seeks to tear down and divide. We amplify mercy in a world seeking retribution.

Many of you were present on June 29 at our party to celebrate the ways we have served together. We danced and ate and laughed and prayed – a fitting way to end this season. Thank you for the cash gift you presented to me that night, one more tangible sign of your generosity, for which I am grateful.

I will continue to pray for you, dear friends in Christ, and ask you to do the same – pray for me and each other. I will take some time off these next few months to listen for the Spirit's calling as to what might be next and to enjoy more unscheduled time with Dan Whitener. I am blessed to leave this office with a full and thankful heart – soli Deo gloria.

Your sister in Christ,

Tracie