

Biographical Information Form

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:

NOMINEE FOR BISHOP OF THE ALLEGHENY SYNOD

1. Name: Rev. Scott E. Schul

2. Current Position: Senior Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, State College, PA (since 9/2018)

3. Congregation Membership: Grace Lutheran Church, State College, PA

4. Date and Year of Birth: February 27, 1966

5. Date and Year of Ordination: June 2, 2011

6. Previous Positions:

Pastor for Education and Outreach, Grace Lutheran Church, State College, PA (11/2013-8/2018)

Pastor, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Martinsburg, PA (6/2011-10/2013)

1991 - 2007 I practiced law (fed. and state taxation, exec. comp., and large commercial transactions). I spent 14 of those years in large-firm practice, and the final two years as the Director of the Tax Policy Div. of Maine Revenue Services.

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

Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, PA, Master of Divinity (2011)

Boston University School of Law, Boston, MA, LL.M. in Taxation (1997)

West Virginia University College of Law, Morgantown, WV, Doctor of Jurisprudence (1991)

Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, PA, Bachelor of Science in Economics (1988)

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

Current Steering Committee member of the Go Tell It IN the Mountains Preaching Initiative, funded by the Lilly Endowment to promote compelling preaching within the Allegheny, Northwest PA and Upper Susquehanna Synods of the ELCA

Current member of the Allegheny Synod Finance Committee

Past member of the Allegheny Synod Worship Committee

Past Chair of the Policy Council of Lutheran Advocacy Ministries of PA

Past Instructor of Church History in the Allegheny Synod DYD educational program

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

Current board member and part of the Executive Committee of the Seminary Ridge Historic Preservation Foundation in Gettysburg, PA

Current member of the Board of Associates, Thiel College, Greenville, PA

Current member of The United Lutheran Seminary Alumni Association

Participating member in multiple ecumenical ministeriums

Regular ongoing contributor of spirituality-related articles to the Centre Daily Times as part of an ecumenical clergy team

10. What gifts would you bring to the office of bishop of this synod? (1,000 characters maximum)

I've served a wide variety of fulfilling ministry contexts and have long resisted the call of Bishop. But the Spirit now compels me to be open. I believe I am ready for the challenge. My combined experience in ministry and law has prepared me with administrative skills and understanding of finance. I am organized, able to multitask, and an effective writer/communicator. I have a curious mind and read deeply and widely. I take my faith and prayer life seriously too and have had a spiritual director since seminary. I'm blessed with a supportive family and strong mental and physical health. Since 2022 I've closely studied European cathedral ministries and have discovered a "theology of beauty" that's enabling us to reach seekers and grow the Church. But what matters even more than these experiences and skills is that I love our people, our Synod, and our Lord. This is my home. I want our Synod to thrive, and with your help and support I will relentlessly do all I can to make that happen.

11. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (1,000 characters maximum)

I was raised in rural PA and have spent my entire ministry in this Synod. We all know the challenges our region has faced; they have fractured our unity and demoralized our spirits. But I believe in the strength and resilience of our people and the value of our Lutheran tradition. Our Synod has much to offer and I want to help rebuild it with a spirit of confidence and optimism. Jesus will provide all we need. One evidence is the "Go Tell" grant. It offers unprecedented opportunity. But money alone isn't enough. We need stability, unity, and mutual respect. Our turnaround starts with renewed commitment to prayer and worship. Only people transformed in Christ can transform the world. Society is giving the Church a fresh look, so let's meet people where they are, invite them into deeper discipleship, and grow together. Let's serve our communities. Let's be the Church in fullness. As your Bishop I want to shepherd you in grace and point you to Jesus because in Christ our future is bright!

12. Describe your leadership style. (1,000 characters maximum)

The demands of ministry are vast. Delegation is critical. Thus I endeavor to create a team where people can grow and develop. I do not micromanage; I surround myself with talented people, ensure they have the resources they need, and I give them space to grow and thrive. I am committed to building and maintaining trust through transparency. I strive to be a humble listener too. I don't have all the answers. I will need your help. So I encourage internal debate so that together we can discern the right approach and build consensus. But once a decision is made, I expect unity. We won't always get it right, but we must be willing to take chances and make mistakes. When mistakes occur, I own them and quickly learn and adapt. I am accountable and I expect others to be accountable too. I am not afraid of tackling a crisis or making a hard decision, and do so with a spirit of calm, balanced resolution. But I am only one person. We need each other to turn this around. We need Jesus even more.