



YEHIEL CURRY ELECTED PRESIDING BISHOP OF THE ELCA

CASTING A VISION FOR THE CHURCH

YEHIEL CURRY TO SERVE AS FIFTH PRESIDING BISHOP OF THE ELCA

By JOHN POTTER JULY 31, 2025 WRITING FOR LIVING LUTHERAN

When Yehiel Curry considers his vision for the future of the church, he sees an important distinction. “Part of the work is naming it,” he said, “but that next phase is embodying it.



“When we’re talking about casting a vision, I think people want to be part of a vision because they want to share in the process. But they typically will also share in the burdens as well. So part of my vision is [about] those things we’ve lifted up as a church that we said we need to do, we’re going to do, and find a way to bring more people to the table so that we might embody that work instead of it just being a written document.”

Curry, who was elected July 30 to serve a six-year term as ELCA presiding bishop, knows something about embodying a vision and discerning a call.

Before he became a pastor, then a bishop, then the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and now presiding bishop-elect, he was a social worker, then a teacher, then in sales. “I went from being a social worker to a teacher in the same community where I was helping those families, and in both cases, what I learned is passion is very important. And if you can align a person’s passion with a need, then it doesn’t feel like work sometimes.

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“IT WASN’T UNTIL I WAS IN THE CHURCH THAT I SAID, ‘I COULD DO THIS FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.’”

Curry wrestled with the passion he feels for his current ministry as he discerned his new call in the days leading up to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. “I take my role [as bishop of] the Metropolitan Chicago Synod very seriously,” he said. “And I started the process of thinking about what the next six months would look like, even the next year. And some people discern differently. I didn’t have some voice saying to me, ‘Here’s what you ought to do.’ But last Friday, what started to happen was the calls of family, friends and mentors—the nudging, the text messages, the emails—served as a form of discernment for me.”

“I only arrived at this place Friday or Saturday where I felt like maybe this is something I should do,” he said of being considered for presiding bishop.

Now that Curry has been elected the fifth presiding bishop of the ELCA—and the first of African descent—how does he feel? “That reality hasn’t really set in,” he said. “Even at this moment, I’m feeling a certain kind of way in understanding the weight and the impact.

“I’m hopeful that, if presence matters, me being here does something for allowing others to consider, ‘Someone who looks like me, or is from my community, or speaks with an accent, or their mother tongue isn’t English [could take on a similar role].’ Hopefully that’s what that means.”

A RETURN ON INVESTMENT....

An immediate answer comes to mind for Curry when asked about what he believes should be among the ELCA’s top priorities. “I think there’s this unique opportunity around lay equipping and lay education,” he said. “The ethos and the structures of many of our congregations are changing. In some cases, they’ve gone from full-time pastors to part-time pastors; we have leaders who are serving two- and three-point congregations.

“Our lay leaders are being asked to do more. And in many cases, they’re saying, ‘Yes, I want the education—as long as you’re not trying to steer me and tell me I need to be a pastor or a deacon. Tell me how to be a better leader in my community, in my context.’”

Curry’s passion for, and awareness of, equipping lay leaders stems from his own ministry beginnings.

He was a Chicago Public Schools teacher when he first visited Shekinah Chapel, then a synod-authorized worshipping community. “I didn’t even realize it was Lutheran,” he said. “I was invited by a friend.” What drew him to Shekinah was Safe in My Brother’s Arms (SIMBA), a mentoring program there sponsored by the ELCA. “I had these unique students,” he said. “And I was interested in services for them. ... There was a worship service I stayed for. And I loved it.”

Curry went home and told his wife, LaShonda, about the great experience he had had there, and they returned together the following weekend. “We came back and joined,” he said. “And we didn’t understand the organizations of the Lutheran church. We just saw a home, we saw a community.”

Eventually, the community, and the synod staff, asked Curry to consider being a lay mission developer. He was unsure. “I knew I had this thing in my heart, but I didn’t have the right vocabulary for it,” he said. “I didn’t know that I was actively discerning and that I was being called into this ministry.”

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After becoming mission developer, Curry enrolled in the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries program at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and received his ordination certification in 2009. In 2012, when Shekinah became an official ELCA congregation, it called Curry to be its pastor. He served in that role until he was elected bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod in 2019.

"This was a process I was honored to be involved in, because I didn't think many people knew who I was," he said. "I was working in poverty ministry in the outskirts of Chicago. So it was an honor to have my name lifted up and to ultimately be elected bishop." In 2024, he was elected chair of the ELCA Conference of Bishops.

Curry recalled his ministry trajectory, and the initial hesitation he felt in accepting that first role, when he addressed the 2025 Churchwide Assembly following his election.

"I'm what a return on your investment looks like," he told the assembly. "Perhaps I'm out there in one of you. I never saw myself as good enough, so for two years, I said no. I finally said yes. When I said yes, your support, this church's support, of that ministry meant everything. So if you want to know what your benevolence dollars look like, it looks like me. And I want to say thank you. Thank you for your investment."

Curry will be installed Oct. 4 at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

Living
Lutheran



TELLING YOUR STORIES OF TRINITY

Thank you to those who have shared your stories of your experiences at Trinity.

These are stories to celebrate where God has used this assembly to cultivate faith, build relationships, care for others and continue a story of Grace, epitomized on the cross and in Jesus' resurrection.

If you have yet to tell your story, we look forward to your sharing where God has done incredible things among the people of this congregation.

Let me encourage us to continue the work of making stories and telling stories.

There is a play on words where it is said "His" story, influences my story to make an impact on "Our" story.

EVERY THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH

10:00AM
to
2:00 PM

Trinity Lutheran Church,
3201 Meadows Drive,
Rolling Meadows, 60008

Come join us, take a
look around. There will
be vendors, crafters
artisans showing off
their wonderful items

July 19

August 16

September 20

October 18

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
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T.L.C. CRAFT FAIR

SUMMER BLT Dip

- 1 POUND BACON
- 1 CUP MAYONNAISE
- 1 CUP SOUR CREAM
- 1-2 TOMATOES, SEEDED AND DICED

COOK BACON AND DRAIN THE GREASE ON PAPER TOWELS.

COMBINE THE MAYONNAISE AND SOUR CREAM IN A BOWL.

CRUMBLE BACON INTO THE MAYONNAISE MIXTURE; MIX UNTIL COMBINED. STIR IN TOMATOES RIGHT BEFORE SERVING.

SERVE CHILLED WITH TOAST CORNERS, PITA BREAD, CRACKERS, OR CHIPS.

(SUBMITTED BY PRINCESS KATHY JOHNSON—WHO'S BEEN FATTENING UP RICK SINCE 1985)

TLC Ladies Group

Come Join us for lunch time together and activities. We will meet on August 12 and start at 12 noon. We will share trivia.

PLEASE COME AND BRING A FRIEND!

Financial Update: General Fund 2025

	INCOME	EXPENSES	NET SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT)	SUNDAY AVERAGE ATTENDANCE
Jan	\$ 11,098.30	\$ 15,093.68	\$ (3,995.38)	25
Feb	\$ 10,149.70	\$ 13,588.82	\$ (3,439.12)	25
Mar	\$ 10,686.45	\$ 13,395.28	\$ (2,708.83)	25
Apr	\$ 12,618.41	\$ 12,723.28	\$ (104.87)	31
May	\$ 10,455.19	\$ 11,973.61	\$ (1,518.42)	24
Jun	\$ 11,554.78	\$ 13,140.38	\$ (1,585.60)	25
	\$ 66,562.83	\$ 79,915.05	\$ (13,352.22)	26

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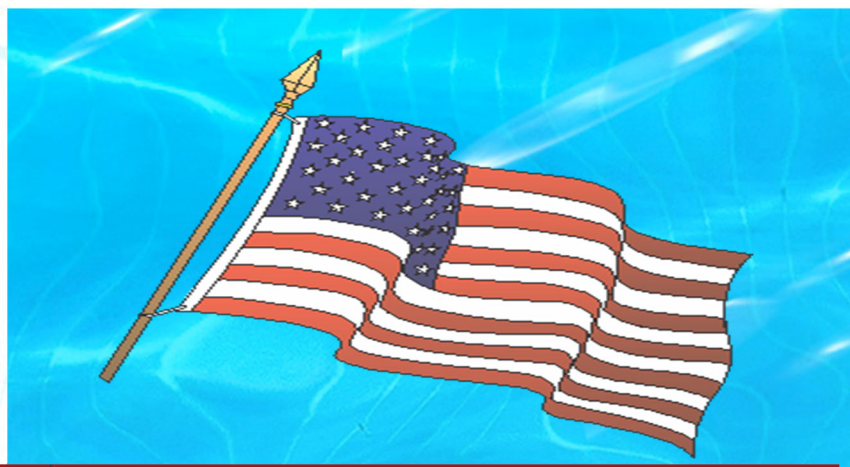
Thank you for your continued support!

Don't Forget....

August 10th Is Our Second Sunday Cereal Collection For Food Pantry.



TRINITY MARCHES IN THE ROLLING MEADOWS JULY 4TH PARADE! THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED!



Suggested Scripture Readings for August

Sundays and Principal Festivals	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
3rd: Eighth Sunday After Pentecost	Eccles 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23	Ps 49:1-12	Col 3:1-11	Luke 12:13-21
10th: Ninth Sunday After Pentecost	Gen 15:1-6	Ps 33:12-22	Heb 11:1-3, 8-16	Luke 12:32-40
17th: Tenth Sunday After Pentecost	Jer 23:23-29	Ps 82	Heb 11:29--12:2	Luke 12:49-56
24th: Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost	Isa 58:9b-14	Ps 103:1-8	Heb 12:18-29	Luke 13:10-17
31st: Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost	Prov 25:6-7	Ps 112	Heb 13:1-8, 15-16	Luke 14:1, 7-14

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 9:30am Trinity Worship Service - Worshipping At Church AND via ZOOM 10:30am Book Study With Pastor Hildner 11:00am Peaceful Baptist Church Worship 2:30pm Masihi Church of God Worship	28	29  10:00am "Come And See" Bible Study	30	31	1	2 10:30am Tu Familia SDA Worship
<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px;"> <p>Belated July Birthdays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeremy Cohn 01 Sandy Hedke 03 Jan Cosman 05 Dave Patterson 08 Renee Chizek 19 Tim Holt 24 </div>						
<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px;"> <p>August Birthdays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lynn Griesmeyer 01 Dottie Jachim 10 Dan Phillips 12 Kathie Godfrey 14 Scarlett Minz 14 Morgan McIntosh 18 Logan Dillon 19 Dick Elkins 19 Marc Vigna 20 Shirley Walter 23 </div>						
3 9:30am Trinity Worship Service - Worshipping At Church AND via ZOOM 10:30am Book Study With Pastor Hildner 11:00am Peaceful Baptist Church Worship 2:30pm Masihi Church of God Worship	4	5  10:00am "Come And See" Bible Study  7:00pm Fellowship Ministry	6			9 10:30am Tu Familia SDA Worship
10  TLC Second Sunday Cereal Food Drive 9:30am Trinity Worship Service - Worshipping At Church AND via ZOOM 10:30am Book Study With Pastor Hildner 11:00am Peaceful Baptist Church Worship 2:30pm Masihi Church of God Worship	11	12  10:00am "Come And See" Bible Study  12:00pm Talk, Lunch, Crafts - TLC Ladies Club	13			16  10:00am TLC Craft Fair 10:30am Tu Familia SDA Worship
17 9:30am Trinity Worship Service - Worshipping At Church AND via ZOOM 10:30am Book Study With Pastor Hildner 11:00am Peaceful Baptist Church Worship 2:30pm Masihi Church of God Worship	18	19  10:00am "Come And See" Bible Study	20	21  7:00pm TLC Council Meeting	22	23 10:30am Tu Familia SDA Worship
24 9:30am Trinity Worship Service - Worshipping At Church AND via ZOOM 10:30am Book Study With Pastor Hildner 11:00am Peaceful Baptist Church Worship 2:30pm Masihi Church of God Worship	25	26  10:00am "Come And See" Bible Study	27	28	29	30 10:30am Tu Familia SDA Worship
31 9:30am Trinity Worship Service - Worshipping At Church AND via ZOOM 10:30am Book Study With Pastor Hildner 11:00am Peaceful Baptist Church Worship 2:30pm Masihi Church of God Worship	1 Labor Day	2  10:00am "Come And See" Bible Study  7:00pm Fellowship Ministry	3	4	5	6 10:30am Tu Familia SDA Worship
<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Trinity Lutheran Church</p> <p>3201 Meadow Drive Rolling Meadows, IL 60008 847-398-7122 www.tlcrm.com</p> </div>						