



Southwestern Texas Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

The Rev. Susan J. Briner of New Braunfels was elected May 6 to serve a six-year term as bishop of the Southwestern Texas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). She is the first woman to serve as bishop in the history of the three ELCA synods in Texas.



The election was held during the Synod Assembly May 4-6 at the Embassy Suites Conference Center in San Marcos.

Briner was elected on the fifth ballot with 175 votes to 157 votes for the Rev. Paul R. Ziese of MacArthur Park Lutheran Church, San Antonio.

Her term as bishop will begin Sept. 1.

"I am both humbled and excited to accept this new leadership position," Briner said. "We have an incredibly diverse territory with great potential for mission. I look forward to engaging with community and church leaders for the betterment of lives and spreading the gospel far and wide."

Briner was ordained in 2003 and called as associate pastor of St. Luke Lutheran Church, Summerville, S.C. She became St. Luke's senior pastor in 2007. She joined the Southwestern Texas Synod staff in 2012 as the bishop's associate.

Prior to serving as a pastor, she worked in the telecommunications industry for 15 years. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science from Duke University and a Master of Divinity Degree from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, S.C.

Briner is a member of Peace Lutheran Church in New Braunfels and serves on the board of LEAD: Living Every Day as Disciples, Houston and Cross Trails Ministry, Kerrville.

The Rev. Dr. Ray Tiemann, current bishop of the Southwestern Texas Synod, has served as bishop since 2000 and will retire Aug. 31.

A service of installation for the bishop-elect will be held on Saturday, September 1 at 2:00 p.m. at University United Methodist Church in San Antonio.



God's grace transforms and connects us

to learn, to love, to lead.