

THE **SUMMIT**

2026 Agenda

February 1–4, 2026 | Ponte Vedra Inn & Club | Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

Sunday, February 1, 2026

4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Registration

Conference Center Lobby

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Welcome Reception and Land Acknowledgment

Stockton A & B

Join us! Reconnect with familiar faces and meet new friends while you enjoy drinks, hors d'oeuvres and the fellowship of your peers.

Monday, February 2, 2026

7:00 – 8:30 a.m.

Registration

Conference Center Lobby

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Private Breakfast

Tarpon

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Breakfast

Conference Center Lobby and Silver Sand Dollar

8:30 – 9:15 a.m.

Opening Devotion and Welcome

Ballroom 1 & 2

- **Alesia Frerichs**, President and CEO, Lutheran Services in America
- **Pastor Mark Huber**, Sanctuary Church
- **Renada Johnson**, Senior Director of Children Youth & Family Initiatives, Lutheran Services in America

9:15 – 10:30 a.m.

Plenary: Bold Leadership & the Art of Resilience

Ballroom 1 & 2

- **Morra Aarons-Mele**, Author and Consultant

What if the pressures facing your organization today could become fuel for bolder leadership, stronger alignment, and

higher-impact decision-making? Gain practical approaches for grounding your leadership presence, strengthening senior team cohesion, and turning data into actionable solutions.

10:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Break

Conference Center Lobby

11:00 – 12:10 p.m.

Plenary: Bold Leadership & the Art of Resilience (cont.)

Ballroom 1 & 2

Panel Discussion:

- **Aurora Kripa**, President & CEO, KenCrest
- **Cyndi Walters**, President & CEO, National Lutheran Communities & Services

CEOs from Lutheran social ministries will share insights and lessons learned from their leadership practice.

12:10 – 12:20 p.m.

Morning Wrap-up

12:30 – 1:30p.m.

Networking Lunch

Stockton A & B

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Catalyst Roundtable Breakout Sessions

- **Catalyzing Community-Driven Affordable Housing Solutions**
Silver Sand Dollar
The affordable housing crisis is reshaping communities across the country. Together, we will identify how to align housing strategies that advance mission, create new pathways for investment, and mobilize networks to deliver measurable, lasting impact.
- **Value-Based Care: What Lies Ahead for Senior Services**
Tarpon
Value-based arrangements offer the promise of stronger outcomes, new revenue streams, and deeper mission alignment. Find out what it takes to excel in a value-based environment and explore where these models create the greatest opportunities for impact and growth.

3:00 – 3:15 p.m.

Break

Conference Room Lobby

3:15 – 4:30 p.m.

Here We Stand: For People. For Care. For Medicaid.

Ballroom Room 1 & 2

LSA Federal Policy and Landscape

- Sue Pechilio Polis, Vice President, Public Relations & Government Affairs

Actionable Insights to Inform Medicaid Policy

- *Moderator: David Trost*, President & CEO, St. John's United
 - **Hemi Tewarson**, Executive Director, National Academy for State Health Policy (Virtual)
 - **Joshua Rubin**, Vice President, Health Management Associates (in-person)

Strengthening Partnerships to Align Health & Social Care

- *Moderator: Katie Horton*, JD, MPH, RN, Research Professor, George Washington University
- **Rick Marshall**, President & CEO, Genacross
- **Mark Stutrud**, CEO, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
- **Ji Im**, System Senior Director, Community & Population Health, CommonSpirit Health (Virtual)
- **Enrique Martinez-Vidal**, Vice President, Quality & Operations for Association of Community-Affiliated Plans (ACAP) (Virtual)

4:30– 4:40 p.m.

Devotion and Wrap-up

Ballroom Room 1 & 2

- **Pastor Mark Huber**, Sanctuary Church

4:40– 5:00 p.m.

Walking Alongside, Together

Ballroom Patio

This small group discussion, led by Pastor Mark Huber and Renada Johnson, will focus on redefining organizational leadership for today as we work to balance decision making and understanding. Join your peers to share your insights, challenges, and strategies.

6:00 – 6:30 p.m.

First-Time Attendee Welcome Reception

Lagoon Room

Sponsored by Portico Benefit Services and Mission Investment Fund.

6:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Open Reception for All

Lagoon Room

Sponsored by Portico Benefit Services and Mission Investment Fund.

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Group Dinner and 10th Anniversary Celebration of LSA's Results Innovation Lab
Stockton A & B

Join us for dinner, conversation, and celebration as we share time together and welcome CEOs new to the network, as we mark the 10th anniversary of the Lutheran Services in America Results Innovation Lab.

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Breakfast

Conference Center Lobby and Tarpon Room

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Disability Network Breakfast

Silver Sand Dollar

8:30 – 8:45 a.m.

Devotion

Ballroom 1 & 2

- **Pastor Mark Huber**, Sanctuary Church

8:45 – 10:15 a.m.

Plenary: Strategic Clarity in Times of Change

Ballroom 1 & 2

- **Morra Aarons-Mele**, Author and Consultant

Explore how to build organizational cultures that stay focused and engaged through turbulent times, using tools for communicating with clarity amid uncertainty, channeling external pressures into strategic advantage, and designing leadership rhythms that sustain resilient performance.

10:15 – 10:45 a.m.

Break

Conference Center Lobby

10:45 – 11:45 a.m.

Navigating Risks and Opportunities to the Faith-based Nonprofit Sector

Faith-based nonprofits are navigating unprecedented change, from mounting financial and workforce pressures to new avenues for partnership and collaboration. This panel discussion will explore both the headwinds and bright spots facing faith-based organizations today and

share strategies for strengthening organizational capacity, building effective partnerships, and leveraging faith communities' unique assets to advance health and wellbeing for people and communities.

- **Erik Gjesfjeld**, Program Officer in Religion, Science & Society, John Templeton Foundation
- **Robb Gray**, Director of Policy-Advocacy, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- **Damyn Kelly**, PhD, Lutheran Social Services of New York
- **Andrea Levere**, CEO, Capitalize Good

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Annual Membership Meeting & Leadership Awards Luncheon
Ballroom 1 & 2

Sponsored by [Lutheran Church Extension Fund](#).

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Catalyst Roundtables Breakout Sessions

- **From Competition to Collaboration: The Strategic Partnership Playbook**
Silver Sand Dollar
Strategic partnerships are emerging as key pathways to strengthen service delivery, expand reach, and build long-term resilience, especially within the senior services sector. Join us for an unfiltered look at what it takes to lead through this new era of strategic partnership.
- **Improving Health & Well-Being for Children and Families**
Tarpon
Our network is showing how public-private partnerships can drive innovation and sustainability. Explore how organizations can move from ad-hoc coordination to structured, results-driven partnerships that improve family well-being and system performance, and demonstrate our network's value in systems such as Medicaid.

3:00 – 3:15 p.m.

Break
Conference Center Lobby

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Catalyzing Insights with Diane Yentel
Ballroom 1 & 2

- **Diane Yentel**, President and CEO, National Council of Nonprofits

Nonprofit leaders have a powerful opportunity to protect sector capacity by engaging in bold, coordinated advocacy that strengthens their organizations and the communities they serve. Diane Yentel will share how mobilizing networks, influencing policy, and speaking confidently about the sector's value can transform collective impact in a rapidly shifting environment.

4:15 – 4:30 p.m.

Wrap-up and Devotion

- **Pastor Mark Huber**, Sanctuary Church

4:30 – 5:00 p.m.

One-on-One Walks

New and experienced CEOs are matched together to discuss issues, share ideas and foster relationships.

5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Portico Networking Reception

Presidential Suite

Portico Benefit Services invites you to enjoy refreshments and conversation with friends and colleagues.

6:30 p.m. /
7:00 pm.

Optional Networking Dinner

Golf Club Dining Room

Meet for a casual dinner and a chance to connect with friends old and new (participants cover their own meal costs). There will be two seatings: one at 6:30 p.m. and one at 7:00 p.m. Please email Kim Roque at kroque@lutheranservices.org to arrange your dining time.

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Breakfast

Conference Center Lobby

8:30 – 8:45 a.m.

Devotion

Ballroom 1 & 2

- **Pastor Mark Huber**, Sanctuary Church

8:45 – 10:15 a.m.

Plenary: Using Technology to Transform Human Services

Ballroom 1 & 2

- **Antonio Oftelie, PhD**, Executive Director of Leadership for a Networked World, Harvard University
- **Amy Neumann**, Author and Nonprofit Technologist
- **Pat Thueson**, President & CEO, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota
- **Dave Morin**, President & CEO, Samaritas
- **Moderator: Alesia Frerichs**, President & CEO, Lutheran Services in America

We will explore what it takes to lead technology adoption effectively, including ethical guardrails, smart governance, clear communication, and operational practices that protect both mission and people. Gain practical tools to turn uncertainty into opportunity and create an organizational roadmap that keeps innovation human-centered, transparent, and sustainable.

10:15 – 10:30 a.m.

Break

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Ballroom 1 & 2

Plenary Cont.

Closing Benediction

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Closing Lunch

South Lawn (back-up Conference Center Lobby)

Join us for an informal lunch as the Summit draws to a close. Boxed lunches will be provided.

12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Public Policy Committee Meeting (by invitation only)

Tarpon Room