

BishopsPost – June/July 2026

“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the Lord Almighty.” (Zechariah 4:6b, NIV)

Pentecost reminds us of a truth that the Church continually needs to hear: the Church of Jesus Christ does not live, grow, or endure through human strength alone.



When the prophet Zechariah spoke these words, God’s people were discouraged. Jerusalem lay in ruins, the rebuilding of the temple had stalled, resources were limited, and the task seemed overwhelming. Yet God reminded His people that His work would not succeed through military strength, political power, or human effort alone, but through His Spirit.

The same was true at Pentecost. The frightened disciples were transformed into bold witnesses, not because they suddenly became powerful in themselves, but because they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps we can compare this to a great ship at sea. Imagine a captain announcing: “Today we will move this ship by human muscle power alone!” Even with many strong rowers, the ship would hardly move. But when the engine starts, the ship moves forward with power and purpose. So, it is with the Church and with our own lives. We cannot carry God’s work through our own strength alone. It is the Holy Spirit who gives life, direction, courage, and endurance.

We live in a world that often celebrates constant activity, strength, and achievement. Yet the Spirit of God does not simply come to strengthen our own plans; He leads us into God’s plans. When we rely only on ourselves, we often become weary and discouraged. But the Holy Spirit comes to those who trust in Christ, bringing strength to the weak, hope to the weary, and guidance when the path ahead seems uncertain.

May we rely only not on our own strength, but to trust anew in God’s promise: “*Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit.*” May the Holy Spirit continue to renew His Church, guide our congregations, and lead us forward in faith and hope.

Developments in NELCSA

Our theology students currently studying in Stellenbosch will undertake a student tour from 27 June to 5 July 2026. Due to time constraints and the size of our church, this year’s tour will focus on one circuit, with visits planned to the congregations of Elandskraal, Vryheid, Augsburg, Piet Retief, and Braunschweig. We wish the students God’s richest blessings for their journey and trust that future tours will also include congregations in other circuits.

From 7–12 June 2026, pastors from NELCSA, ELCSA (Cape Church), and ELKIN (DELK) will gather in Johannesburg for a joint pastors’ convention under the theme: “*Structures and Models, including Processes and Training within the Changing Church.*” Discussions will focus on possible new structures and models for church life, leadership training, lay ministry and lay leadership models, youth work and youth worker training, Christian education, church membership in a changing context, unity within the Lutheran community, as well as practical matters affecting congregational and church life, including copyright and financial matters.

We note with gratitude the upcoming gathering of the Lutheran World Federation in Johannesburg from 19–23 August 2026. The Africa Region consists of 80 representatives from 30 member churches across 23 countries, representing more than 28 million Christians. This gathering will bring together Lutheran churches from across the continent in shared witness, fellowship, and reflection.

At the last Synod, the report of the Church Council was accepted, confirming that eEquip will become an official NELCSA retreat, taking place every second year in different circuits and during the second half of the year to make participation more accessible. The first eEquip retreat in this renewed format will be held in Gauteng from 24–27 September 2026. All members are warmly invited to join in this opportunity for fellowship, renewal, and growth under God’s Word. Flyers and application forms will be made available soon, and we look forward to welcoming many of you there.