

Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod Bishop Nominee Biographical Information



Name: Paul Palumbo

Current Position: Pastor

Congregation Membership: Lake Chelan Lutheran Church, Chelan, WA

Date of Ordination: January 1, 1989

List up to five (5) community, synodical, or Churchwide activities that would shape your call as bishop of this synod.

Pulpit exchange with rural and small congregations: This is a powerful exchange and one that would deeply inform my work should I become bishop.

Catechumenate Training: The desire for faith formation is a core commitment that will continue to shape my ministry.

Visitation with the dying: Our presence with the dying embodies the promise of God that we are not abandoned, even in death. Living in and acting upon that promise is central to my life and ministry.

Vigil for Peace: Every Friday since September 11, 2001, we have held a prayer vigil for peace in front of the post office. This enduring witness for peace has provided me with an image of the church as an anchor in a stormy sea. I hold fast to this witness and to this image of the church.

Supervising interns: For the past seven years our congregation has been an intern site for seminary students. My most important role is to proclaim in word and deed to these interns the liberating gospel they are hoping one day to proclaim. This proclamation will continue to be my life's work.

What is the essence of the promises you made at the time of your ordination, and how would you seek to fulfill those promises in your ministry if elected Bishop? (150 words max)

Essentially, my promise is to be a 'steward of the mysteries of God', (1 Corinthians 4). A pastor is to tend to the mysteries, not to solve them but to enter into relationship with their source, to be shaped by them and to offer them to the world. We are to pore over the scriptures and proclaim the mystery of the 'word made flesh', to celebrate the sacraments so as to invite people into the mystery of 'God with us', to embody the liturgy that carries the church to heaven and then sends it out in service to the world. To tend to the mystery of the cross is to see Christ present in the suffering of our brothers and sisters. These are mysteries that surround us like the cloud of transfiguration and bring us life. We are servants of Christ precisely by being stewards of the mysteries of God.

Describe your spiritual life and the way you prepare for ministry each day. How do you maintain spiritual focus and integrity? (150 words max).

My daily prayer life is framed by the liturgy of the hours from *Christian Prayer*, focusing on the psalms. I incorporate Lectio Divina into my morning prayer. I also lead public Morning Prayer from the ELW Tuesday-Friday at our church. Evening prayer from the LBW is inscribed on my heart. Beyond that I practice attentiveness to the Spirit during the day, listening for the voice of Jesus. I practice the Jesus Prayer as a way to practice unceasing prayer, and I am currently using the Divine Mercy Chaplet of Blessed Faustina, the heart of which is "Have mercy on us and on the whole world", a prayer for our times. I daily place the cares of the day at the foot of the cross, literally under the beautiful stain glass cross in our sanctuary. I have a spiritual director with whom I speak once a month.

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What, in your opinion, is the measure of great leadership, and in what ways do you either achieve or aspire to achieve this standard? (150 words max).

The measure of great leadership in the Church is whether or not the people under one's leadership know, deep in their bones, that they are beloved children of God. In a world where voices continually accuse, blame and shame us, great leadership preaches, teaches, exhorts and demonstrates that our identity is declared and given in our baptism. What we do or do not do is not the measure of our worth. Such leadership inspires fidelity, mutual love and good courage to risk loving the stranger. I aspire to embody this truth in all the ways that my calling gives me opportunity.

What is your leadership style? (150 words max).

I lead by prayerful and public witness to God's grace and love. My style is invitational and ecclesial. I believe that we are better as a body than as individuals and I am committed to inviting the church to worship, work and walk together. My leadership style is greatly influenced by being a spiritual director. Leadership and creativity come from being deeply attentive to the promptings of the Spirit and to the person or people I am with. I recognize the Spirit of Jesus when I hear it. I invite the congregation and individuals to discern and to courageously pursue that Spirit in their lives and vocations. That said, I am generally disorganized, technologically challenged, (I do not own a cell phone), and I have never been prompted to worry about church finances. I do, however, trust and support people who have gifts in these areas.