

**From:** Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod [synod@gulfcoastsynod.org](mailto:synod@gulfcoastsynod.org)  
**Subject:** News from Around the Synod for the week of April 6, 2026  
**Date:** April 7, 2026 at 11:30 AM  
**To:** Warren and Penny [theschicks839@gmail.com](mailto:theschicks839@gmail.com)



Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*A Network of Christ-Centered, Outwardly-Focused, Faith-Growing  
Communities for the Sake of the World*

# Weekly News & Announcements

April 6, 2026

 **Faithful Preaching**  
PROJECT

  
[LEARN MORE](#)

# CLERGY COHORT APPLICATIONS OPEN

DUE MAY 15 • ANNOUNCEMENTS JUNE 1

# Opportunity for Clergy through Austin Seminary

The Faithful Preaching Project (FPP) at Austin Seminary has just opened applications for a clergy learning opportunity. FPP is seeking clergy members at small mainline Christian churches in TX, LA, OK, NM, and AR to join a two-year cohort of 15-20 peers. The two years together feature preaching coaching, peer support, and four cohort retreats — all with the goal of cultivating more faith-full preaching. The online meetings are slated for twice a month on Tuesday afternoons, with the exact schedule released after the cohort is announced. There is no cost.

[Learn More](#)



**ELCA's World Mission Support Moves East**

## **ELCA'S March Mission Support Memo: Post-its Create Shared Encounters**

Our [March 2026 Mission Support memo](#) takes us into a two-day training on *Facilitation Fundamentals* by our ELCA innovation team. It's a room full of ELCA staff from across the country, across churchwide units, in all levels of positions. A few people know each other, but everyone will leave knowing each other. They wonder what the pile of Post-it notes is all about but quickly realize it's to collect each person's imaginings and ideas that then help the group surface insights quickly, ensure everyone is heard, and allow people across roles and hierarchy to contribute equally. Read to hear how valuable folks are finding this approach. Also a tool for our synods is included in the memo, the *Thank You Certificate*, to celebrate our congregations generosity.

[Read the Memo](#)

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# PORTICO<sup>®</sup>

Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA

## **April 2026 Portico Updates**

### **2025 FSA Claims Submission Reminder**

Tying up receipts and loose ends? ELCA Health Plan members have until April 30 to submit 2025 claims for reimbursement from your health and/or dependent care flexible spending accounts (FSA). Submit 2025 claims to [Further](#) (and 2026 claims to HealthEquity). Not sure what qualifies as an eligible health care expense? [This guide can help.](#)

### **Quantum Health – Better Search. Better Care.**

Starting April 1, ELCA Health Plan members may notice a refreshed experience on the Quantum Health Care Coordinators website and app — including an [enhanced provider search](#) designed to make finding high-quality care easier. Contact a Care Coordinator for help navigating care, resolving claims and billing issues, and confirming your provider or clinic are in-network.

### **I Spy Something Blooming ...**

Spring is a great time to get active, try something new, and build habits that support your well-being. Breathing fresh air, looking for signs of growth, and praying for our planet is a great way to give thanks for creation. Want to go the extra mile? ELCA-Primary health benefit members can explore Burnalong classes designed to help your wellness goals bloom. Check out the [April calendar](#).

## Clergy Spirituality Survey

All Gulf Coast pastors, deacons, seminarians, and full-time lay ministry leaders are invited to fill out a survey on clergy spirituality. Questions can be directed to Pastor Mindy Roll at [pastor@zionhouston.org](mailto:pastor@zionhouston.org). Please submit responses by **April 15**. Thank you to all who have already filled it out, and thank you in advance to those who might! Names are optional.

Take Survey

JOIN US FOR

# Worship

AND THE INSTALLATION OF  
DEACON MICHELLE MOTE  
TO THE MINISTRY OF WORD  
AND SERVICE  
AT ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

**SUNDAY, APRIL 19**

11:00 AM WORSHIP  
3606 BEAUCHAMP



CLERGY ARE INVITED TO  
VEST AND PROCESS.  
THE COLOR  
OF THE DAY IS **WHITE**.  
POTLUCK LUNCH  
CELEBRATION TO  
FOLLOW!



## Installation of Deacon Michelle Mote

You are invited to worship and celebrate with Zion Lutheran Church as

**Deacon Michelle Mote**

is installed to the Ministry of Word and Service

**Sunday, April 19, 2026**

at 11:00 a.m.

3606 Beauchamp

Houston, TX 77009

Deacon Aimee Elles, preaching  
The Rev. Cassandra Nagle, presiding

*A potluck celebration will follow.*

Clergy are invited to vest and process. The liturgical color of the day is white.

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**The  
CaSTLE  
Project**

The Gulf Coast Synod received a CaSTLE grant to support lay formation in our synod. We are currently excited about work we will be sharing at synod assembly. Would you please take a minute to take this quick survey? We will have the link open until **April 10**. Thanks for taking time to help us assess this project!

[Take the Survey](#)



# Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



[Registration](#) for Synod Assembly 2026 is open! Join us on **May 15-16, 2026** at St. Martin's Lutheran Church, 1123 Burney Rd, Sugar Land, TX 77498.

Register for a room at Hilton Garden Inn Houston/Sugar Land [online](#) or call the hotel for reservations at 281-491-7777 or 1-866-577-1278 and mention the group name or group code TXLA26.

*All reservations must be completed by May 01, 2026.*



[Register](#)

[Book a Room](#)

## Upcoming Events

**April 9**

[Youth Ministry Network Meeting](#)

**April 25**

[St. James Houston Silent Auction](#)

**April 17-19**  
[Spring Family Retreat at Lutherhill](#)

**April 18**  
[Ordination of Linda Davies](#)

**April 18-19**  
[Christ Lutheran Church 75th Anniversary](#)

**April 19**  
[Installation of Deacon Michelle Mote](#)

**May 1-3**  
[Explore Retreat at Lutherhill](#)

**May 7**  
[Youth Ministry Network Meeting](#)

**May 15-16**  
[Synod Assembly](#)

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## Synod Partners

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LEAD: Living Every Day As Disciples  
[LEAD](#) is a Christian leadership development organization that is nurtured by this synod to be a gift to the whole church.



Lutheran Men In Mission Opportunities  
For more information on [LMM](#), contact [Randy Bratsven](#),  
[Ambassador-Grams](#) (right side)



Lutherans Restoring Creation  
For more information on [LRC](#), contact the [Lisa Brenskelle](#). The team is seeking additional members



Creation Care  
For more information on [Creation Care](#), contact [Lisa Brenskelle](#).

MEMBERS.



Lutherhill Ministries  
Lutherhill Ministries is a Summer  
Camp and year-round Retreat  
Center at two locations – [Lutherhill  
in La Grange, TX](#) and [Lutherhill in  
Galveston, TX](#).



Live On  
[Live On](#) is the endowment fund of  
the Gulf Coast Synod. Together with  
the synod, we are developing  
Lutheran leadership through a  
culture of generosity.

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## ELCA

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News

Resources

Our Work

Job Openings

Monthly Mission Support Memo

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