

Agenda

- 9-9:30 AM Coffee and Fellowship
- 9:30-10 AM Bishop's Welcome
- 10-11 AM Keynote Speaker: Rev. Emily Carson
- 11:10-Noon Workshops: Session One
- 12:15 Lunch (provided to pre-registrants)
- 1-2 PM Workshops: Session Two
- 2-2:15 PM Break
- 2:15 - 3 PM Worship and Sending



Saturday, March 8, 2025

9 AM to 3 PM

Trinity Lutheran Church in Owatonna

Also viewable online:



418 Sumner Street E, Suite 200
Northfield, MN 55057
semnsynod.org

Congregation Council members are key leaders in the life of a church. As a synod, we support church councils and rostered ministers as they live into their leadership roles and responsibilities. Focused on equipping church councils, this event includes a wide range of workshops from which to choose so that all participants can personalize the experience in a way that is useful for their current context and needs. This event is open to council members, church staff, lay leaders, and rostered ministers.

Session 1 Workshops:

Creating Practical Policies: Tools for Ministry with Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne — Room A

Tech and Internet Policy, Child Protection Policy, Parental Leave Policy, Sabbatical Policy, Building Use Policy, Funeral Policy, Confirmation Handbooks, Personnel Manuals and more... sounds like fun, right? Policies can be time consuming and finicky and yet essential for guiding ministries and lifting up the values of a congregation. This workshop will share examples of policies, resources, and tips for forming policies in your congregation so policies do not just live on paper but work for your context.

Congregational Money Matters: Stewardship, Endowments, Planned Giving, and Financial Best Practices

with Rev. Emily Carson and Mr. Tharan Leopold — Room B

This workshop will equip congregational leaders with practical tools and insights to manage financial resources faithfully and effectively. Topics include stewardship strategies, promoting endowment funds, fostering planned giving, and implementing financial best practices. Participants will leave with actionable steps to nurture generosity and strengthen their congregation's financial health.

Updating Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions with Rev. Kristi Mitchell & Sadie Neigum, the Synod Constitution Support Team — Room C

The Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of our congregations reflect the theology and polity of this church as it organizes itself to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, share the sacraments, reach out to the neighbor with good news, and share the love of God in the world. Learn how to engage and update your constitution to be a tool of ministry for this important work.

Making Meetings Meaningful with Rev. Lisa Janke — Room D

A well-planned and well-led meeting leaves people feeling good about their volunteer commitment and promotes participation in future meetings. This workshop will cover a variety of ideas for preparing and facilitating meetings. Participants will have opportunities to engage with the material and experience some of the practices in action.

Session 2 Workshops:

Discerning Vocation for Congregational Mission and Vision with Rev. Dr. Char Rachuy Cox — Room A

This workshop will explore discernment as a foundational practice for building and living a vocation-centered congregational mission and vision. It will provide practical tools and resources that help congregations engage with three fundamental questions: Who are we called to be? What are we called to do? Why are we here? So that congregations can more faithfully and effectively live life on purpose and engage in ministry on purpose for the common good today!

Compensation Conversations: Understanding Your Rostered Leaders Compensation and Benefits Package with Rev. Barb Streed — Room B

In our SEMN Synod, we are called to walk together as we proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. The SEMN Synod Minimum Compensation and Benefits Guidelines are presented as a tool for congregations and rostered ministers to use together so that compensation decisions can be made in such a way that God's mission flourishes, rostered ministers are cherished as servants of God, there is a sense of faithful partnership between church members and rostered ministers and all areas of the church's ministry thrive. At the same time, rostered ministers' compensation and benefits can be a bit confusing. Join Rev. Barb, who serves as the Office of the Bishop staff liaison to the SEMN Synod Minimum Compensation and Benefits Guidelines Task Force, to learn more about our guidelines and how to engage our guidelines as a tool to promote meaningful conversation around the subject of compensation and benefits.

Building a Connected Church: Strengthening Council + Congregation Relationships with Rev Trish Reedstrom and Jen Levisen — Room C

In this session, Pastor Trish Reedstrom and Jen Levisen will share their experience fostering stronger relationships within the church council and between the council and congregation. By building trust, improving communication, and creating opportunities for engagement, they have worked to shift the mindset from a pastor-led church to a congregation that genuinely feels ownership of its faith community.

Global Ministry: Engaging Congregations in Local + International Ministries with Kathy Chatelaine and Panel — Room D

Join Kathy Chatelaine, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry, and a panel of rostered ministers in conversation on connecting congregations with SEMN Synod's local and international partners. Participants will leave with practical strategies of discernment and engagement.