



**HOLY CROSS  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

# THE QUEST

*Transforming the world & ourselves,  
together in community,  
fellowship and faith.*



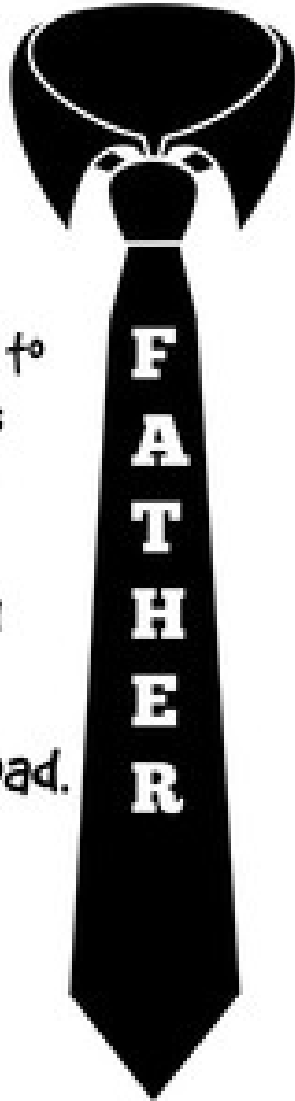
*Father's Day*  
*June 20<sup>th</sup>*

# June 2021



## Happy Father's Day!

A sturdy, steady hand to hold to  
In times of strife and stress  
A true friend we can turn to  
When times are good or bad  
one of our greatest gifts and  
blessings,  
The man that we call Dad.



Author Unknown

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# JUST A LITTLE *Reminder*

The deadline for inclusion in the July 2021 edition of the Holy Cross newsletter, *Quest*, is Monday, June 14.

Articles can be emailed to the Church Administrator at:  
[admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net](mailto:admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net).

The **deadline** for inclusion in the **Weekly Update** is noon on Tuesday.

Thank you,  
Teresa Easterly  
Church Administrator

Holy Cross Lutheran Church  
1090 Sterling Road  
Herndon, VA 20170  
703-437-1883

Find us online!

[www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net](http://www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net)



[www.facebook.com/HCLCHerndon](https://www.facebook.com/HCLCHerndon)



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Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Herndon VA

## STAFF NEWS

# THE PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends in Jesus,

In the calendar of the church, we are transitioning from the season of Easter into the season after Pentecost (sometimes called, “Ordinary Time”). As we begin the journey into this long, green season of the church year, a couple of topics will be before us soon and both center around the idea of hospitality.

First, as I am writing, the Council has just come to a decision to have us return to in-person worship in the Sanctuary beginning on Sunday, May 30<sup>th</sup>. For the summer, we will stay with one service at 10 am, and return to two services on Rally Day, September 12<sup>th</sup>. We will also have everyone wear masks, at least at first. This is a big step, but we believe that this is a safe and prudent direction to take. We also completely understand if some people still feel comfortable returning to indoor worship, so we will continue to live stream. Drive-through Communion will continue on the first and third Sundays.

This has been an intentional and careful process. We asked the help of some of our members with medical expertise. I want to thank Jo Roe, Carol Shaffer, and Lori and Wayne Newcomb for the help in preparing their report to the Council presenting some of the scientific and medical considerations. Thank you all for your prayers and patience as we move forward.

A second topic on which I would like us to begin discussion is that of becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation. A Reconciling in Christ congregation is one that is committed to full hospitality: welcoming all people regardless of race, gender, marriage status, sexual orientation, or gender expression. It is a congregation that believes all people are God's children, and all God's children are welcome in God's house. To become an RIC, a congregation adopts a welcome statement that explicitly welcomes all people and is willing to learn about and advocate for siblings that are in groups or identities that the society at large often ostracizes.

Why become a RIC congregation? For many people in the groups I have described, church has not been a pleasant experience. Some experienced verbal abuse or condemnation from the pulpit. Some were even physically assaulted to "make them right." Still others have been kicked out and excommunicated from the churches in which they grew up. Becoming a RIC congregation is an indicator that we are truly a safe place, a sanctuary from the hate. All churches say that they are welcoming, but to a person that has suffered abuse from a church that may not be enough to trust. A RIC designation says, we've had the talks and done the work – you are safe among us.

I included the draft of a welcome statement that was adopted by the Council in May as a proposal for adoption by the congregation. When I return in July, I would like to begin a process of conversations around this welcome statement. Until

then, let us prayerfully consider together the words and the import of this statement.

Pastor Martin

## **A Statement of Welcome**

Holy Cross Lutheran Church joyfully affirms and celebrates that every person is a beloved child of God. We welcome all who are seeking God's boundless love and sustaining grace into full community with us at Holy Cross. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down barriers and systems that divide God's children and to building a community where all are recognized as part of Christ's new creation. In that light:

We welcome you, and you are safe with us...

Whatever your race, ethnicity, or heritage.

Whatever your relationship status.

We welcome you, and you are safe with us...

Whatever your sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or gender expression.

Whatever your socio-economic status.

We welcome you, and you are safe with us...

Whatever your age and life circumstance.

Whatever your physical and mental ability.

You are a beloved child of God, you are valued, and you are welcome here.



# A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND LITURGY



## **Favorite Hymn Requests**

This summer, I'd like to restart the "Favorite Hymn Requests" program. Each Sunday I'd like to include a favorite hymn from members of HCLC. We had many requests last summer and people enjoyed learning about each other's favorite hymns.

It would be great if you could write a few sentences about why it is your favorite hymn. Maybe your mother always sang it to you as a child. Maybe it was sung at your parent's funeral and it still brings you comfort. Maybe the text resonates with your life right now. Maybe the tune is just fun to sing, and it makes you happy!

We will use a requested hymn each week and print the explanation in the margin of the bulletin. Please send your request to Jeremy Shoop, [MusicDir@holycrosslutheranchurch.net](mailto:MusicDir@holycrosslutheranchurch.net). Feel free to submit a few if you just can't pick one!

Soli Deo Gloria,  
Jeremy Shoop, Director of Music and Liturgy

## COUNCIL

### *A Message from the* **PRESIDENT**

Holy Cross Family –

As I write this in mid-May, we've received uplifting news on multiple fronts. Perhaps the best news came from the CDC, and several members with backgrounds in healthcare are digesting the announcements and synthesizing information from all appropriate sources in time for the May Council Meeting; we should have a plan to responsibly re-open very soon (probably before you receive this issue of the Quest). The special appeal for the Steeple Bell was a success with all required funds raised, and the order to affect the repairs was sent in along with the required initial payment. Giving has remained strong, and pledges towards the Building on the Best Capital Campaign continue to be on track. Along with its financial contributions, Holy Cross continues to demonstrate that it is a caring community of faith with its ongoing outpouring of food and clothing donations. Thank you for your generosity in so many areas!

In his sermon on May 16, Pastor Martin discussed some issues about nostalgia. It got me to thinking about my own past experiences. I can remember seeing "sunset" billboards on trips to see my grandparents and drinking fountains at local stores which were labelled "white" and "colored." Raised a Baptist, I can remember asking my mother why our church was part of the Southern Baptist Convention and not the

American and being told that the American Baptists “allowed colored people” as members. I can remember learning racist “jokes” in church and the whispers using derogatory terms about the sexual orientation of a classmate who, for some strange reason, had stopped coming to church youth group. I can remember being told that a gay friend of my future wife would turn her “that way” if they shared an apartment. I could go on and on, but I think you get the picture and probably have many similar experiences you could share. Pastor Martin reminded us that the “good old days” weren’t that good for many of our siblings in Christ!

I was heartened with the news this week of the ELCA electing its first transgender bishop (*full story on page 26*). It brought back the memory of an excellent student in one of our Coast Guard Boating Safety classes when I served as Flotilla Commander. After completing the prerequisite courses, she expressed interest in joining the Auxiliary. Like any volunteer organization, we were always on the lookout for new members, but some members voiced misgivings about having her since she was transgender. We informed those members that we would not discriminate and welcomed our new member; we’re so glad we did, as she became a very active member, a true friend, and served with distinction in increasing positions of responsibility. What if we had not “let her in?” Pastor Martin asked in his sermon, “Who gets to be in?” If we follow Jesus, we know the answer is that we should welcome, include all in all aspects of our fellowship, and celebrate the unique contributions to our church family.

During the services when we “pass the Peace” I, like many of you, embrace my wife as part of the process. While we like to think that we are a welcoming congregation, would that “welcome” be limited if a gay couple similarly embraced? How about a mixed-race couple? Are we ready to move beyond “welcoming” to true inclusion and celebration? At Holy Cross,

we are truly fortunate to have some visible members of the LGBTQIA+ community who are active in our congregation, but there are others who keep their status to themselves. I pray that we will capitalize on the opportunity the announcement of the election of Bishop Megan Rohrer which might spur discussion as well as possibly attract unanticipated visitors to show the welcoming and inclusive message of the Christ we follow.

May the Holy Spirit continue to use and guide us to become more like Jesus.

- Sam Carter



Looking for a rewarding opportunity to volunteer your time and talents? We will have several vacancies this fall for Council positions. Please prayerfully consider whether you can give of yourself for this important work.

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC



Pastor Martin will be on vacation from May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 23<sup>rd</sup> visiting Shelly. Since this is Shelly's last summer in Alaska (she expects to be moving here full-time next spring), Pastor and Shelly want to visit some friends and family, as well as some locations in the state that they have not seen.

Pastor Paul Opsahl, who is no stranger to Holy Cross will preach and preside on June 6<sup>th</sup> and June 20<sup>th</sup>. Our seminarian, Katy Moran is scheduled to preach on June 13<sup>th</sup> (providing her summer chaplaincy program schedule allows). Pastor Martin and Shelly will return to Virginia on Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>. In case of pastoral emergency, please contact Sam Carter ([President@holycrosslutheranchurch.net](mailto:President@holycrosslutheranchurch.net)), Teresa Easterly ([Admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net](mailto:Admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net)), or Jeremy Shoop ([MusicDir@holycrosslutheranchurch.net](mailto:MusicDir@holycrosslutheranchurch.net)). They have the list of local pastors that have agreed to help when needed.

## OUTREACH

Now that the Pandemic restrictions are easing, volunteering becomes something we can consider again. Here is some information about groups that Holy Cross has a long history of supporting and that always need help. The information is captured from their websites.



**LINK Against  
Hunger  
What Can You  
Do?**

LINK is run entirely by volunteers. Please contact us if you are interested in helping! Typical volunteer needs include food sorting, packing, food delivery, screening food applicants, and coordination of these activities. There are spots for occasional or routine volunteers, individual or groups. LINK uses electronic volunteer calendars for many positions to make it easy for you to pick times that are convenient for you.

For more detailed information, visit their website, <https://www.linkagainsthunger.org/volunteer/how-can-you-help>.

If anyone is interested in serving on the LINK Board, or partnering with someone else to represent Holy Cross, please contact Suzanne Flegal, [suzflegal@verizon.net](mailto:suzflegal@verizon.net).



**The Closet of  
The Greater  
Herndon Area  
Incorporated** is  
a nonprofit  
thrift shop in  
the heart of

historic downtown Herndon, Virginia.

The Closet was founded in 1974 by a handful of churches to assist low-income families by selling used clothing at nominal prices. Over the years, our mission has expanded, and we have become a significant resource for the greater Herndon area.

We continue to be a source of low-cost clothing and household necessities for families and individuals on a tight budget. The Closet sells a wide variety of donated items, including men's, women's, and children's clothes and shoes; housewares such as dishes, kitchen ware and linens; electronics; sporting goods; books, videos, CDs, and record albums; artwork and frames; toys; and knickknacks.

We also give away clothing at no cost to truly needy individuals, and we use our profits to support worthwhile community programs.

Rachel Williams represents Holy Cross on the Closet's Executive Committee.

To learn more about volunteering, visit their website, <http://theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/volunteer>.

## English Language Learners (ELL) Classes



We completed our 19<sup>th</sup> year teaching English to our immigrant community here at Holy Cross. We teach three classes, beginners, basic and intermediate English online via Zoom. We started our fall semester September 16, 2020 through Christmas, and our winter semester was from January 11 to May 5, 2021.

Teaching online was a milestone for the teachers! None of us had virtual teaching experience. We learned or relearned PowerPoint and used YouTube and other platforms to present a virtual and interesting learning experience for our students. We were also blessed with a donation of 24 computers for our students.

Hear what our teachers have to say.

### **Beginner English Teacher - Dayna Sowd:**

This spring, our beginner English class covered a variety of topics - from talking about occupations to transportation and giving directions to how we feel. They are enthusiastic and work very hard. Even if they can't join for the full class, our students will sign on after work, mid-class to make sure they get some time to practice their English. The biggest barrier for attendance has been reliable internet access, but we make it



work! By the end of this semester, I could see my students' confidence grow as they learn a little more each week.

### **Basic English Teacher - Chip Edwards:**

The one thing I want to say about my students is how much I admire them. I know that they have struggled over the past year through job loss, illness, and other hardships, but they always come to class in a cheerful mood that makes my day. One of my students arrived in class a little early recently and when I asked how she was doing she said “triste – a little sad”. When I asked why, she said that she was still out of work and was having a tough time finding a job. Our classes have allowed my students to socialize with each other and they have clearly enjoyed the interaction. Some of my students have been attending class with each other for years and some have become very close. I just hope that my teaching quality is up to the level that they deserve.

### **Intermediate Teacher - Suzanne Baggett:**

Simultaneously teaching English Language Learners on two continents was an extraordinary and gratifying experience for HCLC's ELL teachers. Beginning last September with some uncertainties for teachers and students alike, by the end of May it seemed everyone was confident “to mute or not to mute” to show themselves or to multitask while still hearing the lesson. Planned interactions like tongue twisters and other language games were challenging and soon discarded for this medium, but neutral topic conversations were WONDERFUL! A topic would be provided ahead of time and the students were always ready. Once some had talked, the conversation flowed, especially exciting when our students were from such diverse countries as Eritrea, Togo, Venezuela, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Bolivia, Japan, and El Salvador. Though we worked also on reading, comprehensions and pronunciation, conversations exalted the learning experience for all of us.

**Intermediate Teacher - Jeanne Maysonett:**

Our English class has made substantial improvement in reading, pronunciation, and comprehension. A wide range of topics were covered. We found that current events were well received, and students participated and asked questions. Students who were still more advanced and knew English grammar needed help with pronunciation. The students helped each other and were respectful to the teachers and other students. We have enjoyed working with the group so much that we will continue in summer school.

I'm very proud of our teachers because they made it possible to continue to educate our immigrant families.

A special, "thank you" to each teacher for making it possible to continue to educate our immigrant families. You are essential to our successful program and we could not help our students without you.

Ellen Atwell and the ELL Team  
(Dayna, Chip, Suzanne, and Jeanne)

# YOUTH

## **Congratulations to Our Graduates!**



*For I know the plans  
I have for you,  
“declares the LORD,”  
Plans to prosper you and not  
to harm you, plans to give  
you hope and a future.*

*Jeremiah 29:11*

Holy Cross would like to take this opportunity to express our congratulations to Benjamin Darby and Patrick Reilly for their recent graduation from college.

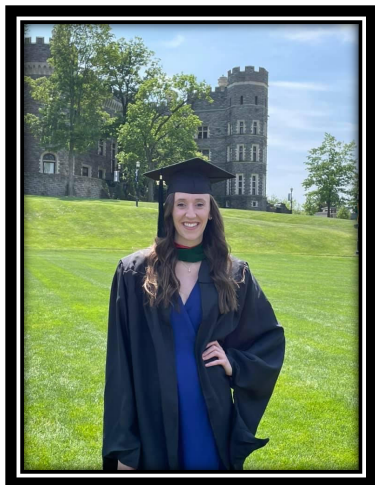
No doubt these past few years have required an intense amount of study, hard work, and a commitment perhaps like you've never known before. This past year alone has been a year like no other and we will never forget for the rest of our lives as the Coronavirus has captured the attention of the World. But, through it all you kept your faith, stood strong and achieved a milestone.

We are so proud of you and would like to recognize you for your 2020/2021 college graduation success!



**Patrick J Reilly** graduated in May 2021 from James Madison University with a degree in Kinesiology and a minor in Pre-PT. Patrick was active with Habitat for Humanity in his time at JMU. He plans to attend graduate school to pursue a Doctor of Physical Therapy.

**Benjamin Darby** graduated from George Mason University in December 2020 with a BS in Business Management. His plans are a position in Human Resources.



Lauren Muller graduated on May 13, 2021 with a Master's Degree in Medical Science, Physician Assistant Studies from Arcadia University. She takes her Boards in June to become a Physician's Assistant (PA).



Camp Funshine is an introductory program for girls who are NOT currently Girl Scouts. Activities include arts & crafts, STEM, games, songs and more!

**Camp Fees: \$40**  
**(Financial Assistance Available)**

Camp fees are non-refundable . Camp will be held outside (with indoor safety location) to follow COVID-19 guidelines plus mandatory masks and social distancing.



Registrations will be accepted starting May 17th:  
**<http://bit.ly/gscnc-cbc>**

If you do not have internet access, please call 703.372.4349

**For questions or more information, contact Natalie Thibodeau at**  
**[nthibodeau@gscnc.org](mailto:nthibodeau@gscnc.org) or call 703.372.4349**

These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Board of Education of Fairfax County, the superintendent of schools or this school.

## **PROPERTY**

### **HCLC's Steeple Bell**



Thank you all for the marvelous response we had raising funds for the repair of our bell system! Through the generous gifts of so many, the total amount of what we needed for the repairs has now been reached and we are in the process of scheduling with the bell company. We hope to have the bell in ringing form very soon. Thank you once again for your generosity!

# STEWARDSHIP

## WAYS TO GIVE

We must keep the Church alive. If we aspire to keep Holy Cross Lutheran Church a thriving, serving community of God's people, we will each need to make a determined effort to ensure that our offerings can sustain us through this time. Your generosity makes all things possible.



1. Drop a check in the mail or bring your offering with you to communion on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays.
2. Go to our website, [www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net](http://www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net), Click "Donate" and fill out the safe and secure donation form.
3. Download the **Give+** app from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store, Search for Holy Cross Lutheran Church. (It will appear near the bottom of the list) and follow the prompts as desired.

Together, we will ride out this storm. We are not afraid. We trust in God's grace and take peace and comfort in God's promise:

*"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; who will never leave you or forsake you."*

*Deuteronomy 31:6*

## SYNOD AND CHURCH-WIDE NEWS



*Sarah Abendanon, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname, earned her degree at Augsburg University, Minneapolis, with a scholarship from the International Women Leaders program.*





# EMPOWERED TO EMPOWER OTHERS

Leaving her home in Suriname for Augsburg University, Minneapolis, Sarah Abendanon felt frightened and excited.

"Before my departure for the U.S., I was a very insecure girl," she recalled.

Abendanon's home church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname, had endorsed her to pursue her bachelor's degree in the United States through the ELCA's International Women Leaders (IWL) program.

Since graduating in May 2018, Abendanon has **found work as a publications officer, started her own small business and volunteered her marketing skills to her church.** She credits her Augsburg education as invaluable. "I came **back much more confident," she said.**

Abendanon is one of 39 young women who have received IWL scholarships, awarded through partnerships with 11 ELCA colleges and universities. The scholarships continue for the duration of their bachelor's degree programs.

Thanks to the generosity of ELCA members during and after *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, all the women's expenses are covered, "a type of scholarship that's extremely rare these days," said Kaleb Sutherland, director, International Leaders program for scholarship administration and student engagement. "The idea is to remove any barriers for students to access this opportunity."

**Mission Support dollars fund IWL program administration and help to support ELCA companion churches, some of which encourage young women to apply for IWL.**

Yuen Ching Lee graduated from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, in 2019 with the help of an IWL scholarship. She was endorsed by her home church, the Lutheran Church in Malaysia.

Originally from Selangor, Malaysia, Lee said studying in the United States "broadened my mind and mindset to what things and society could be like, especially when it comes to women empowerment and going against patriarchy."

Today, Lee is a teacher for a Malaysian **nonprofit, Dignity for Children Foundation,** that educates underprivileged youth to pursue careers that could lift them out of poverty.

Sutherland noted that the ELCA designed IWL to accompany young women from ELCA companion churches in the hope that they would return to their communities and churches to pursue their vocations **with confidence.** Recent graduates such as Abendanon and Lee are thriving.

"I continue to do the work of the [church] and the IWL program [by using] my gifts and talents," Abendanon said. "And I pass it on by helping [my] neighbors wherever I can. No matter where we are and where we are from. We are one."

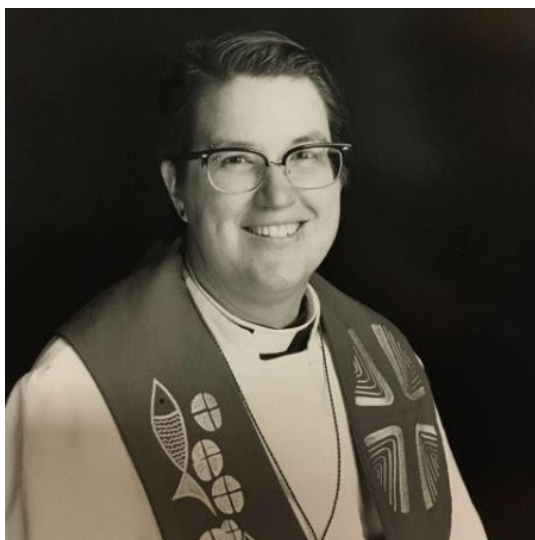
To watch a video about this ministry, visit [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://elca.org/SOFIA).

*Thank you for your generous gifts of Mission Support, which made this story of faith in action possible. Mission Support is the portion of your offering your congregation shares with your synod, and your synod shares with the churchwide organization. To learn more, visit [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://elca.org/SOFIA).*

# Megan Rohrer elected bishop of ELCA Sierra Pacific Synod

*5/10/2021 4:40:00 PM*

CHICAGO — The Rev. Dr. Megan Rohrer (they/their), San Francisco, Calif., was elected May 8 to serve a six-year term as bishop of the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Rohrer is the first transgender bishop in the ELCA. The election took place during an online synod assembly.



Rohrer was elected on the fifth ballot, with 209 votes. The Rev. Jeff R. Johnson, pastor of University

Lutheran Chapel of Berkeley in Berkeley, Calif., received 207 votes.

The bishop-elect has served as pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in San Francisco since 2014 and as community chaplain coordinator for the San Francisco Police Department since 2018. They served as executive director of the Welcome Ministry in San Francisco from 2002 to 2014, assistant night minister for the San Francisco Night Ministry from 2013 to 2018 and community garden coordinator at Project Homeless Connect from 2010 to 2012. Rohrer also served as pastor of a multiparish call serving the homeless and hungry at Welcome Ministry from 2006 to 2014.

Rohrer received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Augustana University in Sioux Fall, S.D., in 2001, a Master of Divinity degree from Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley in 2005, and a Doctor of Ministry degree in 2017. Rohrer is currently a doctoral candidate in transformative studies at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. Augustana is one of 26 ELCA colleges and universities.

Rohrer's installation is scheduled for Sept. 11 at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Walnut Creek, Calif.

The Rev. Mark W. Holmerud has served as bishop of the Sierra Pacific Synod since 2008 and will retire June 30.

Information about the Sierra Pacific Synod is available at [spselca.org/](https://spselca.org/).



1090 Sterling Road  
Herndon, VA 20170

