

Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA
Presents

BAPTIZED
IN
muddy waters

2026 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Saturday, May 2
Mankato

SEMNSynod.org/Assembly

Pre-Assembly Report

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Social Service
of Minnesota**

Proposed Agenda

Saturday, May 2

8:00 AM **Registration Opens**

9:00 AM **Worship**

10:30 AM **Plenary One**

Call to order, credentials report, introductions, adoption of the rules and agenda
Report of the Synod Treasurer
Report of the Synod Nominating Committee
Report of the Synod Secretary
Report of the Synod

11:15 AM **Keynote Speaker: Session One**
(Rev. Leila Ortiz)

12:15 PM **Recess for Lunch**

1:15 PM **Plenary Two**

Worship time, credentials report

1:35 PM **Keynote Speaker: Session Two**
(Rev. Leila Ortiz)

2:20 PM **Plenary Two continues**

Report of the Synod Vice President
Election of synod council and committees

2:40 PM **Break**

ELCA Churchwide Report
Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel
LSS Servant of Christ Award
Adoption of the 2027-28 spending plan
Results of the election
Offering update
Thank outgoing council members and conference deans
Install synod council and conference deans

4:00 PM **Adjournment of the Assembly**

Venue Information

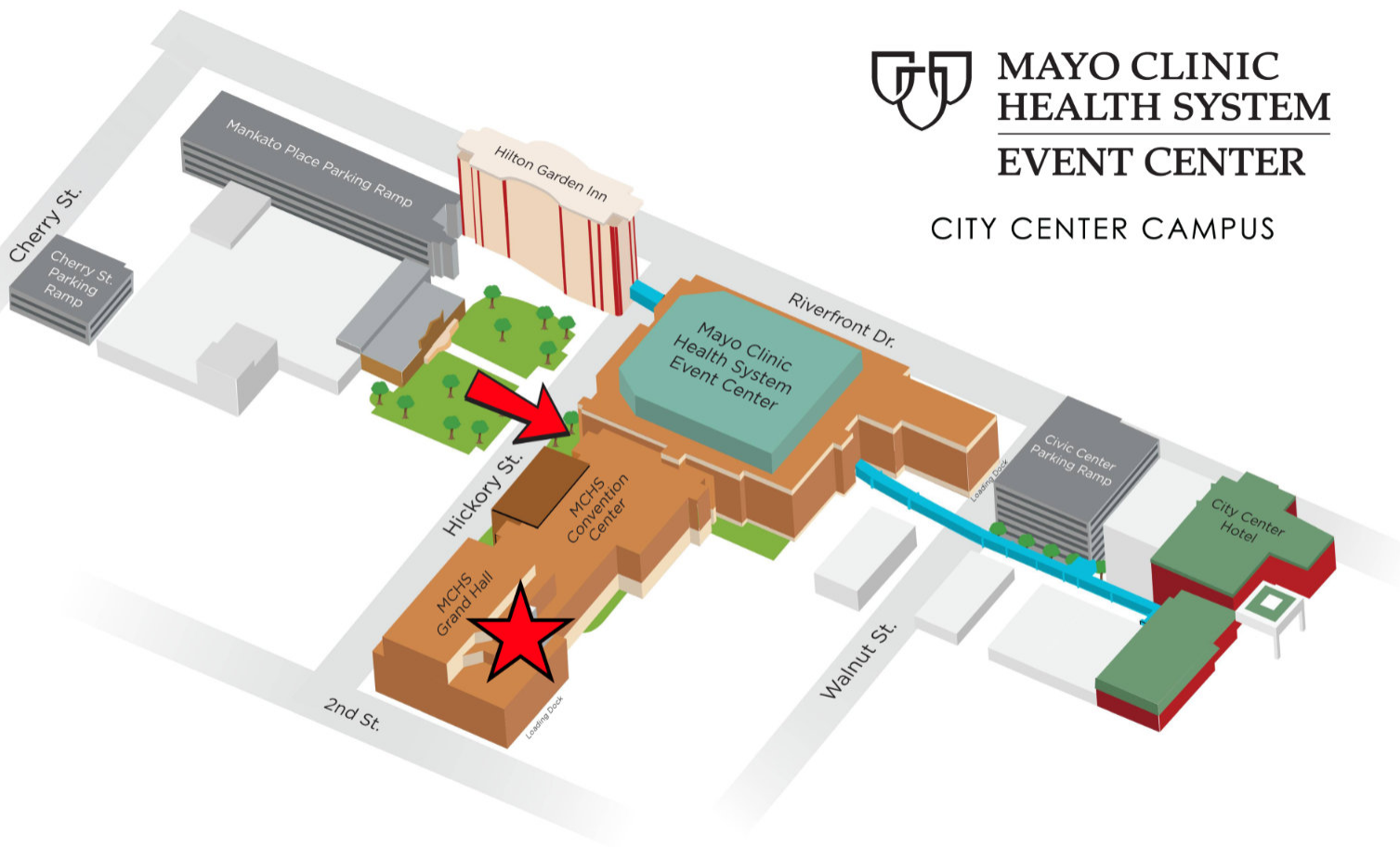
PARKING

Note the parking ramps available in the map below.

Or visit [mayoclinichealthsystemeventcenter.com/about-us/parking-and-directions](https://www.mayoclinichealthsystemeventcenter.com/about-us/parking-and-directions) for more information on how to get there and where to park.



CITY CENTER CAMPUS

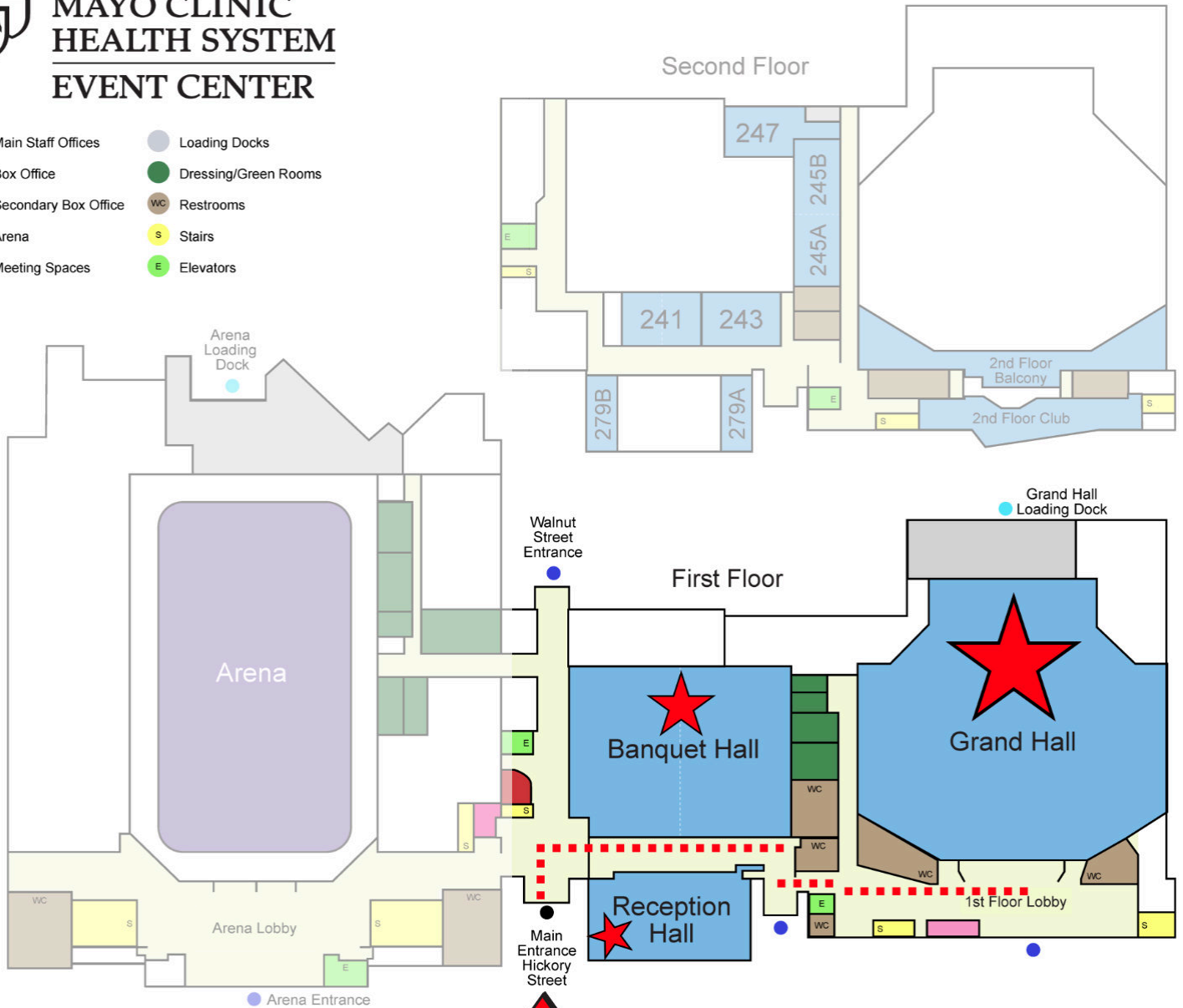


Venue Information



MAYO CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEM EVENT CENTER

- | | |
|--|---|
| ● Main Staff Offices | ● Loading Docks |
| ● Box Office | ● Dressing/Green Rooms |
| ● Secondary Box Office | ● Restrooms |
| ● Arena | S Stairs |
| ● Meeting Spaces | E Elevators |



EVENT KEY:

- Main Entrance
- Reception Hall: Registration
- Banquet Hall: Meals
- Grand Hall: Assembly Meeting



Special Guests

Rev. Leila Ortiz *Keynote Speaker*

In August of 2025, The Rev. Leila M. Ortiz completed a six-year term as bishop of The Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod of the ELCA and is currently "All but dissertation" with a concentration in Systematic/Contemporary Theology and special interest in Protestant Latinx Liberation Theologies and the impact of Latina hermeneutics on Lutheran ecclesiology. As of October 1, 2025, she is serving as Pastoral Theologian in Residence at Saint Peter's Church in Manhattan, New York.

Rev. Ortiz has significant experience in global Lutheran theological dialogue, serving as a U.S. representative at The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Global Theological Consultations in Wittenberg, Germany (2012) and Geneva, Switzerland (2016). During the LWF Assembly in Karakow, Poland (2023), she was elected to serve a five-year term on the council and appointed to the Ecumenical Relations Committee. In June of 2025, she was elected to serve on the, "Special Committee for the Augsburg Confession 500," to develop a framework that can serve as a compass for LWF Communion Office programs, member church participation, and preparation for the Assembly in 2030.

She is a published theologian, contributing to "Global Lutheranism: Vitality and Challenges," co-authoring a chapter in "Faith on the Avenue: Religion on a City Street" (Oxford University Press, 2014), and publishing in Gather Magazine, Dialog: A Journey of Theology, and workingpreacher.org.

When not immersed in theological discourse or pastoral care, Rev. Ortiz enjoys exploring New York City's diverse neighborhoods and cuisine, hosting friends and family, and experimenting with recipes that blend her Puerto Rican heritage with flavors from her travels.



Special Guests

Rev. Barbara Lund *ELCA Churchwide Representative*

The Rev. Barbara Lund serves as the Senior Director of Operations in the Service and Justice unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Service and Justice unit fosters and facilitates the ELCA's engagement in service, promotes efforts to call and act for compassionate justice and supports the freedom of Christians to love and serve their neighbor globally and locally.

In this capacity, she oversees the operations of the ELCA's global and domestic ministries that are deeply rooted in the ELCA identity: *World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, Advocacy, Global Companions and mission personnel, Ministries of Diverse Cultures and Communities and AMMPARO*. This rich tapestry of ministries deepens and extends the ELCA's faith in action with a commitment to accompaniment.

Pastor Lund has served ELCA Churchwide Organization through the Global Mission Unit as the Asia Pacific Desk Director, Global Mission Events Director, and pastor at Tokyo Union Church in Tokyo, Japan. Pastor Lund is a graduate of Augsburg University and received her Master of Divinity degree from Luther Seminary.

Pastor Lund serves on the board of Lutheran Services in America. During the Lutheran World Federation Assembly in Karakow, Poland (2023), she was elected to serve a five-year term on the council and appointed to chair the Committee for World Service. LWF World Service is the humanitarian and development arm of the Lutheran World Federation.



Offering

This year's assembly offering will support what the Holy Spirit is doing through the synod's campus ministries and candidacy process, supporting young adults and emerging leaders as they discern God's call. Ten percent of the offering will be directed toward International Women Leaders of the ELCA which empowers women from global companion churches through education, scholarships, and training. Thank you for your partnership and generosity!

How do I give?

- Any person or congregation may give online anytime online at semnsynod.org/giving (select the fund 'Synod Assembly Offering')
- A gift can be brought to the assembly to offer during the worship service. An offering envelope will be included in your welcome packet when you arrive on Saturday.
- If you are interested in contributing in a way not listed above, please reach out to the synod's Director of Evangelical Mission, Rev. Emily Carson.



General Information

WELCOME

Welcome to the 38th annual Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly, “Baptized in Muddy Waters,” May 2, 2026. As an assembly of congregations, we gather together to worship, learn, and participate in the decision-making business of the church.

ABOUT

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of 165 congregations and three Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities as well as related institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is one of 65 synods that make up the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Its geographic area includes 15 counties in the southeastern corner of Minnesota. The synod is divided into five conferences, each one named after rivers in the area:

1. Root River Conference
2. Zumbro River Conference
3. Blue Earth River Conference
4. Minnesota River Conference
5. Cannon River Conference

The office is located in Northfield, Minnesota, inside the building of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church.

REGISTRATION

On-site registration begins Saturday, May 2, at 8 AM.

LANYARD COLOR DISTINCTION

All voting members will receive a blue colored lanyard. All guests (non-voters) will receive an orange colored lanyard.

MEALS

The registration fees include a continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday. Your name badge is your meal ticket. Please wear it at all times.

SPECIAL NEEDS

We want to make sure you have what you need to make the assembly experience meaningful. Please let us know of any special needs before the event by calling the Office of the Bishop at 507-280-9457.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Thank you for working together to minimize our environmental footprint from this event. Please help recycle by returning all name badges, voting cards, unwanted paper, unwanted recyclable bags, and completed evaluation forms to the appropriate boxes upon leaving the assembly. Also, please bring your own beverage mug. Look for containers available for general recycling.

DISPLAYS

Be sure to visit the displays from our synod tables, teams, committees, ministry partners, and others.

This year includes:

1. Lutheran Campus Center (LCC), Winona
2. Crossroads Campus Ministry, Mankato
3. Synod Global Ministry Table
4. Synod Faith Formation Network
5. Good Earth Village
6. Portico Benefit Services
7. Sumud
8. Luther Seminary
9. Continuous Growth Pathway (CGP)
10. Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota
11. Global Health Ministries
12. Synod Generosity
13. Lutheran Advocacy – Minnesota
14. ELCA Young Adult Ministry

Rules of the Assembly

Voting Members of the Synod Assembly shall be designated by congregations and otherwise determined in accord with Chapter 7 of the Constitution, By-Laws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. See S7.21-.32.

VOTING MEMBER CREDENTIALS

Voting privileges are extended only to voting members of the Assembly and may not be transferred.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The adoption of the Synod Assembly agenda, with necessary changes, shall become the order of business for the assembly.

QUORUM

One-third of the registered voting members shall constitute a quorum. See S7.14.

DECORUM & ETIQUETTE

Respect, dignity, civility, and courtesy shall be guidelines for the tone and content of all assembly discussion. Behavior outside these guidelines and which continues after warning shall be grounds for the assembly chair to restrict any further privilege of the floor.

PRIVILEGE OF THE ASSEMBLY FLOOR

- Voting members of the assembly shall have prior right to the assembly floor.
- Officers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA shall be entitled to the privilege of the floor at all times.
- Voting members addressing the assembly during the discussion of a pending motion or resolution shall identify themselves by name and congregation.
- Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion of motions

or resolutions shall be limited to two minutes each.

- A person who has addressed the assembly on the pending motion or resolution may not speak to that pending motion or resolution again unless all others wishing to speak have done so.

SPENDING PLAN IMPACT

Any proposed amendment that adds money to the spending plan for mission and ministry should show a reduction of an equal amount in that same budget, or provide a proposal as to how the additional funds would be acquired. Any proposed amendments must be submitted by **12:45 PM, Saturday, May 2, 2026.**

VOTING PROCEDURES

To be eligible to vote, a voting member must be seated in the assembly. No proxy or absentee voting is permitted. A two-thirds vote is required for adoption of amendments to the constitution and by-laws of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. A majority vote is required for approval of the synod budget, resolutions, and other actions as specified in **Robert's Rules of Order**. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

RESOLUTIONS

A resolution for consideration at the Synod Assembly must be submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel no later than March 15, 2026. Resolutions may be submitted by:

- by majority vote of a congregation of the synod at a regular or special meeting of the congregation
- by approval of a two-thirds vote of a congregation council

Rules of the Assembly

- by majority vote of a committee of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod
- by majority vote of a conference assembly
- by a group of at least ten members of congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod elected to serve as voting members of the forthcoming synod assembly

Minutes showing adoption of such proposed resolutions from a meeting of a congregation, Congregation Council, committee of the synod, or conference assembly must accompany the submitted resolution. The signatures, typed names, and telephone numbers must be provided by voting members (of the forthcoming synod assembly) submitting a resolution. (S7.34.A05).

Late resolutions will not be accepted.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations for synod vacancies will be made available before the Assembly at semnsynod.org/nominations. Nominations will not be read to the assembly as part of the assembly agenda. Additional nominations for any vacancies can be made until **12:45 PM, Saturday, May 2, 2026**, by completing the 2026 Nomination Form. Nomination forms will be available at the business table on the assembly floor or at <https://semnsynod.org/nominations>. Additional nominations will be announced. Ballots will be in voting member packets.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

Materials produced by the Office of the Bishop staff, teams, and committees may be distributed to voting members and visitors at the assembly as long as such materials are relevant to the overall work of the synod. Synod ministry partners may distribute materials produced by their

organizations as long as such materials are directly related to the work of the synod.

SYNOD CONSTITUTION

Our synod constitution is available on the website at semnsynod.org/constitutions.

Report of the Secretary

Each year at the Synod Assembly, a report is presented by the synod’s secretary. Our Synod Secretary, Rev. Josh Enderson, will be presenting the report on May 2, 2026.

The report will be presented in two sections. All amendments presented were approved by the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Section 1 focuses on proposed amendments to non-required amendments that require action by the 2026 SEMN Synod Assembly. Section 2 reports the amendments made to required provisions of the synod’s Constitution. The changes in Section 2 have already been incorporated into our governing documents, in accordance with †S18.11.

Section 1: Amendments to Non-Required Provisions

Section 1 before the assembly will focus on several proposed amendments to the SEMN Synod Constitution. These changes highlight non-required amendments which align our Constitution with the Model Constitution for Synods. Secretary Enderson will present these changes in his report, which are detailed in the following pre-assembly report. These proposed changes can be found in the table on the following pages. If an item is ~~struck through~~ and highlighted in yellow, it will be deleted; if it is underlined and highlighted in yellow, it will be added. Proposed amendments to non-required provisions approved by the Churchwide Assembly can be adopted at a Synod Assembly by a majority vote of the members present and voting. (†S18.12.)

- S10.06. was recommended for approval by the SEMN Synod Council on November 22, 2025.
- Amendments to S11.04., S7.26., S9.04., S10.05., S10.07., S10.08., S10.09., S13.40., and S13.41. were recommended for approval by the SEMN Synod Council on February 21, 2026

Provision	Amended Provision Words inserted are <u>underlined</u> . Words removed are struck out
	<i>Provisions Reclassified from Required to Non-Required (Requires action)</i>
S11.04.	The <u>A</u> Mutual ministry Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council to provide support and counsel to the bishop.
	<i>Amendments to Non-Required Provisions (Requires action)</i>
S7.26.	This Synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit <u>persons currently serving as synod-authorized ministers and/or</u> lay representatives of authorized worshipping communities <u>and/or outreach ministries</u> of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.
S9.04.	The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second

Report of the Secretary

	ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes <u>(including ties in the final qualifying position)</u> on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the four persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes <u>(including ties in the final qualifying position)</u> on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes <u>(including ties in the final qualifying position)</u> on the previous ballot.
S10.05.	No e lected members of the Synod Council shall <u>not</u> receive compensation <u>solely</u> for <u>such</u> <u>their</u> service <u>as council members</u> .
S10.06.	<u>No person related to a synod staff member shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Synod Council. For this purpose, a related individual is one who, with respect to the synod employee, is a spouse, parent, son, daughter, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, son, daughter, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling).</u>
S10.0607.	If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet...
S10.0708.	The composition of the Synod Council...
S10.0809.	<i>Robert's Rules of Order</i> , latest edition, shall govern...
S13.40.	Synod-authorized Worshipping Communities <u>and Outreach Ministries</u>
S13.41.	Authorized worshipping <u>Worshipping</u> communities <u>and outreach ministries</u> , <u>authorized by the synod and</u> acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

Rationale for amendments from the ELCA Churchwide:

- S11.04. This provision is being made non-required, and as there is a change of wording, approval is required by the assembly.
- S7.26. This would allow synod-authorized ministers (SAMs) or representatives of synod-authorized worshipping communities or outreach ministries to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- S9.04. Clarification of the election process in the event of ties.

Report of the Secretary

- S10.05. Clarification, and establishment of the possibility that elected Synod Council members may receive compensation for other services provided to the synod.
- S10.06. For purposes of avoiding conflicts of interest, this provision allows synods to define where relatives of synod staff may or may not serve.
- S10.07.—09. Renumbering.
- S13.40. & 41. This change relates to ELCA Churchwide constitutional provision 10.01.04., which was amended at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. This amendment reflects a change in terminology when referring to authorized worshipping communities and extends the synods' authority to acknowledge authorized outreach ministries as well.

Section 2: Amendments to Required Provisions

Section 2 highlights required amendments which align our Constitution with the Model Constitution for Synods. If an item is ~~struck through~~ and highlighted in **yellow**, it was deleted; if it is underlined and highlighted in **yellow**, it was added. Amendments to required provisions approved by the Churchwide Assembly are introduced at once into the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod and no action is required by the Synod Assembly. These amendments are presented to the assembly for information only. (†S18.11.) A rationale document for these changes can be found here: <https://resources.elca.org/office-of-the-secretary/2025-churchwide-assembly-rationale-for-amendments/>

Chapter 6.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

†S6.04.02. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be members of historically underrepresented groups, in addition to the 10 percent representation of persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English in †S6.04. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal.

Chapter 7.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- †S7.21.** The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:
-
- b. Lay voting members shall be elected by each congregation or its council as follows: A minimum of one lay member elected ~~by~~ from each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected ~~by~~ from each congregation with 175 or more baptized members ~~related to this synod,~~ typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, ~~shall be voting members.~~ The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as

Report of the Secretary

nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men.

†S7.21.02. If a special Synod Assembly is called and voting members at the previous assembly are unable to serve as voting members, where permitted by state law, the congregation ~~through the Congregation Council~~ or its council may elect new members who shall continue to serve until the next regular Synod Assembly.

†S7.25. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution or in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, each voting member of the Synod Assembly shall be a voting member of a congregation or a confirmed member of a synod-authorized worshiping community of this synod.

Chapter 8.

OFFICERS

†S8.21. The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall be a voting member of a congregation or a confirmed member of a synod-authorized worshiping community of this synod. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of the office.

†S8.31. The secretary shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The secretary shall be a voting member of a congregation or a confirmed member of a synod-authorized worshiping community of this synod. The secretary may be either a layperson or a rostered minister.

†S8.41. The treasurer may be elected by the Synod Assembly or may be appointed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall be a voting member of a congregation or a confirmed member of a synod-authorized worshiping community of this synod. The treasurer may be either a layperson or a rostered minister.

†S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be as follows:

.....
c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] [elected or appointed] to a term of _____ years and may be [re-elected] [reappointed] [re-elected or reappointed]. The treasurer shall serve until a successor takes office.

†S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of [(name of month)] [the (ordinal number) month] following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

†S8.53. Each officer shall be a voting member in a congregation or a confirmed member of a synod-authorized worshiping community of this synod, except that the bishop need not be a member of a congregation of this synod at the time of election.

Report of the Secretary

Chapter 10.

SYNOD COUNCIL

†S10.01. The Synod Council, consisting of the four officers of the synod, ~~and~~ 10 to 24 other members, ~~and~~ at least one young adult youth ~~and~~ with a goal of at least one young adult youth, shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.

- a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation or a confirmed member of a synod-authorized worshiping community of this synod, with the exception of ministers on a roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and the term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.

Chapter 11.

COMMITTEES

†S11.11. This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation or a confirmed member of a synod-authorized worshiping community of this synod.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATIONS

†S13.01. Each congregation, except those certified as congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the uniting churches, prior to being listed in the roster of congregations of this synod, shall adopt the *Model Constitution for Congregations* or one acceptable to this synod that is not in contradiction to the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- ...
- c. **Recognition and reception.** Recognition and reception of additional congregations into this church ~~of transferring or independent congregations by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is based upon the judgment of the synod that the congregations satisfy the criteria of 9.21. and 9.25. is based on the judgment of the synod and action by the synod through the Synod Council and Synod Assembly.~~ The synod bishop shall provide for prompt reporting of such additions to the secretary of this church for addition to the roster of congregations.
 - 1) Recognition and reception of congregations newly formed by this church is accomplished by action of the Synod Council.

Report of the Secretary

2) Recognition and reception of transferring or independent congregations is accomplished by the action of the Synod Assembly upon the recommendation of the Synod Council.

a. If a congregation is a member of another church body, the leadership of the congregation first should consult with the appropriate authorities of that church body before taking action to leave its current church body. After such consultation, leaders of the congregation should contact the synod bishop or synod staff in this church where the congregation is located.

b. The synod bishop or synod staff where the transferring or independent congregation is located shall confer with the congregation to assure its understanding and acceptance of commitment to and affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 14.

ROSTERED MINISTERS

†S14.12. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

.....

8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, proclaiming God's love for the world, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.

†S14.18. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:

.....

d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation under paragraph a.3) above, the bishop's committee shall endeavor to hear from all concerned persons, after which the bishop together with the committee shall present their recommendations first to the pastor and then to the congregation. In the bishop's sole discretion, the bishop's committee may also present, as may be appropriate, either a report or report summary to the pastor and to the congregation together with the recommendations. The recommendations of the bishop's committee must address whether the pastor's call should come to an end and, if so, may suggest appropriate severance arrangements. The committee may also propose other actions that should be undertaken by the congregation and by the pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor and congregation agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action need be taken by the synod.

†S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

Report of the Secretary

-
- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, **proclaiming God's love for the world**, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;

Chapter 17.

CONSULTATION AND ADJUDICATION

†S17.02. The synod bishop and the Executive Committee of the Synod Council shall receive expressions of concern from rostered ministers—~~of this church~~, congregations, and organizations within this synod; provide a forum in which the parties concerned can seek to work out matters causing distress or conflict; and make appropriate recommendations for their resolution. When a concern relates directly to the synod bishop, the synod vice president will lead the Executive Committee's efforts at resolving the matter. When the matter at issue cannot be resolved in this manner, applicable procedures for investigation, decision, appeal, and adjudication shall be followed. Allegations or charges that could lead to the discipline of a rostered minister—~~of this church~~ shall not be addressed by the Executive Committee but shall be resolved through the disciplinary process set forth in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.

Chapter 18.

AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

†S18.12. Whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs this synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended **any non-required provision of** the *Constitution for Synods*, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the *Constitution for Synods* shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by this synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.

†S18.13. Other amendments to this constitution may be adopted by this synod through either of the following procedures:

- a. Introduced with the support of at least _____ voting members and having been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly, an amendment may be **adopted** ~~ratified~~ unchanged by a two-thirds vote at the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

(S10.09.01. was reclassified from non-required to required in 2025)

Report of the Secretary

Chapter 10.

SYNOD COUNCIL

†S10.0809.01. To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held through electronic means such as the Internet or by telephone, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. electronically or by telephone conference, and To the extent permitted by state law. Notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Audit Report

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod remains committed to fiscal responsibility and transparency, carefully stewarding the generous financial gifts received from congregations and individuals. Since the 2025 assembly, the 1/31/2025 audit has been completed. The Audit Committee and Synod Council have received the report as an accurate representation of the financial position of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. The report is located online at semnsynod.org/audit.

As of the writing of this document for the Pre-Assembly Report, the 1/31/2026 audit is underway. We anticipate that it will be complete and the final report available by the opening of the 2026 Synod Assembly. It will be posted to the web page listed above once it has been received.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy Dahlvang". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tammy Dahlvang

Treasurer of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

Report of the Vice President

The Synod Vice President serves as the chair of the Synod Council. The Synod Council serves as the synod's board of directors and as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. The Constitution outlines the full functions of the Synod Council, which range from preparing a preliminary budget for Synod Assembly approval to issuing letters of call to appointing representatives to boards and committees when not elected by the Synod Assembly.

The 2025-26 Synod Council year launched with an orientation meeting in July for new members. This is an opportunity for members to learn about roles as well as meeting procedures.

In September, the Synod Council gathered at Bethlehem Lutheran in Mankato. We began with an activity called "Concentric Circles," where we learned more about one another. The morning was spent reflecting on the role of the Synod Council as well as the roles of each of the staff members who work in the Synod Office. Rev. Emily Carson led us in a "Finance 101" to review the financial duties of the council and how to review the monthly finance reports. The Synod Council elected Rev. Shawn Brooks and Dr. Joyce Thompsen to serve on the Executive Committee. Additional business items included approval of the minimum compensation guidelines, confirmation of Portico benefits for synod staff, as well as updates from the Nominating Committee.

In November, the Synod Council gathered at the United Redeemer Lutheran in Zumbrota. Our generative work time was spent learning about Reference and Counsel and how their work connects to the Synod Council i.e., per the constitution, the Synod Council is to "Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly." Additional business items included a review of constitutional amendments from the Churchwide Assembly.

In February, the Council met via Zoom with topics ranging from the status of nominations for synod positions and the process for nominating persons to serve as Synod Secretary. We also appointed members for the task force to develop a preliminary spending plan for 2027.

Our March Synod Council meeting was held via Zoom. Our focus was on discussing and approving the preliminary budget to send to the Assembly and nominating one candidate for Synod Secretary.

During all of our Synod Council meetings, we spend time reviewing/approving the financial reports of the synod, constitutional changes, and personnel changes of rostered ministers of the synod, such as calls to service and request for on leave from call.

I am grateful to the lay and rostered ministers of our synod who offered their time and talents as members of the council. The role does require time away from family and other commitments to review materials and attend meetings. In the busy schedules we all have, I am thankful they chose to take the time to be leadership for our church.

We are all church together. We all have strengths and gifts we can use to support our members, congregations and rostered ministers. Take a moment to consider how your gifts could benefit others.



Lisa Dierks

Vice President of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

Report of the Bishop

It has been a tremendous year.

When we gathered in 2025, I was elected to serve a second six-year term that officially began September 1.

In the earliest days of this second term, I had a sense that I wanted to place a particular emphasis on the sacrament of baptism.

Thus, we gather this year, in 2026, under the theme Baptized in Muddy Waters. It is the same theme that the Rostered Ministers (pastors, deacons, chaplains) of this synod gathered under at our annual Fall Theological Retreat in October.

This emphasis comes from my belief that our understanding of who we are (collectively and individually) and how we are called to live is rooted in the promises of baptism and the revelations therein.

Poet, pastor and artist, Jan Richardson writes in a blessing intended for the beginning of the season of Lent “beloved is where we begin.”¹ In her poem, she describes the significance of the proclamation of Christ’s belovedness at his own baptism before he “enter[s] the wilderness.”

Earlier this fall, as I was preparing to preach on the baptism of Jesus as recorded in the gospel of Matthew, I was struck by how quickly, immediately, the narrative moves from the voice of heaven declaring Jesus’ belovedness to the Spirit’s leading Jesus into the wilderness.

The break in chapters 3 and 4 at the end of the baptism and the beginning of the wilderness temptations does us no favors, nor does the way these stories often show up in the lectionary. The structure with which we encounter the baptism of Jesus too easily separates it from the Spirit fueled propulsion of Jesus into the wilderness. When in fact these things happen in quick succession.

Baptism is not only about the warmth of knowing we are loved. It is also about giving us the grounding we need to live in a world whose foundations often quake, a world in which we will be tempted to act not out of our truest, beloved identity, but, in reaction to the voices of deceit, the façade of power, and the allure of greed that so often surrounds us.

We begin with baptism because the promises of baptism are the promises we stand on as we live in the wilderness.

In the bleakest moments of the past year, the consistent spots of starlight (at least for me) have been the ways the people of this synod have shown up. The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is full of folks that have led with courage, compassion, integrity and commitment. You, the people of this synod, have been advocates for justice, compassionate neighbors in your communities, providers of food and transportation and social services for those forced to the margins.

Together, we have supported our global companions in their own work for justice and peace. A group of 13 of us travelled to our partners in the Central Diocese of Tanzania to, in part, lift up the gifts of women in the ministry of the church.

Leaders throughout this synod have participated in and facilitated prayer vigils, community singing, and advocacy for the most vulnerable.

We have continued to work together, as congregational leaders and synod staff on 41 call processes throughout the synod.

We are accompanying 15 candidates in their discernment for rostered ministry.

Report of the Bishop

We have walked alongside our newest ministry, the Nuer Community Lutheran Church, as it has formed its own leadership team and continues to build a ministry for the community.

We've joined with our ministry partners as we continue to live into our baptismal calling to love and care for our neighbors.

We have benefited from the service of our Churchwide Assembly voting members who worked to elect a new Presiding Bishop, adopt a timely social statement on Faith and Civic Life, and strengthen connections among the church.

Our Synod Council has recognized the need for a comprehensive and strategic plan regarding our ministry priorities and our financial capacities. The Synod Council will begin this work in earnest in the fall. It will include discerning ways to incorporate the voices and perspectives of many. I am incredibly grateful for their partnership and leadership as we look to the future together.

As a synod we are joined together through conference meetings, text studies and events like Councils as Leaders and Synod Assembly. These gatherings work to weave us together for the sake of each of us and all of us and the ministries to which we are called. If you don't feel connected to the synod or larger church – reach out. Every member of the body of Christ is vital! This includes you!

It has been a tremendous year. Tremendous in its challenges and its opportunities. I count it a blessing and gift to serve this synod in this season and it is my joy to do so.

For all the ways you continue to show up, to lead, to listen, to pray, to practice hospitality and to love your neighbors...I offer thanks to God for you and for all the ways God has been and will be at work in us, among us and through us. Soli Deo Gloria!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Regina Hassanally". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Regina Hassanally
Bishop
Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

Roster & Call Process Report

April 15, 2025 through March 31, 2026

ORDINATIONS

Ms. Brittany Mailleue, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, to Associate Pastor at Christ the King, Mankato-05/19/2025.

Ms. Alison Bondy, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, to Associate Pastor at First English, Cannon Falls-10/23/2025.

Ms. Jessica Camp, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, to Deacon at Grace, Albert Lea-01/10/2026.

NEW OR RENEWED CALLS WITHIN THE SYNOD

Rev. Jeremy Johnson, Solo/2 point Pastor at Little Cedar & Marshall, Adams, to Senior Pastor at Christ, Byron-07/01/2025.

Rev. Gregory Schaefer, Bridge Interim at Faith, Winona, to Pastor at Faith, Winona-07/01/2025.

Rev. Jolene Knudson-Hanse, On Leave from Call to Bridge Interim at Little Cedar & Marshall, Adams-07/15/2025.

Rev. Jessica Bakken-Busch, Bridge Pastor at United Redeemer, Zumbrota, to Senior Pastor at United Redeemer, Zumbrota-11/16/2025.

Rev. Kary Jonas, RENEWAL, Bridge Pastor at First, Lake City-01/01/2026.

Rev. Paul Graham, Dennison & Vang, Dennison, to Interim at St. Olaf College Congregation-01/14/2026.

LETTER OF INVITATION TO EXTENDED SERVICE

Rev. Deborah Lyanga-ELCT-Central Diocese, Contracted at St. John's, Kasson, to Pastor at Good Shepherd, Wells-09/28/2025.

SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED LAY MINISTRY (SAM) – *Renewed Yearly*

Mr. Michael Ahrens, to SAM at Grace Lutheran Church, Nerstrand-09/15/2025

Mr. Randall Mickelson to SAM at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, Waltham-01/01/2026.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR EMERGING MINISTRIES (TEEM)

no changes

CONTRACTED ROSTERED LEADERS FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY TO CONGREGATIONS

Rev. Kristen Schlauderaff-Retired, Contracted Pastor at St. John, Kasson-RENEWAL-01/01/2025.

Rev. Deborah Lyanga, ELCT-Central Diocese, Contracted Pastor at St. John, Kasson-RENEWAL-01/01/2025.

Rev. David Wall, Retired/Southwestern Minnesota Synod, Contracted Pastoral Ministry at St. John's, Montgomery-04/24/2025.

Rev. Lane Zaffke-Retired, Contracted Part-time Visitation/Pastor at Trinity, Spring Grove-07/09/2025.

Rev. Susan Li, Full Communion Partner, Contracted Pastoral Ministry at Trinity, Owatonna-07/15/2025.

Rev. Patricia Reedstrom, Retired, Contracted Pastoral Ministry at Trinity, New Richland-08/01/2025.

Rev. James Scaife, Full Communion Partner, Contracted Pastoral Ministry at Saint Paul, Pine Island-08/18/2025.

Roster & Call Process Report

April 15, 2025 through March 31, 2026

Rev. Lane Zaffke, Retired-Contracted QT Visitation & QT Associate Pastor at Trinity, Spring Grove, Contracted Quarter-time Visitation Pastor at Trinity, Spring Grove-09/28/2025.

Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Kaghondi, ELCT-CD, Contracted Pastoral Ministry at Little Cedar & Marshall, Adams-10/21/2025.

Rev. Krista Strum, Letter of Call at Hosanna, Rochester, Contracted Pastoral Ministry at Peace, Eyota-11/01/2025.

Rev. Mark Van House, Retired, Contract Pastoral Ministry to Moscow, Austin-01/01/2026.

Rev. Jon Mapa, Retired, Contracted Pastoral Ministry at Faith, Delavan & Jackson Lake, Amboy-01/01/2026.

Rev. Byron Meline, Retired, Contracted Pastoral Ministry at Mount Olive, Rochester-01/04/2026.

Rev. Kerry Eversole, Retired, Contract Pastoral Ministry at Our Savior's, Spring Valley-01/20/2026.

Rev. Gena Parker, Chaplain at Mayo-(Synod Council Call)-Contracted Pastoral Ministry Part Time at Pontoppidan, Ellendale-02/01/2026.

CONTRACTED CONGREGATIONS FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY TO CONGREGATIONS

Rev. Eileen Woyen, Trinity, Albert Lea-Holds the Letter of Call-Contracted with First, Glenville-RENEWAL-09/01/2025.

Rev. Mark Boorsma, Ascension, Albert Lea-Holds the Letter of Call- Contracted with Salem, Albert Lea- RENEWAL-01/01/2026.

Rev. Matthew White, Grace, Austin-Holds the Letter of Call-Contracted with Oakland, Oakland-, RENEWAL, 01/01/2026.

Rev. Nissa Peterson, Chatfield, Chatfield-Holds the Letter of Call-Contracted with Good Earth Village, Spring Valley-02/17/2026.

CONTRACTED LAY LEADERS FOR LAY MINISTRY TO CONGREGATIONS

no changes

ON LEAVE FROM CALL

Rev. Henry Burt-08/11/2025.

Rev. Elizabeth Shank-09/07/2025.

Rev. Jolene Knusdon-Hanse-09/30/2025.

Rev. Peg Marose-12/03/2025.

Rev. Andrew Yackel-12/15/2025.

Rev. Katherine Fick-01/01/2026.

TRANSFERRED INTO THE SYNOD

Rev. David Christenson, Retired, Southwestern Minnesota Synod to Retired-Southeastern Minnesota Synod-05/06/2025.

Rev. Ryan Stevenson-Cosgrove, Southeastern Iowa Synod to Senior Pastor at First, Albert Lea-05/25/2025.

Rev. Lisa Meshke, Southwestern Minnesota Synod to Bridge Interim at First English, Faribault-06/16/2025.

Rev. Peter Coen-Tuff, Eastern North Dakota to Interim Pastor at Dennison & Vang, Dennison-07/08/2025.

Roster & Call Process Report

April 15, 2025 through March 31, 2026

Rev. Mark Abelsen, Minneapolis Area Synod to Senior Pastor at Trinity, Spring Grove-07/20/2025.

Rev. Heidi Wallace, Nebraska Synod to Pastor at Bethlehem, Lanesboro- and Contracted at Fountain, Fountain-09/09/2025.

Rev. Scott Westphal, Saint Paul Area Synod to Chaplain at Minnesota Correctional Facility-Faribault-09/24/2025.

Rev. Gerald D. Sutherland, Southwestern Minnesota Synod to Pastor at Grace, Nerstrand-11/04/2025.

Rev. Michael Peuse, East-Central Wisconsin Synod to Our Savior's, Austin-11/30/2025.

Rev. Andrew Thompson, Southwest Synod of Wisconsin to St. Ansgar's, Cannon Falls-01/15/2026.

Rev. Anita Nuetzman, Retired, Northeastern Iowa Synod to Retired, Southeastern Minnesota Synod-01/16/2026.

TRANSFERRED OUT OF THE SYNOD

Rev. Peter Reuss, On Leave to Southwestern Minnesota Synod-02/01/2025. (Rec'd form on 05/20/2025.)

Rev. Mary Kaye Ashley, On Leave to Northeastern Minnesota Synod-05/01/2025.

Rev. Gary Rusinko, Retired, to Florida-Bahamas Synod-05/30/2025.

Rev. Jason Pollington, On Leave, to Saint Paul Area Synod-06/23/2025.

Rev. Jacque Ziemer, Chaplain with Mayo Clinic Health to Western Iowa Synod-09/08/2026.

Rev. Susan Miller, Retired, to Saint Paul Area Synod-09/23/2025.

Rev. Hannah Bergstrom de Leon-Pastor at Minneola, Zumbrota, to Pacific Synod-01/26/2026.

Rev. Steven Berkeland, Retired, to Southwestern Minnesota Synod-02/24/2026.

DISABILITY

no changes

RETIREMENTS:

Rev. Patricia Reedstrom-06/01/2025.

Rev. Marie Anderson-07/01/2025.

Rev. Dean Lundgren-07/01/2025.

Rev. Steven Berkeland-09/01/2025.

Rev. Dr. Glenn Monson-01/01/2026.

DECEASED

Rev. Henry Mathre-12/14/2024- (No Notification Received).

Rev. Eugene Hasselquist-02/07/2026.

Rev. Robert C. Berthold-02/27/2026.

Rev. Myrwood Bagne-03/18/2026.

Rev. Barbara Finley-Shea-03/21/2026.

Rev. Gordon Trelstad-03/30/2026.

PARTNERING EXPERIMENT

Lanesboro, Union Prairie -Contracting Pastoral Ministry from Rev. Kurt Bockoven, Called at Greenfield Lutheran Church.

Roster & Call Process Report

April 15, 2025 through March 31, 2026

ROSTERED LEADERS REINSTATED TO THE ELCA ROSTER

no changes

ROSTERED LEADERS REMOVED FROM THE ELCA ROSTER

no changes

ROSTERED LEADERS RESIGNED FROM THE ELCA ROSTER

no changes

CONGREGATIONS WHICH CLOSED

none

CONGREGATIONS REMOVED FROM THE ELCA/SYNOD

none

Advisory for Call Process:

Rev. Barbara Streed,
Assistant to the Bishop-Call Process

Support Staff for Call Process:

Cheryse L. Brenno,
Call Process & Roster Administrator

Mission Support Report

The people and congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod are generous stewards. You share your time, abilities, resources, buildings, and finances in a multitude of ways. You take good care of that which God has entrusted to you!

The intention of the "Mission Support Report" is to specifically highlight the mission support generosity of the synod's congregations. We give thanks for the dollars shared in 2025 by the congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. This report is a summary of that giving, and it also highlights what each congregation's mission support giving represents as a percentage of the total dollars they received in 2025.

We pray that this document serves as a two-part invitation: 1) let us join together in collective thanksgiving to God for all the mission support generosity extended forth in 2025, and 2) let us prayerfully consider what ongoing mission support generosity might look like in the year ahead within each of our ministry contexts.

Faithful stewardship is happening in our midst, and it makes a lot of ministry possible. Thank you for walking together as we proclaim the good news through every expression of our denomination - congregations & specialized ministries, synods, and churchwide.

**The third column represents the congregation's 2025 mission support giving as a percentage of total dollars received by the congregation.*

CONGREGATION	2025 Mission Support Giving	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Blue Earth River Conference		
Albert Lea:		
Ascension	\$11,941.30	5.86%
Bear Lake	\$2,500.00	NO REPORT
Central Freeborn	\$9,800.00	9.34%
Concordia Pickerel	\$1,002.00	NO REPORT
East Freeborn	\$3,000.00	2.26%
First	\$11,000.00	1.47%
Grace	\$35,704.36	6.41%
Salem	\$2,100.00	1.37%
Trinity	\$8,815.00	3.15%
Alden:		
Mansfield	\$13,285.00	12.68%
Redeemer	\$4,401.00	NO REPORT
Amboy:		
Jackson Lake	\$2,400.00	5.00%
Austin:		
Trondhjem	\$5,500.00	11.47%
Blue Earth:		
East Chain	\$0.00	0.00%
Trinity	\$21,764.00	5.47%
Bricelyn:		
Bricelyn	\$4,000.00	4.94%
N. Blue Earth	\$1,500.00	6.77%
Conger:		
St. Paul	\$304.00	0.79%

CONGREGATION	2025 Mission Support Giving	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Delavan:		
Faith	\$5,352.00	8.80%
Elmore:		
Shiloh	\$1,136.79	1.89%
Fairmont:		
Grace	\$16,500.00	3.46%
Geneva:		
Community	\$1,800.00	2.42%
Glenville:		
Deer Creek Valley	\$2,442.46	4.26%
First	\$500.00	0.87%
Hartland:		
Cross of Glory	\$3,000.00	3.91%
West Freeborn	\$500.00	0.52%
Hayward:		
Hayward	\$4,500.00	3.47%
Kiester:		
Our Savior's	\$1,075.00	1.66%
Trinity	\$3,805.62	6.98%
Myrtle:		
Bethlehem	\$784.88	1.59%
Oakland:		
Moscow	\$900.00	NO REPORT
Oakland	\$1,200.00	1.74%
Twin Lakes:		
Lunder	\$500.00	1.01%

Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2025 Mission Support Giving	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Walters:		
United	\$8,204.00	7.81%
Wells:		
Good Shepherd	\$7,061.91	2.74%
Cannon River Conference		
Cannon Falls:		
Cannon River	\$1,200.00	NO REPORT
First English	\$16,995.00	5.55%
Spring Garden	\$18,996.12	8.76%
St. Ansgar's	\$4,500.00	1.90%
Urland	\$1,500.00	1.04%
Dennison:		
Dennison	\$0.00	NO REPORT
Vang	\$9,600.00	NO REPORT
Faribault:		
Christ	\$700.00	0.65%
First English	\$22,999.92	4.47%
Our Savior's	\$15,000.00	2.35%
Goodhue:		
Minneola	\$3,650.00	2.43%
St. Luke's	\$26,204.10	9.96%
Kenyon:		
Dale	\$0.00	0.00%
First Evangelical	\$7,892.00	NO REPORT
Gol	\$1,000.00	1.38%
Holden	\$9,000.00	6.87%
Moland	\$500.00	NO REPORT
Lake City:		
First	\$33,000.00	7.97%
Lonsdale:		
Trondhjem	\$1,200.00	0.47%
Nerstrand:		
Grace	\$4,000.00	4.08%
Northfield:		
Bethel	\$38,000.00	3.76%
St. John's	\$60,000.00	5.44%
St. Olaf Student	\$1,500.00	24.49%
St. Peter's	\$9,500.00	NO REPORT
Pine Island:		
Saint Paul	\$16,849.30	5.28%
Red Wing:		
First	\$29,451.96	6.51%
St. Paul's	\$11,500.00	3.53%
United	\$42,306.00	4.13%
Wabasha:		
Faith	\$10,820.00	4.71%

CONGREGATION	2025 Mission Support Giving	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Wanamingo:		
Trinity	\$5,500.00	3.74%
Wanamingo	\$1,000.00	1.29%
Webster:		
Solor	\$800.00	2.51%
Welch:		
Cross of Christ	\$8,538.23	NO REPORT
Vasa	\$7,500.00	4.72%
West Concord:		
Trinity	\$4,134.95	2.55%
Zumbrota:		
Lands	\$26,403.07	8.64%
Stordahl	\$0.00	NO REPORT
United Redeemer	\$6,000.00	2.22%
Minnesota River Conference		
Cleveland:		
Our Savior's	\$12,650.00	NO REPORT
Eagle Lake:		
Epiphany	\$1,836.74	1.24%
Ellendale:		
Pontoppidan	\$2,500.00	NO REPORT
Good Thunder:		
Redeemer	\$1,500.00	2.65%
Janesville:		
Faith	\$4,000.00	5.54%
Lake Crystal:		
Zion	\$16,499.99	7.76%
LeCenter:		
St. Paul	\$4,500.00	1.85%
Lemond:		
Zion	\$500.00	0.73%
LeSueur:		
First	\$22,459.00	6.86%
Mankato:		
Bethlehem	\$16,000.00	3.12%
Christ the King	\$33,001.50	NO REPORT
Connections Shelter Ministry	\$20.00	NO REPORT
Grace	\$7,492.00	1.65%
Mapleton:		
St. John's	\$2,500.00	NO REPORT
Meriden:		
St. Paul's	\$5,200.00	NO REPORT
Montgomery:		
St. John's	\$5,004.00	3.02%
New Richland:		
LeSueur River	\$8,750.00	NO REPORT
Trinity	\$5,081.05	3.16%
Vista	\$11,149.84	20.56%

Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2025 Mission Support Giving	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
North Mankato:		
Messiah	\$25,299.96	7.20%
Owatonna:		
Aurora	\$2,000.04	1.86%
Nuer Community	\$600.00	NO REPORT
Our Savior's	\$24,319.00	4.79%
St. John	\$19,500.00	4.60%
Trinity	\$68,000.00	3.61%
Rapidan:		
Calvary	\$2,000.00	NO REPORT
Waseca:		
Grace	\$6,000.00	0.68%
North Waseca	\$10,800.00	12.95%
St. John	\$16,500.00	7.18%
Waterville:		
St. Paul's	\$4,484.00	NO REPORT
Root River Conference		
Canton:		
Henrytown	\$2,168.66	NO REPORT
Chatfield:		
Chatfield	\$15,204.00	3.13%
Pilot Mound	\$0.00	0.00%
Fountain:		
Fountain	\$1,200.00	2.25%
Root Prairie	\$4,500.00	NO REPORT
Granger:		
St. Matthew	\$2,000.00	NO REPORT
Harmony:		
Greenfield	\$8,000.00	NO REPORT
Saetersdal	\$2,032.50	NO REPORT
Houston:		
Cedar Valley	\$2,100.00	5.42%
Cross of Christ	\$14,160.03	6.69%
Lanesboro:		
Bethlehem	\$7,200.00	NO REPORT
North Prairie	\$500.00	1.72%
Union Prairie	\$0.00	NO REPORT
Lewiston:		
St. Paul	\$1,700.00	1.36%
Mabel:		
Garness Trinity	\$25.00	0.16%
Mabel First	\$1,969.00	NO REPORT
Scheie	\$500.00	NO REPORT
Peterson:		
Arendahl	\$0.00	0.00%
Elstad	\$4,500.00	4.38%
Grace	\$0.00	NO REPORT
Highland Prairie	\$3,750.00	4.47%

CONGREGATION	2025 Mission Support Giving	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Preston:		
Christ	\$6,750.00	3.43%
Rushford:		
Trinity Fellowship	\$4,935.58	49.95%
Saint Charles:		
Faith	\$1,000.00	0.62%
Spring Grove:		
Trinity	\$14,479.00	2.14%
Spring Valley:		
Our Savior's	\$20,000.00	5.65%
Whalan:		
First of Highland	\$1,500.00	NO REPORT
Whalan	\$1,500.00	5.05%
Winona:		
Central	\$24,000.00	4.00%
Faith	\$12,120.00	NO REPORT
Wykoff:		
Immanuel	\$0.00	NO REPORT
Zumbro River Conference		
Adams:		
Little Cedar	\$5,000.00	NO REPORT
Marshall	\$1,000.00	1.23%
Austin:		
Grace	\$775.64	0.45%
Our Savior's	\$4,500.00	0.88%
Red Oak Grove	\$2,000.00	1.03%
St. Olaf	\$5,000.00	0.51%
Blooming Prairie:		
First	\$14,813.00	3.79%
Byron:		
Christ	\$16,448.86	5.40%
East St. Olaf	\$2,650.00	3.03%
West St. Olaf	\$0.00	0.00%
Dodge Center:		
Faith	\$5,000.00	2.41%
Elkton:		
St. John's	\$2,100.00	2.07%
Eyota:		
Peace	\$500.00	1.36%
Grand Meadow:		
Bear Creek	\$3,000.00	
Grand Meadow	\$1,200.00	1.28%
Hayfield:		
Trinity	\$21,708.68	7.92%
Kasson:		
St. John's	\$24,200.00	4.02%
LeRoy:		
LeRoy	\$8,013.60	NO REPORT

Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2025 Mission Support Giving	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Ostrander:		
Trinity	\$5,000.00	NO REPORT
Plainview:		
Good Shepherd	\$12,471.96	NO REPORT
Rochester:		
Bethel	\$33,114.84	1.67%
Gloria Dei	\$35,400.00	2.75%
Good Shepherd	\$10,400.00	2.76%
Hosanna	\$15,000.00	NO REPORT
Mount Olive	\$46,350.00	6.03%
Our Savior's	\$10,000.00	2.11%
People of Hope	\$0.00	0.00%
Zumbro	\$40,000.00	2.42%
Sargeant:		
Evanger	\$0.00	0.00%
Stewartville:		
Zion	\$11,438.00	1.62%
Waltham:		
St. Michael	\$1,000.00	0.00%

This report was created with information from the **ELCA Annual Congregation Reports (formerly known as Form A).*

***The phrase **NO REPORT** in the third column indicates that the ELCA Annual Congregation Report was not submitted to churchwide by the March 15 deadline.*

If your congregation would like to suggest an edit to the data included in this report, please email updates to treasurer@semnsynod.org.

Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2027-28

	MINISTRY AREA	ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT	2025 ACTUAL (PRE-AUDIT)	2025 SPENDING PLAN	2026 APPROVED	2027 PROPOSED
2	Income						
3	Mission Support	400100	Mission Support	\$1,492,045.33	\$1,525,000.00	\$1,450,000.00	\$1,400,000.00
4	<i>Total Mission Support</i>			\$1,492,045.33	\$1,525,000.00	\$1,450,000.00	\$1,400,000.00
5							
6	Other Income						
7		400390	Annual Fund	\$25,240.00	\$45,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
8		400300, 400302	Event Offerings	\$24,670.78	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00
9		400391	Honorariums from Congregations	\$5,648.49		\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
10		400402	DEM Grant	\$10,000.00		\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
11		400400	Interest Income	\$8,732.49		\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
12		800520	Witmer CE Fund	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
13	<i>Total Other Income</i>			\$74,353.98	\$92,500.00	\$135,000.00	\$135,000.00
14							
15	Program Fees						
16		400204	Synod Assembly	\$76,590.00	\$101,250.00	\$72,000.00	\$72,000.00
17		400200	Theological Conference	\$26,310.00	\$26,250.00	\$32,000.00	\$32,000.00
18		400208	Boundaries	\$3,800.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
19		400202	Candidacy	\$3,467.50	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00
20		400205	Councils as Leaders	\$2,165.00			\$3,000.00
21		400210	First Call Theological Education	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
22	<i>Fees</i>			\$112,332.50	\$143,000.00	\$114,500.00	\$117,500.00
23							
24	Total Income			\$1,678,731.81	\$1,760,500.00	\$1,699,500.00	\$1,652,500.00
25							
26	Expense						
27	ELCA Mission Support						
28		500002	ELCA Mission Support	\$641,579.54	\$655,750.00	\$623,500.00	\$581,000.00
29	<i>Total ELCA Mission Support</i>			\$641,579.54	\$655,750.00	\$623,500.00	\$581,000.00
30							
31	Personnel						
32		500100, 500110	Salaries, housing allowance & wages	\$524,315.02	\$510,000.00	\$520,000.00	\$525,000.00
33		500120	Continuing Education	\$2,256.23	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00

Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2027-28

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Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2027-28

	MINISTRY AREA	ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT	2025 ACTUAL (PRE-AUDIT)	2025 SPENDING PLAN	2026 APPROVED	2027 PROPOSED
34		500130	Book Allowance	\$652.74	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
35		500140	Payroll Tax Expense	\$16,771.09	\$15,710.00	\$16,000.00	\$16,000.00
36		500150	Employee Benefits - Portico	\$148,495.45	\$175,000.00	\$160,000.00	\$165,000.00
37		500225	Staff Development	\$3,073.46	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
38		500226	Staff Sabbatical	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
39		500224:230	Constituent Hospitality	\$760.70			\$1,000.00
40		500230	Contract Services	\$28,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$26,500.00	\$20,000.00
41	<i>Total Personnel</i>			\$723,563.99	\$727,710.00	\$739,500.00	\$742,000.00
42							
43	Ministry Partners						
44		500300	Campus Ministry: Winona & Mankato	\$49,992.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$47,500.00
45		500302	Luther Seminary	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$4,000.00
46		500305	Good Earth Village	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$9,500.00
47		500304	Minnesota Council of Churches	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$4,750.00
48		500308	Lutheran Advocacy - Minnesota	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
49		500310	Region 3 Archives	\$9,362.50	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00
50		500537	Continuous Growth Pathways	\$10,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00
51	<i>Total Ministry Partners</i>			\$101,354.50	\$106,000.00	\$91,000.00	\$81,750.00
52							
53	Synod Ministry Programs						
54		500570	Synod Assembly	\$67,896.43	\$85,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
55		500532	Theological Conference	\$24,049.91	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
56		500802	Councils as Leaders	\$3,334.39			\$3,000.00
57		500543	New to Synod Gatherings	\$939.48	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
58		500544	Retired Minister Gatherings		\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00

Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2027-28

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Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2027-28

	MINISTRY AREA	ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT	2025 ACTUAL (PRE-AUDIT)	2025 SPENDING PLAN	2026 APPROVED	2027 PROPOSED
59		500555	Interim Network Gatherings				\$1,000.00
60		500804	Advent Worship				\$2,000.00
61		500514	Candidacy	\$8,926.82	\$13,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
62		500541	First Call Theological Education	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
63		multiple	Tables/Teams	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
64		500535	Faith Formation	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
65		500450	Rostered Leader Development	\$3,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
66		500403	New Ministry Initiatives	\$7,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
67	<i>Total Synod Ministry Programs</i>			\$115,647.03	\$145,000.00	\$104,500.00	\$110,500.00
68							
69	Global Partners Discretionary Table						
70		500503	Global Ministry Table Discretionary	\$6,709.27	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
71	<i>Total Global Partners Table Discretionary</i>			\$6,709.27	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
72							
73	Governance						
74		500500	Executive Committee	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
75		500507	Synod Council	\$1,091.25	\$1,500.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
76		500546	Endowment Committee	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
77			Bishop Transition	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
78	<i>Total Governance</i>			\$1,091.25	\$4,200.00	\$3,400.00	\$3,400.00
79							
80	Operating Expenses						
81		500400	Rent	\$10,800.00	\$15,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
82		500402	Contracts & Repairs	\$8,484.37	\$12,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
83		500410	Postage	\$3,237.88	\$1,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
84		500412	Office Supplies	\$6,125.51	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
85		500418	Phone & Internet	\$5,946.55	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
86		500416	Audit & Legal Services	\$11,383.60	\$10,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
87		500417	Accounting Service	\$17,020.00	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00

Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2027-28

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Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2027-28

	MINISTRY AREA	ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT	2025 ACTUAL (PRE-AUDIT)	2025 SPENDING PLAN	2026 APPROVED	2027 PROPOSED
88		500420	Insurance	\$10,628.55	\$10,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$11,000.00
89		500424	Bank Fees	\$440.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
90		500425	Credit Card Processing	\$4,695.59	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
91		500426	Office Equipment	\$566.95	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$6,000.00
92	500420, 500427		Miscellaneous Expense	\$6,714.09	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
93		500428	Communication	\$4,599.23	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
94		500224:225	Staff Travel: Synod	\$26,035.13	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00
95		500224:226	Staff Travel: Domestic	\$2,867.41	\$7,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
96		500224:227	Staff Travel: Global	\$5,638.13	\$10,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
97	<i>Total Operating Expense</i>			\$125,182.99	\$132,000.00	\$121,500.00	\$124,500.00
98							
99	Total Expense			\$1,715,128.57	\$1,777,660.00	\$1,690,400.00	\$1,650,150.00
100							
101	Net Total			-\$36,396.76	-\$17,160.00	\$9,100.00	\$2,350.00

Note:
 Previous year spending plans are available on the website at:
semnsynod.org/pages/spending-plans.

Sample Synod Ballot

Ballot for 2026 Synod Elections

Synod Secretary

Vote for no more than 1 for a 4-year term.

Rev. Joshua Enderson – 3rd term (2026-30)

Synod Council At-Large (Lay)

Vote for no more than 4 for a 2-year term.

Dr. Joyce A. Thompsen – 2nd term (2026-28)

Jennifer Levisen – 2nd term (2026-28)

Synod Council At-Large Young Adult Member

Vote for no more than 1 for a 2-year term.

Halle Fessel – 1st term (2026-27)

Augsburg University Corporation Board

Vote for no more than 3 for a 2-year term.

Synod Council At-Large (Rostered)

Vote for no more than 5 for a 2-year term.

Rev. Samuel Mailleue – 2nd term (2026-28)

Synod Council At-Large Youth Member

(Confirmed – age 17 when elected)

Vote for no more than 2 for a 1-year term.

Sophia Culhane – 1st term (2026-27)

About Synod Council

The Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod states the following:

†S6.04. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of rostered ministers shall include both men and women. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

†S6.04.01 It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

2025-2026 Synod Council Members



Lisa Dierks, Synod Vice President
Rev. Joshua Enderson, Secretary
Tamara Dahlvang, Synod Treasurer
David Holger
Matthew Huggenvik
Barbara Lake
Bradley Leathers
Jennifer Levisen
Roy Srp
Ed Taylor
Dr. Joyce Thompsen
Sam Pollock
Rev. Jessica Bakken Bush
Rev. Shawn Brooks
Rev. Anna Ferro
Rev. Cheryl Indehar
Rev. Sam Mailleue

Nominations

Those nominated were invited to submit responses to these two questions:

1. List three current or past congregational, synod, or churchwide service activities.
2. Describe your sense of God calling you into mission and service in Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. What are the gifts, skills, experiences, and areas of expertise that you could bring to the work?

2026 ELECTION BALLOT

Each year at the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly, voting members vote for individuals to serve in different leadership capacities on council, tables, and teams.

Synod Secretary

Vote for up to 1.

Rev. Joshua Anderson

(Hayward Lutheran in Hayward)

1. SEMN Synod Secretary (2 Terms); Fall Theological Planning Committee; Blue Earth River Conference Secretary.
2. It has been an honor to serve as the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Secretary over these last 8 years. If reelected, I will continue using my organizational and communication skills to carry out the duties of Synod Secretary, through such things as the curating of minutes and updating of the synod's governing documents, as well as participating in our shared work as a voice on synod council and the executive committee.

Synod Council - Rostered

Vote for up to 5.

Rev. Samuel Mailleue

(First Lutheran in Le Sueur)

1. Pastor of First Lutheran, Le Sueur; Co-Dean of Minnesota River Conference; SEMN Synod Council 2023-2025.

2. I have served on the SEMN synod council for the past two years and have enjoyed getting to work with so many diverse people from across our synod. I've been ordained for over 6 years and have served at First Lutheran, Le Sueur for over 3 of those years. I have a passion for faith formation and seeing all ages explore the ways in which God is calling us all to love our neighbors, love and serve God, as well as love ourselves by taking care to nurture the faith we have been given.

Synod Council - Lay

Vote for up to 4.

Jennifer Levisen

(First Lutheran in Albert Lea)

1. Currently finishing my first term as a member of the Synod council. Also, in the first year of my second term on the council at my church, First Lutheran Church in Albert Lea. I've had the privilege of serving as Council President at FLC for 2.5 years.
2. I feel called to serve by fostering connection, clarity, and shared purpose within the church and across the broader community. I'm drawn to spaces where people show up as they are to listen, reflect, and find their way forward together. As a council president, writer, and facilitator, I'm committed to listening well, asking thoughtful questions, and making room for honest, imperfect conversation. I care deeply about the church's role in people's lives and feel called to help it keep showing up with openness, humility, and a steady commitment to serving others.

Dr. Joyce Thompsen

(Grace Lutheran in Waseca)

1. SE MN Synod Council 2024-2026; Chair, Committee to Elect the Bishop, 2025; Luther Seminary Board of

Nominations

Directors Chair and Foundation Board of Trustees Chair; Synod Vice President, SW CA Synod; President, Grace Lutheran Church, Waseca, MN

2. My roles as current Synod Council executive committee member, chair of Committee to Elect the Bishop, former synod vice president, Luther Seminary Board of Directors Chair and Foundation Board of Trustees Chair, LSS Board member, ELCA LIFT Advisory Board, and congregation president prepare me as an experienced servant leader. As a corporate vice president, executive consultant, author and educator, my professional roles have focused on helping organizations clarify and execute strategy to achieve desired results, with emphasis on building effective leadership.

communication. I am an active listener allowing me to support and understand others. I have experience in leadership roles and problem solving. I am excited to use these skills and grow with the community.

Synod Council - Youth

Vote for up to 2.

Sophia Culhane

(North Waseca Lutheran in Waseca)

1. Helped with the computer program during the Christmas Program, Attended Bible School/Sunday School, Help with Sunday School.
2. I believe God calls us to these new opportunities at the right time. My faith means a lot to me. I believe faith is believing without seeing.

Synod Council - Young Adult

Vote for up to 1.

Halle Fessel

(North Waseca Lutheran in Waseca)

1. Helping clean on a church trip; Helping set up dinners at church; Playing my guitar for the congregation.
2. I feel called to serve within the ELCA by sharing the love of God. I value transparency and genuine

Office of the Bishop Reflections



Photo by David Hendee of St. Peter's Lutheran (Northfield).

Rev. Emily Carson

**Director for Evangelical Mission and
Assistant to the Bishop for Generosity,
Stewardship, and Financial
Administration**

What is your role and how does your work impact congregational ministry?

I serve as Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. Directors for Evangelical Mission (DEMs) serve at the intersection of the wider church and local congregations, helping strengthen congregational vitality and cultivate new expressions of ministry. I also serve as the synod's Financial Administrator.

Much of my work focuses on equipping and accompanying congregations and their leaders as they live fully into God's mission. That might look like supporting new ministry development, coaching leaders, facilitating

retreats and workshops, or helping congregations reflect on stewardship, leadership, and community engagement. At its heart, my call is about helping communities notice where God is already at work and discerning how they are being invited to participate.

A unique part of the DEM role is collaboration across the many expressions of the church (congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, and ministry partners in the community). I often find myself building bridges: connecting leaders to resources, helping congregations learn from one another, and creating spaces where people can reflect together on what faithful leadership looks like in this moment.

In the work you do, what brings you the most joy?

What brings me the most joy in my work is collaboration. I especially love spending

Office of the Bishop Reflections

time with lay leaders and rostered ministers, and in particular with church councils. There is something deeply hopeful about gathering with people who care so deeply about their congregation and their community and helping them notice the gifts and possibilities already present among them.

Some of my favorite moments happen during retreats or workshops when a group of leaders has the chance to slow down together. The pace of ministry is often so full, but when people step back to pray, reflect, and listen together, new clarity often emerges. I love watching a room of council members begin to connect the dots between their faith, their congregation's story, and the needs of their community.

I also find so much joy in working with our synod staff and my DEM colleagues across the country!

What does your baptism mean to you?

Baptism is foundational. Before any role, title, or responsibility, I am first and foremost a beloved child of God. Baptism is the promise that my identity and worth do not depend on my accomplishments, my productivity, or even my faithfulness. They rest in God's grace.

Baptism is a comfort and a call. No matter what, I'm a beloved child of God. And no matter what, I'm called out into the world - to bear God's creative and redeeming word to all the world - and to work for justice & peace. I am grateful that this isn't just an individual assignment - it's a collective responsibility that as God's people, we do together!

**Email: carson@semnsynod.org
Phone extension: 106**

Rev. Matt Larson

**Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy,
Leadership, and Congregation Care**

What is your role and how does your work impact congregational ministry?

I work with Candidacy, Leadership, and Congregation Care. The way the first two impact congregational ministry are pretty direct: raising up and forming faithful, healthy, mature leaders from both rosters for service in SEMN and throughout the church. That formation doesn't have an end state; leaders (rostered or not) are constantly in formation - or ought to be! It's a joy and a privilege to get to work on this among God's people.

In the work you do, what brings you the most joy?

It's always relationships. That's always the heart of things. From my earliest church memories as a kid, to my own time in seminary and candidacy, through every call I've ever had, the relationships are where I find joy. That's absolutely the case in my current call to Synod Staff. God's love in Jesus, and the relationships we have to each other are what get us through and bring me joy.

What does your baptism mean to you?

All through my life, my truest identity as a beloved child of God has been there. I've always had my baptism as a concrete event to point to as the anchor of that truest identity. I've wondered about that. I've wandered from that. I've sought and been sold other false identities. God is faithful, and God's promises can be trusted, and I've always been brought back to my truest identity as a baptized and beloved child of God.

**Email: mlarson@semnsynod.org
Phone extension: 103**

Office of the Bishop Reflections

Rev. Barb Streed

**Assistant to the Bishop for Call Process
and Congregation Care**

What is your role and how does your work impact congregational ministry?

The role I have been called to serve on the SEMN Synod staff is Assistant to the Bishop in Call Process and Congregational and Rostered Leader Care. We have 165 congregations in our SEMN Synod and when one of those congregations finds themselves without rostered leader support due to resignation, retirement, or other I am the staff person who accompanies these congregations during this transitional time as they discern what God might be calling them to in the next season of life together. I also get to accompany rostered leaders as they feel the nudge of the Holy Spirit to consider a new call or a first call. In addition to my work in the 'call process' and in 'mobility' ministries, I have the joy of being the synod staffer taking lead in planning the SEMN Synod Assembly, accompanying the SEMN Synod Minimum Compensation and Benefits Task Force, as well as serving and supporting the congregations and rostered leaders throughout our synod and in a variety ways.

Transition is a significant word in my work on the synod staff. This past year, 41 of our congregations experienced transition as they journeyed (and many still continue to journey) through the call process. This past year, 12 rostered leaders experienced transition as they joined our synod. We continue to accompany our congregations and our rostered leaders through the everchanging landscape of being God's hands and feet in the world.

In the work you do, what brings you the most joy?

Every time our Synod Council meets, as a staff member, I submit a report and this question is asked every time. Every time I have same answer. What brings me the most joy in my work are the people of our SEMN Synod. What brings me the most joy is witnessing the presence of God in the midst of God's people in the SEMN Synod.

I've witnessed God give folks who felt anxious, calm hearts. I've witnessed God provide folks with wisdom when difficult decisions were needed to be made. I've witnessed God convict folks with radical welcome when uncertainty was present just to name a few examples. It is a joy to witness the trust in God and the courageous faith with which the people of this Synod navigate life and serve the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Truth be told, I've never not witnessed the presence of God among and in the people of the SEMN Synod and what a joy that is!

What does your baptism mean to you?

I have so many thoughts, questions, and understandings about baptism. In all of it, I always come back to 'named and claimed' and that has made all the difference in my life and in the lives of all of God's children and here's why. Being named matters because to be named IS to be claimed. In the waters of baptism we given a new name, I'm not just Barbara Allyn, I'm Barbara Allyn Child of God. I am named and I am claimed.

I am honored and humbled and SO VERY thankful to carry my creator's name... because that name makes all the difference in my life. As Barbara Allyn Child of God, I get to live in the freedom of my salvation... and so do you. Beloved Child of God, named and claimed, WE get to live among

Office of the Bishop Reflections

God's faithful people. WE get to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper. WE get to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus; and WE get to strive for justice and peace in all the earth because WE are named and WE are claimed. Thanks be to God!

Email: streed@semnsynod.org
Phone extension: 107

Kathy Chatelaine
Assistant to the Bishop for Global
Ministry

What is your role and how does your work impact congregational ministry?

Our synod's Global Ministry initiatives provide education, engagement, and advocacy opportunities that equip and empower congregations to see, connect with, and learn from local and international communities so that, as the Body of Christ throughout the world, we can work together to fulfill Jesus's words to Love God and Love People: by Feeding the hungry. Visiting the lonely. Healing the sick. Welcoming the immigrant.

I invite you to explore a few of SEMN Synod's Global Ministry initiatives that congregations throughout our synod can be a part of (see [page 44](#)). Together may we work in God's mission so that all may have life in abundance! All are welcome!

In the work you do, what brings you the most joy?

God created us to be in relationship with God and with one another. In its essence, global ministry is all about relationships: within and between our congregations, communities, nation, and world. What a privilege to serve in a job where I can

experience God's abundant welcome and love through the faithful work of the people of God!

What does your baptism mean to you?

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone. To heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known. Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face; Let us bring an end to fear and danger: All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

—All Are Welcome, ELW, 641

At the beginning of the baptismal service (ELW, p. 227), the presiding minister reminds all those assembled of the lifelong significance of their baptism: 'We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.'

In other words, through baptism . . .

- We are part of the family of God, the body of Christ;
- We are united (as one) with all people who are baptized; *and*
- We are each called to live into our part of the 'one body', joined together and generously sharing the gifts Spirit showered on us in our baptisms *so that together* – faithful to the gospel and in partnership with the Spirit – we can 'work toward more justice and wholeness in the world' (elca.org).

Email: chatelaine@semnsynod.org
Phone extension: 108

Office of the Bishop Reflections

Cheryse Brenno

Call Process & Roster Administrator

What is your role and how does your work impact congregational ministry?

My main role is assisting with Call Process as the Call Process Administrator.

Other responsibilities consist of:

- Candidacy Assistant
- Mission Support Intents
- Manage Roster & Congregational Records/Files
- Roster Changes-Churchwide/Synod Database
- Personnel Files-Payroll & Portico
- Others as assigned.

In the work you do, what brings you the most joy?

I love the work that I do in the Office of the Bishop. The real bonus in my work is that it allows me the opportunity to get to know the people of this synod! To listen to them share their faith journeys, tell about their families, and just plain old visiting with the people! I love listening!

A dear pastor once told me that all you have to do is "Love the People!" Thank you for this blessed opportunity!

What does your baptism mean to you?

I am a Child of God. I received the sign of the cross of God's endless love and mercy for me.

In my family, baptism was a celebration. I have my Certificate of Baptism dated April 13, 1958, signed by my parents, Cleon and LaDonna Brenno; my sponsors, Fordyce and Beverly Brenno; and by Rev. Obed Vold. These are the people who started my faith journey.

God is always there! In my good days and my bad! I pray that there is always hope in

all that I do, and all journeys that I am on, God is with me! As we journey together to do God's work, blessing to you and remember—"Only one thing in life is truly dependable and stable... God's love for us."

Email: brenno@semnsynod.org

Phone extension: 109

Ashley Corbett

Director of Communications

What is your role and how does your work impact congregational ministry?

I have the joy of serving as the Director of Communications for our office. My career started in congregational faith formation, but I've always had a passion for communication and marketing (that's what my college degree says!). I am the one sending most any mass email, posting to social media, editing videos, and producing print material—including this Pre-Assembly Report. I also get to manage the technical components of our events, which change with each event.

For congregations and community members, this means I direct communication from our office to you. You may or may not see me or my name, but I hope that you are reading and seeing some of the content I publish. It also means that you share your stories with me so that I can share them with others.

All the work I do fluctuates as purpose and visions move with the Spirit. I love wondering and listening for what that might look like.

In the work you do, what brings you the most joy?

The creative elements of all work! I love solving problems. I never want to stop asking what the vision is, figuring out how

Office of the Bishop Reflections

that aligns with our mission, and then ensuring that we are doing our best to reach the right people in the most effective and compassionate ways.

What does your baptism mean to you?

Like many Lutherans, I was baptized as an infant. As I grew up, I remember watching the home video of the service. My cousin and I were baptized together at a church in Minneapolis, where my family lived at the time. For most of my life, that's all I knew.

After starting my first job, I discovered that the pastor who baptized me—Rev. Lamont Kerner—also served as an interim at my home congregation after I graduated. He had become a pastor and mentor to me before I knew he also baptized me. That has been a pretty wonderful gift in my faith journey, and it reminds me how tangible and steady God's presence is in our lives, no matter how we see or remember it.

**Email: corbett@semnsynod.org
Phone extension: 105**

Sadie Neigum Office Administrator

What is your role and how does your work impact congregational ministry?

I am the office administrator for the Southeastern Minnesota synod. I assist the Bishop's staff in completing projects and making sure the office runs smoothly. I also assist in event planning throughout the year. The events are great opportunities for the people of the synod to see one another in person and strengthen fellowship and connection. I also assist in the synod's constitution ministry which aims to serve the congregations of our synod in updating and maintaining constitutions.

In the work you do, what brings you the most joy?

I feel joyful in my work when I am helping others--staff, ministers, and lay leaders alike.

What does your baptism mean to you?

Because I was baptized when I was a bit older, I remember my experience. I think I was maybe four or five years old. My mom let me pick the fabric she used to make my dress for the occasion. I remember the family that gathered after to celebrate and the cross-shaped cake we shared. My baptism feels like a strong tether to my faith and personal religious journey. It feels like a special connection, also, to my family and loved ones who shared in it with me, and continue to share in it with me throughout my life.

**Email: neigum@semnsynod.org
Phone extension: 100**

Global Ministry Report

God created us to be in relationship with God and with one another. In its essence, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod's global ministry is all about relationships - within and between our congregations, communities, nation, and world. The church is revitalized when we experience life together with our local and international ministry partners.

Some highlights from this past year include:

IELCO: The Lutheran Church of Colombia (international)

- Kathy Chatelaine and Rev. Mark Johnson represented SEMN Synod congregations at IELCO's annual assembly where Bishop John Rojas was elected as IELCO's new bishop. Bishop Atahualpa (Ata) Hernandez was honored for his nine years of service as bishop. During his tenure, Bishop Ata, a leader who knew most of IELCO's 1,800 members by name, stabilized and then strengthened the church while advocating for justice and peace in Colombia during a time spanning a fragile peace agreement and global pandemic.
- The people of IELCO continue to walk with marginalized populations, including the elderly, in the barrios of cities and in distant rural areas providing basic human needs, education, and dignity to people who are often overlooked by the government and shunned by their neighbors.
- This faithful church courageously continues to welcome Venezuelan refugees into their communities, generously sharing food, shelter, and relationships in the name of Jesus.

ELCT-CD: The Lutheran Church of Tanzania - Central Diocese (international)

- In a region where over 85% of the people eke out a living as subsistence farmers - growing just enough food on this harsh land to feed their family, pay their taxes - the Central Diocese provides its members and their neighbors access to basic health care and quality secondary education for rural youth, while equipping remote rural congregations with trained pastors and evangelists
- In July, a group from St. John's Lutheran Church, Kasson, visited Central Diocese schools, dispensaries, and congregations - including Shelui, their partner congregation. During their visit, the new Thomas Musa Pharmacy was opened in the central city of Singida. This centralized pharmacy, named after the first bishop of the Central Diocese, provides pharmaceuticals at a lower cost to rural health care facilities.
- In January, 11 people from SEMN Synod congregations joined Bishop Regina and Kathy on an eight-day visit in the Central Diocese. In addition to visiting our partners and friends at rural congregations, schools, and health care facilities, Bishop Regina joined Bishop Syprian Hilinti (ELCT-CD), pastors and former bishops, regional government leaders, and over 1,000 additional people in dedicating the *Bishop Regina Girls Secondary School* in Kititimo, a 'suburb' of Singida. Scheduled to open in September, this school will provide a quality education to girls, many of which would not have had the opportunity to attend secondary school. (Photos and a

Global Ministry Report

travelogue can be found at: semnsynod.org/news)

- With U.S. government cuts to international aid programs, the Central Diocese is facing the reality of diverting funds for education and expansion of quality health care in order to provide the pharmaceuticals (malaria treatment, antiretrovirals) needed to preserve life.

South Sudanese ministries (local)

- Pastor Joseph Ajok Garang Bol joins William Deng as formal leaders of the Dinka worshiping community. Over the summer, the Dinka community provided a multi-week basketball camp experience for Rochester-area South Sudanese youth as well as hosted the Episcopalian Bishop of South Sudan.
- Through Nuer Community Lutheran Church, the synod's newest congregation, we are reminded that the Holy Spirit is always doing a new thing for the sake of Gospel proclamation. Beginning its second year, this vibrant community is growing in leadership and mission. Their deep faith and shared life together embody the spirit of accompaniment - offering a compelling witness that strengthens and inspires the whole synod.

Hunger ministries (local)

- Five SEMN Synod congregations received a \$500 grant from the SEMN Synod Food Ministry Grant, funded through donations from synod congregations. These funds provided seed money for new food ministries within local SEMN communities.
- Grace Lutheran Church (Fairmont) is the recipient of a 2025 ELCA Domestic

Hunger Grant! With the funds, Grace will expand access to the intergenerational garden they initially started this past summer - with seed money from the *local SEMN Synod Food Ministry Grant*.

AMMPARO: Welcoming our neighbors (local)

- Congregations and leaders throughout our synod continue to faithfully accompany neighbors within our communities by generously sharing their time, talents, and/or treasures.
- SEMN Synod rostered and lay leaders are walking alongside marginalized communities during the recent ICE actions, including advocating for Christ's compassion and justice.

Opportunities for congregations to engage in global ministries (international and local)

- SEMN congregations generously provide designated funds to the ELCT-CD for equipping of rural clinics (dispensaries), providing scholarships so that rural girls have the opportunity to attend secondary education, and equipping new pastors to share the good news of Jesus within a growing rural church. For example,
- \$50/month (\$500/year) provides secondary school education (including at the new Bishop Regina Girls Secondary School) for a daughter of a Central Diocese subsistence farmer
- \$100 goes towards supplies and equipment needed by schools and rural dispensaries (health clinic), pharmaceuticals that are no longer received through USAID, food packets

Global Ministry Report

for people served through the palliative care ministry, etc.

- Other current SEMN global ministry funding your congregation can contribute to:
 - Equipment and supplies for a new vocational education (sewing & cooking) for high school students attending Kijota Hull High School (TZ fund)
 - Seed money for local SEMN congregations to address hunger in their respective communities (SEMN Food Ministry fund)
 - Partnering with the Lutheran Church in Colombia (IELCO), provide food, water, and clothing to Venezuelan children who, due to the closing of the U.S./Mexico border, are stuck in Colombia (Colombia fund)
 - Accompaniment of recent immigrants within SEMN communities (SEMN AMMPARO fund)
- SEMN congregations are experiencing the joys found in personal relationships cultivated through virtual (WhatsApp, Zoom, and email) visits with people in the Central Diocese while experiencing ‘tastes of a culture’ – music, food, dance, traditions - within their respective congregations. Discover how your congregation can be a part of this reality of living as the Body of Christ with our global partners!
- Learn more about local and international global partnerships through an adult forum, a confirmation or VBS experience, or a synod ministry gathering. Discover how you and your congregation can engage in these vibrant relationships!

- *A Migrant Journey* interactive experience provides an objective encounter with historical and current migration realities by walking in the shoes of two Central American youth and the people they meet on their journey to the U.S./México border. Schedule the newly updated *A Migrant Journey* for your congregation’s confirmation program, adult forum, or special community event!

To explore how your congregation can be connected with local or international global ministry initiatives, check out the new global ministry website pages at semnsynod.org/globalministry and/or contact Kathy Chatelaine, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry at:

- chatelaine@semnsynod.org
- Phone extension: 108

Financial giving can be done online at: semnsynod.org/giving.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy Chatelaine, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry.

Report of the Presiding Bishop



"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

March 23, 2026

Dear siblings in Christ,

As you gather for your synod assembly, I want to express my gratitude for what you are doing — and have been doing — for this church, *our* church.

In the months since I was installed as presiding bishop, I have been focused on connection. Some of you have heard me talk about what it means to be a connected church. This vision of connectedness grows directly out of one of the three priorities we, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, have named for this season of our life together.

When we lifted up these priorities, we committed ourselves to them not as abstract ideas but as guiding commitments for how we live and serve as church. As I reflected on them, the third priority stood out with particular clarity: to be a connected, sustainable church, raising the bar together.

That priority has been shaping my thinking and my leadership. It asks not just what we do but how we do it — together, across congregations, synods and the churchwide organization. Connectedness is not a program or a slogan; it is a way of being church that recognizes our shared calling and our shared responsibility. This is not my church. It is yours. It is ours, together. The ministries you carry out in your congregations and synods are not just yours — they are ours together.

Over the next several years, you will hear this priority expressed with greater focus and clarity. In 2026, our emphasis is on connection — strengthening relationships, listening deeply and recognizing how much we depend on one another.

In 2027, you will begin to hear me speak more intentionally about sustainability — how we steward our people, our resources and our structures so that our witness remains strong for generations to come. By 2028, connection and sustainability will come together in a shared language of togetherness, as we more fully live into who God is calling us to be as church.

So, when you hear language about being together, it is about living out the ELCA's vision of a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. It matters deeply to me that we know who we are, moving forward as one body, trusting God and one another.

I believe this is how connection is built — not by standing alone but by being church together.

With gratitude and hope,

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Retirement Recognition

This section honors the rostered ministers who have retired within the past year. Some are now serving interim calls and others are exploring the new possibilities into which the Spirit is leading them. Please hold these leaders in your prayers as they transition into the next chapter of their ministry journey: retirement.

We give thanks for their leadership!

Rev. Patricia Reedstrom (6/1/2025)

Rev. Marie Anderson (7/1/2025)

Rev. Dean Lundgren (7/1/2025)

Rev. Steven Berkeland (9/1/2025)

Rev. Dr. Glenn Monson (1/1/2026)

Anniversary Celebrations

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Ministers of Word and Sacrament

5 Years

Peg Marose - 6/26/2021

10 Years

Allison Cobb - 1/16/2016

Christopher Meester - 4/3/2016

Nissa Peterson - 8/27/2016

Susan Leibnitz - 1/16/2016

15 Years

Cole McCormick - 11/12/2011

Jeanette Bidne - 7/31/2011

Jonathan Davis - 6/26/2011

Joshua Enderson - 7/10/2011

Paige Whitney - 6/12/2011

Robert Zahn - 12/17/2011

Suzanne Froelich - 9/16/2011

20 Years

Anthony Bateza - 10/28/2006

Carol Mapa - 4/22/2006

Herman Bakker - 9/9/2006

Kent Narum - 9/24/2006

Nancy Hansen - 7/2/2006

Paul Miller - 6/18/2006

25 Years

Dean Smith - 12/9/2001

Heidi Heimgartner - 7/8/2001

Jillene Fritch-Gallatin- 7/22/2001

Lydia Mittag - 7/29/2001

Michael Short - 8/19/2001

30 Years

David Sorenson - 7/13/1996

Scott Olson - 6/9/1996

35 Years

Carl Bruihler Jr. - 2/3/1991

Charlene Cox - 6/30/1991

Glenn Monson - 8/18/1991

Margaret Pleiss-Sippola - 9/29/1991

40 Years

Daniel Dimick - 7/27/1986

Jane Timmerman - 6/8/1986

Jeffrey Forbes - 8/31/1986

Nancy Toensing - 8/17/1986

Steven Berkeland - 6/15/1986

45 Years

Betsy Dartt - 6/6/1981

Byron Meline - 6/21/1981

Joel Xavier - 12/6/1981

Linda Helberg - 10/11/1981

Phillip Ruud - 6/28/1981

Rachael Hanson - 5/29/1981

Steven Schwartz - 6/13/1981

Timothy Sersen - 8/30/1981

Vernon Christopherson - 8/30/1981

Waldemar Gies - 6/14/1981

William Klavetter - 8/16/1981

50 Years

Duane Holst - 8/15/1976

Gerald Gengenbach - 7/11/1976

Richard Jorgensen - 2/15/1976

Susanne Smith - 12/12/1976

55 Years

Gary Hanson - 6/13/1971

Lawrence Lindmark - 6/14/1971

Philip Lewison - 6/27/1971

Rolf Wangberg - 8/15/1971

60 Years

Kenneth Jensen - 7/24/1966

65 Years

Gordon Trelstad - 6/4/1961

Milton Ost - 6/4/1961

Orlin Mandsager - 6/18/1961

70 Years

Curtis Johnson - 5/20/1956

Ivan Amman - 7/22/1956

Luther Olson - 6/17/1956

Myrwood Bagne - 5/27/1956

75 Years

Eugene Hasselquist - 5/16/1951

Anniversary Celebrations

Ministers of Word and Service

10 Years

Travis Beck - 3/13/2016

20 Years

Todd Portinga - 11/29/2006

25 Years

Jennelle Cunning - 6/24/2001

CONGREGATION ANNIVERSARIES

25 Years

Peace Lutheran Church
in Eyota

75 Years

Grace Lutheran Church
in Peterson

150 Years

Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Glenville

Hayward Lutheran Church
in Hayward

Marshall Lutheran Church
in Adams

Oakland Lutheran Church
in Albert Lea

St. John Lutheran Church
in Mapleton

St. John Lutheran Church
in Kasson

Thank You!

To all who make this Synod Assembly possible.

EVENT PRODUCTION

Aesthetics:

Rev. Jackie Short

Hospitality + accessibility:

Kathy Chatelaine

Technology + production:

AV For You

Ashley Corbett

Worship:

Mary Kay Bougie

Isabelle Duran

Quin Johnson

Bierte Peterson

Tony Santos

Rev. Matt Larson

Photographer:

Gabe Saenz

Registration + ushering:

Sadie Neigum

Sara Obermeyer

Donna Perryman

Karen Myers

Barb Feder

Sally Burdick

Jodie Wallschlaeger

Joe Ahrens

Jean Zandstra

Stan Bruss

Zella Vandervort

Paul Streed

Debra Lee

Synod Vice President:

Lisa Dierks

Secretary:

Rev. Joshua Enderson

Synod Treasurer:

Tamara Dahlvang

Parliamentarian:

Dave Borka

Synod Council Members:

David Holger

Matthew Huggenvik

Barbara Lake

Bradley Leathers

Jennifer Levisen

Roy Srp

Ed Taylor

Dr. Joyce Thompsen

Rev. Jessica Bakken Bush

Rev. Shawn Brooks

Rev. Anna Ferro

Rev. Cheryl Indehar

Rev. Sam Mailleue

Sam Pollock

Nominating Committee:

Rev. Matthew Griggs

Rev. Maureen Hagen

Deacon Robert Tewes

Rev. Heath Queen

Katherine Holger

Lisa Dierks

Reference + Counsel:

Dave Borka,

Advisory member

Rev. Emily Carson,

Synod staff liaison

Sue Frederickson

Rev. Krista Henning-Ferkin

Dave Holger,

Chairperson

Rev. Beth Krolak

Rev. Dr. Scott Olson

Dick Osborne

Credential Committee:

Rev. Peg Marose,

Chairperson

Nancy Svendsen

Dale Svendsen

Rev. Sarah Deutsch

Juanita Kramer

Rev. Mary Feil

CONFERENCE DEANS

Blue Earth River (BER):

Rev. Kristi Mitchell

Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne

Cannon River (CR):

Rev. Drew Yackel

Rev. Inger Hanson

Minnesota River (MR):

Rev. Sam Mailleue

Rev. Heath Queen

Root River (RR):

Rev. Kris Kincaid

Rev. Sarah Walker Brown

Zumbro River (ZR):

Rev. Timothy Bowman

Rev. Mike Mandsager

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP STAFF

Cheryse Brenno

Rev. Emily Carson

Kathy Chatelaine

Ashley Corbett

Rev. Matt Larson

Sadie Neigum

Rev. Barb Streed

Tharan Leopold, M.A. CES

OUR BISHOP

Bishop Regina Hassanally

Partner and Organization Reports

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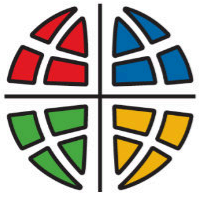
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In the following pages you will find reports from ELCA organizations, some of our partners, ministry organizations operating in our synod, and ELCA schools. These reports were provided by the ministries for use in this report. All partners and relevant ministries have the opportunity to submit such a report.

Those represented here are not an exhaustive list. You can learn more about all of the organizations we are connected to by visiting our website and clicking on "Ministry Areas." There you will find links to global ministry, faith formation, campus ministries, partners, organizations, and more.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

CHURCH PROPERTY RESOURCE HUB

Resourcing Faith-driven Church Property Stewardship

A project of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the **Church Property Resource Hub** was built in response to requests from synod and local church leaders, to support them in navigating the challenges and opportunities that buildings and land represent for both congregational vitality and the wider mission of the church.



COURSES & RESOURCES

Find **resources** and expand your knowledge of church property management through templates, guides, explainers and **courses**.



SUPPORT FORUM

Share advice and get support from colleagues with experience answering property management questions, all on our digital **forum** (forthcoming).



SUCCESS STORIES

Be inspired by **success stories** of faith communities using underutilized space in exciting new ways to fulfill their mission.

Why Is the Church Property Resource Hub Being Developed?

The Church Property Resource Hub (CPRH) was created **in response to questions and needs voiced by synods and congregations** regarding the use, management and support of church-held property. Our congregations find themselves with buildings and land that no longer fit their need for programming or their capacity to manage them. This has spurred urgent conversations at local and synod levels about the future of church property. There was no centralized hub collecting the information and wisdom congregations need to **faithfully steward buildings and land** for both congregational vitality and mission impact. The ELCA churchwide organization is addressing this need by equipping congregation and synod leaders with the expertise that will empower congregations to continue to steward their buildings and land as a witness to the gospel through the Church Property Resource Hub.

Sign up for “**Church Property Resource Hub Newsletter**” for the latest news and resources.



The Church Property Resource Hub is ...

... an online platform that connects congregations and synod leaders to information, organizations and guidance on effective, faith-driven management of church property. It includes how-to lessons for the many aspects of property stewardship, stories of congregations that have found creative solutions to property challenges, and a network of professionals who can answer questions and partner with congregations and synods.

The resource hub is **built for synod and local church leaders, to help them navigate the challenges and opportunities that buildings and land represent.** The hub offers advice and experience for churches in a variety of contexts across the United States, from urban centers to suburban areas to rural and small-town communities. The Church Property Resource Hub is a growing initiative that will be completed by 2028, though the first, most basic version was launched in August 2025.

The Church Property Resource Hub is NOT ...

... an attempt by the churchwide organization to take control of congregations' property. Local churches hold the title and deed to their property; their right to make independent decisions about the use, management and future of their property is codified in the ELCA constitution and churches' individual constitutions.

... an attempt by the churchwide organization to bypass synods' relationships with their congregations. The resource hub is being built **in collaboration with synod leaders** and equips them to **assist and guide congregations** that approach the synod with ideas, questions or concerns about property stewardship.

Who leads the Church Property Resource Hub?

The Church Property Resource Hub is led by the **Rev. Sarah Jones** (program director), **Deacon Sarah Kretschmann** (digital communications manager) and the **Rev. Tim Brown** (director of congregational stewardship). This team is reaching out across the ELCA, our sibling denominations and the many organizations and businesses that focus on church property, to collect, curate and disseminate information that synods and congregations need. Please reach out with your questions!



ELCA Federal Credit Union

ELCA Federal Credit Union Faithful financial services for ELCA members and ministries



The ELCA Federal Credit Union (ELCA FCU) provides a full range of financial products and services to members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA. **As the first of the ELCA's financial ministries to offer loans to individuals**, the Credit Union offers savings and checking accounts, CDs, loans and lines of credit, credit cards, home mortgage loans for purchases or refinances, as well as home equity loans and lines of credit.

The ELCA FCU serves ministries through federally insured deposit accounts, a flexible corporate credit card program, auto loans and unsecured ministry loans up to \$100,000 to support smaller projects such as building repairs and purchases. In addition, the Workplace Banking program allows ministry organizations and congregations to offer ELCA FCU Credit Union products and services, along with other exclusive perks, to their employees.

A new cohort joined the ELCA's Resourceful Servants program, **designed to improve financial wellness and assist rostered leaders in building emergency savings funds**. Through this matching program, ELCA rostered leaders make ongoing deposits to their Credit Union emergency savings accounts. The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA matches those deposits up to an established amount. Together, more **than 700 rostered ministers** have been served, collectively depositing more than \$1 million in emergency savings.

A **strong online presence** means members have access to funds with an ELCA Federal Credit Union Mastercard Debit Card at more than 30,000 surcharge-free ATMs. The ELCA FCU also offers account-to-account (A2A) transfers, person-to-person (P2P) payments (similar to Venmo and Zelle), remote deposit, bill pay and more.

Why choose the ELCA Federal Credit Union?

- **The ELCA Federal Credit Union supports the ELCA's mission of good stewardship.** We provide full services to all ELCA members, congregations and related ministries.
- **As a not-for-profit financial cooperative chartered to serve our church, we offer socially responsible banking solutions often priced more competitively** than traditional banks. We have demonstrated success in providing savings to our members.
- **With the church as our sponsor, we operate in ways that are consistent with the church's values.**

Membership is open to every ELCA member, synod, congregation and ministry—and their employees.

For more information about the products and services of the ELCA Federal Credit Union, please visit our website, elcafcu.org or call us toll-free at 877-715-1111.



The Mission Investment Fund: Helping ELCA congregations bring ministry to life



The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a *financial services ministry of the ELCA*, has been a **steady and reliable financial partner** for congregations, ministries and individuals for more than 150 years. Through times of growth and uncertainty alike, MIF has remained committed to strengthening ELCA ministries and communities — delivering customer-first support backed by flexible financing solutions.

In 2025, MIF continued to support ministry growth across the ELCA. Your investments helped expand worship spaces, rebuild congregations after fires and natural disasters, provide spaces for people to age with dignity, start green projects and support accessibility remodeling for community spaces. Each project strengthens ELCA ministries, ensuring that they stay vibrant, inclusive and fully prepared to support the communities they serve.

By the numbers:

- **Total Loans Outstanding:** \$614,967,000
- **Total Assets:** \$779,189,000
- **Total Investment Obligations:** \$551,452,000
- **Net Assets & Capital Ratio:** 27.4%

What makes MIF unique?

- **Proven stability:** With more than a century and a half of experience, MIF has weathered changing economic and political landscapes, maintaining financial strength for ELCA ministries.
- **Deep expertise in church and ministry financing:** We understand the unique needs of faith communities and have longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects.
- **Competitive rates and terms:** Our financial offerings are structured to support ministries of all sizes.
- **A full suite of financial services:** In partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union, we provide a range of financial solutions for congregations, ministries and individuals.
- **Faithful stewardship:** Investments in MIF directly support loans that fund hundreds of capital projects across the church.

MIF continues to enhance our tools and financial services to better support ELCA ministries. And even as we look ahead with fresh vision and innovation, our foundation remains the same: enduring trust, time-tested stability and commitment woven through generations. In every chapter, we journey with ELCA members and ministries, united in faith — a steadfast partner supporting God’s work in the world.

MIF at work in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod (as of December 31, 2025):

- 9 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$6,738,964
- \$10,083,180 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations.

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact Dan Schwiesow, Senior Director, Sales and Consulting Services: 773-682-5284 dan.schwiesow@elca.org

Updates from the ELCA Foundation

Synod Assemblies 2026



We are the ELCA Foundation, a financial ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We walk alongside faithful people and organizations – helping them turn generosity into legacy, and legacy into ministry.

We believe generosity is more than a financial act; it is a testimony of faith, gratitude and hope. With \$1.5 billion in donor-designated gifts and invested assets entrusted to our care, we partner with individuals and organizations to thoughtfully steward these resources and maximize their impact.

We serve as a bridge between individual generosity and the shared mission of the ELCA – from congregations and synods to seminaries, outdoor ministries, and churchwide ministries such as ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response. Every planned gift we steward is an investment in the church's life – now and into the future.

What we do

We offer guidance that is both spiritually grounded and financially sound, ensuring every gift reflects the heart of the giver and the needs of the church.

- **Gift Planning Services:** Our regional gift planners accompany individuals and families through faithful, personalized planning – helping them create charitable legacies through bequests, trusts, charitable gift annuities, real estate, retirement assets and more.
- **Ministry Growth Fund:** A socially responsible investment option that supports endowments and ministries across the ELCA, balancing fiduciary excellence with faithful stewardship.
- **Resources and Tools:** From our online Planning Library and free Personal Estate Planning Kit to our partnership with Giving Docs, we provide easy, trustworthy ways to start planning today.
- **Ministry Partnership:** We help ELCA ministry leaders grow a culture of generosity without adding more to their workload, offering training, templates and direct support to strengthen local ministry.



Our vision

is to support and sustain ELCA ministries by enhancing gifting capacity and stewarding resources.

Our mission

is to be a thriving ministry that develops a culture of intentional generosity and financial stewardship to expand the work of the ELCA.

Updates from the ELCA Foundation

Synod Assemblies 2026



2025 At a Glance ✨

In 2025, the ELCA Foundation's gift planning network walked alongside **190 donors/families** in developing faith-focused gift plans that reflect their passion and purpose.

\$79.9M

in future planned-gift commitments

\$6.9M

in currently funded gifts

\$34.4M

in direct support to individual congregations

\$105.4M

in existing gifts to ministry stewarded

In total, the network generated **\$205.4 million** in gifts and investment assets, which includes **\$118.5 million** in new assets invested in the Ministry Growth Fund.

Let's continue the conversation

The ELCA Foundation has gift planning tools for every situation and professional staff throughout the U.S. ready to walk with you every step of the way. All of our gift planning services are made available to individuals and congregations without obligation. Contact your gift planner to get started:

Tharan Leopold

Tharan.Leopold@elca.org

507-838-1980

Region 3 Archives

Introduction

2026 marks the 38th year of the ELCA Region 3 Archives. While the ELCA Region 3 Archives continues to be housed at Luther Seminary and serve the church across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota, it has entered a period of significant transition. This time of change will have its challenges, but it will also include meaningful opportunities for deepening the engagement between the archives and congregations.

A Time of Transition

- In June 2025, Paul Daniels retired from the role of archivist, after 42 years of service. We give thanks for Paul's faithful commitment to preserving and promoting the stories of Lutheran communities with curiosity and care. The new archivist for ELCA Region 3 and Luther Seminary, Caleb Rollins, began full-time in July 2025. As a student in the MA program in History of Christianity at Luther Seminary, Caleb volunteered in the archives for several years and had a months-long apprenticeship with Paul before taking over full-time.
- In June 2025, Luther Seminary announced that they would sell their campus and move to a new location in the Twin Cities. Luther Seminary has indicated their intention to continue serving as the physical home of the ELCA Region 3 Archives. Luther Seminary anticipates remaining on its current campus through the 2026-2027 school year, and has formed a working group focused on finding their new location. As of the submission of this report, the process of finding a new location is still ongoing.
- Preparing for any kind of move takes time, especially when that move requires you to carefully transport over 175 years of Lutheran history! In order to properly execute this move, the archives will have to close to most researchers for a few extended periods of time to allow staff to focus on this monumental task. While this move will take time and energy, it will also provide an opportunity to improve the organization and arrangement of ELCA Region 3 records so that they can be more accessible to synod staff, congregations, and other researchers.

Personal Gratitude

As I finish my first eight months as archivist for ELCA Region 3, I also wanted to express my gratitude to all of the synod staff and congregation members I have met so far. You have been incredibly hospitable and patient as we navigate this period of transition together. Thank you! I look forward to meeting more of you in the coming months and years and collaborating on projects that help congregations preserve and promote stories from the past that propel them into a faithful future.

Respectfully submitted 3.11.26 by Caleb Rollins, ELCA Region 3 Archivist and Luther Seminary Archivist crollins002@luthersem.edu

A YEAR OF PATIENCE, RESILIENCE, HOPE, & JOY

When we gather each January before the second semester, we write words on wooden stars during worship. We remember how God guided the magi to the Christ child in the shining of a star and ponder what God might be calling us to in the next year. I encourage the students to place their star where they might see it regularly. Last January, the word “patience” came to my mind, and I immediately wanted to run the other direction like the reluctant prophet, Job. *I don't want to have to have more patience! I've already faced too much uncertainty and upheaval following the fire at the LCC!* A friend and colleague gave another star to me the following week, this one labeled “abundance.” That sounded much better. Suspecting I might need both, though, “patience” and “abundance” have looked up at me from my table for the past year.

To tell you all the times and ways in which we had surprises and setbacks through the rebuilding process would take far too long. Suffice it to say, we have needed patience. The lot where the LCC building once stood still lies empty, waiting until warmer temps for us to break ground and finally, *finally* rebuild.

Dear ones, to tell you all the times we have experienced abundance in the past year would also take a long time. We have more first year students showing up for dinner, worship, Bible study, and other activities than I've seen in a while. They are earnest, engaging, full of wonder, joy, and beautiful questions and ideas. Our returning students have done an incredible job of welcoming--welcoming in a way that allows the newcomers to influence and change the community, too. Our student ministers, Elsie and Emma, listen well to their peers, preparing to offer more Bible study (per request!) next semester and nights of service for nursing students and others who want to be involved in community and world.

It continues to be a joy & honor to serve the LCC. God is leading us through the wilderness and teaching us what it means to hold patience, abundance, resilience, hope, and joy together. We trust that God is good, all the time. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your involvement and support in this time and always.

With patience *and* abundant hope, Pastor Corrine



Our new logo is based off the LuMin (ELCA campus ministry network) logo. This helps people recognize ELCA campus ministries nationwide. The rainbow portion represents our theological commitment to welcome & claim belovedness, esp. for our LGBTQIA+ siblings. The other colors represent the higher ed institutions in Winona-- purple for Winona State, green for Southeast Tech, and red for St. Mary's. The cross is our center and reaches out to the wider world.



Crossroads Campus Ministry- Mankato

331 Dillon Avenue
Mankato, Minnesota 56001-4005
507-625-6779

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Crossroads is a non-profit ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In its many forms, this ministry has served the campus community for over 100 years.

What We Believe

- That God is the source and goal of life.
- That God, the wholly Other, has been made known in Jesus Christ.
- That the Scriptures, read with discernment, reveal God in our midst today.
- That the Holy Spirit makes Christ present and invites us to grow into the mystery of God.
- To love God and neighbor is the basic calling of each person.
- That our lives now, and after death, are held securely in the gracious hands of God.

Staff

- Rev. Jenna Couch
- Teri Herder-Blahnik

Board of Directors

- Deacon Ian Heseltine, President
- Pastor Jacie Richmond, Vice President
- Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Treasurer
- Deacon Jessie Camp, Secretary
- Pastor Janet Adams
- Mackenzie Otterson
- Pastor Scott Richards
- Sarah Suskovic



Crossroads Campus Ministry- Mankato

Program Reports

- **Lunch for a Buck**

Seven ELCA congregations, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Calvary Lutheran Church (Rapidan), Christ the King Lutheran Church, Epiphany Lutheran Church (Eagle Lake), Grace Lutheran Church, Messiah Lutheran Church (North Mankato), and Our Savior's Lutheran Church (Cleveland), along with 42 volunteers, prepared, provided, and served lunch to Minnesota State University, Mankato students, staff, and community members on 28 Tuesdays during the Spring and Fall terms in 2025.

Due to challenges in volunteer recruitment, one long-standing partner congregation was unable to continue participation prior to the Fall term. This created a need to fill several open weeks, and Crossroads stepped in to provide meals on two occasions, serving 91 individuals directly.

In total, 1,177 individuals were served through Lunch for a Buck in 2025. Donations of \$1,081.06 were collected and reinvested into the program, supporting the purchase of food, beverages, and supplies.

Hunger and food insecurity remain real and pressing concerns on campus. We are deeply grateful for our congregational partners and volunteers who make this ministry possible.

- **Campus Cupboard**

The Campus Cupboard food pantry continues to be one of the most vital expressions of Crossroads' ministry. Open weekly to students from Minnesota State University, Mankato, South Central College, and Bethany Lutheran College, the Cupboard provides essential food support to those navigating increasing financial pressure.

In 2025, the demand for food support remained at historically high levels. Ongoing SNAP benefit reductions, combined with rising food costs, have significantly impacted students' ability to meet basic needs. As a result, food insecurity on campus is not decreasing. It is growing.



Crossroads Campus Ministry- Mankato

Over the course of the year, the Campus Cupboard served 10,741 households, including 12,801 adults, 999 children, and 71 seniors, and distributed a total of 170,690 pounds of food.

At its peak in April, the Cupboard served 1,347 households in a single month. Even in the summer months, when campus populations typically decline, demand remained steady, with hundreds of households continuing to rely on this resource.

This ministry depends on strong partnerships, including food banks, local organizations, and dedicated volunteers who give their time and energy each week. Together, they make it possible for Crossroads to respond to immediate needs with dignity and care.

Financial Report

In 2025, Crossroads received \$43,485.66 in support through individual donors and grant funding. We are deeply grateful for this generosity, which makes our day-to-day ministry possible and allows us to continue responding to the growing needs of students with care and flexibility.

While challenges remain, this support reflects a strong foundation and a shared commitment to the future of this ministry. You'll see a more fledged out update on our financials on the next page.



Crossroads Campus Ministry- Mankato

Statement of Activity

January1-December31,2025

TOTAL

Revenue

INCOME

1 External Income

2030 Partner Congregations	15,187.92
2037 Ministry Support / Congregation	118,222.38
2038 Grants	249.89
2039 SEMN Synod ELCA	12,498.00
2041 ELCA Chicago	8,000.00
2049 Thrivent Choice	628.00
2050 Christ the King Salary Payment	15,015.18
2055 A Day in the Life of Crossroads Income	4,217.27
4039 Individual Donors	12,914.15

Total for 1 External Income

\$186,932.79
\$9,000.00

2 Internal Income

3010 Interest	540.89
3020 Parking Lot	350.00
3027 Lunch for \$1	578.62
3028 Space Rental Donation	75.00
3030 Rent Apartment	5,400.00
3042 Other Income	22,879.76
	\$38,824.27

Total for 2 Internal Income

3 Campus Cupboard Income

3110 Churches	1,860.00
3115 Individuals	545.00
3116 Grants	35,821.81

Total for 3 Campus Cupboard Income

\$38,226.81

Total for INCOME

\$263,983.87

Total for Revenue

\$263,983.87

Gross Profit

\$263,983.87

Expenditures

EXPENSE

100 Facilities Expense

110 Repair & Maintenance	\$35.96
5021 Snow Removal/Lawn Care	420.00
5032 Repairs and Maintenance	11,899.04

Total for 110 Repair & Maintenance

\$12,355.00

120 Utilities

5038 Water Machine- Culligan	598.25
5041 Gas -Center Point Energy	8,811.99
5043 Waste and Recycling- Waste Mgmt	3,948.67
5044 Water - City of Mankato	2,329.92
5045 Electricity- Xcel Energy	9,242.42
6020 Internet and Phone- Charter Com	2,424.92

Total for 120 Utilities

\$27,356.17



Crossroads Campus Ministry- Mankato

Statement of Activity

January1-December31,2025

TOTAL

Total for 100 Facilities Expense	\$39,711.17
200 Operations Expense	
5015 Technology Upgrades	56.08
5020 Fund Appeal	737.62
5026 Insurance (Mulit-Peril & W/C)	8,568.19
6000 Donor Communications	744.05
6040 Office Supplies	2,083.78
6050 Postage.	1,941.69
6060 Computer and Softerware	4,427.04
9010 Accounting	2.50
Total for 200 Operations Expense	\$18,560.95
300 Personnel Expense	
4022 Staff Mileage Reimb.	210.35
4030 Office Specialist Staff	16,585.61
4031 PTO Expense	231.25
4040 Payroll Taxes	209.62
4070 Pastor Salary	45,755.88
4071 Pastor Housing Allowance	16,800.00
4072 Pastor Social Security	2,367.56
4080 Employer Retirement	6,558.32
4090 Employer Basic Group Life	123.27
4098 Employer Disability Benefit	184.94
5035 Intern Stipend	12,000.00
5040 Janitorial Staff	7,729.43
5042 BookkeeperExpense	550.00
Total for 300 Personnel Expense	\$109,306.23
400 Program Expense	
410 Churchwide Participation	
7008Synod Conference / MeetingFees	450.00
Total for 410 Churchwide Participation	\$450.00
420 Other Programs	
3035 Apartment Expense	1,141.07
3036 Pest Control	303.75
7030 Events and Programs	322.75
7043 Lunch 4 \$1	1,017.94
Total for 420 Other Programs	\$2,785.51
Total for 400 Program Expense	\$3,235.51
700 Campus Cupboard Expense	
7110 Food Cost	44,301.63
7112 Equipment Repair	5,942.84
7114 Hygiene Supplies	22.63
7121 OtherExpenses	846.05
Total for 700 Campus Cupboard Expense	\$51,113.15
Total for EXPENSE	\$221,927.01



Crossroads Campus Ministry- Mankato

Statement of Activity

January1-December31,2025

	TOTAL
Payroll Expenses	-\$291.50
Taxes	1,441.78
Total for Payroll Expenses	\$1,150.28
Uncategorized Expense	871.18
TotalforExpenditures	\$223,948.47
Net Operating Revenue	\$40,035.40
Net Other Revenue	
Net Revenue	\$40,035.40



Crossroads Campus Ministry- Mankato

Dear friends in Christ,

This past year has been one of both challenge and quiet resilience in the life of Crossroads.

About a year ago, we found ourselves facing difficult but necessary conversations about the future of this ministry. Questions about financial sustainability, capacity, and how we could continue to meet the growing needs before us. Those were not easy moments, but they were faithful ones. They called us to be honest about where we were and intentional about where we are going.

Today, we find ourselves on the other side of that season, not without challenges, but with a renewed sense of clarity and purpose. Crossroads continues to be a place where students are met with care, dignity, and belonging in a time when those things are deeply needed.

That need has only grown. With ongoing SNAP benefit reductions and rising food costs, food insecurity on campus is not decreasing. It is growing. The Campus Cupboard continues to serve hundreds of households each month, and the demand placed on this ministry reflects broader realities facing students across our community. In the midst of this, Crossroads remains committed to showing up, providing not only food, but a sense of stability and care.

At the same time, this year also revealed the strength of our community. Through the generosity of donors and grant partners, Crossroads received \$43,485.66 in support in 2025. This support makes the day-to-day work of this ministry possible and sustains our ability to respond to growing needs with flexibility and care. We also give thanks for the leadership of Pastor Jenna, whose presence across campus, in the broader community, and throughout the synod has helped extend the reach of this ministry in meaningful ways. Her commitment to connection and outreach continues to shape how Crossroads is known and experienced. Even in a year marked by uncertainty, the heart of this ministry has remained steady. We see it in the shared meals of Lunch for a Buck, in the work of the Campus Cupboard, and in the everyday relationships that form the foundation of this community. These moments may not always be visible, but they are deeply transformative.



Crossroads Campus Ministry- Mankato

Crossroads has always been a place where faith becomes tangible, where love of neighbor takes shape in real and practical ways. That calling continues to guide us forward.

Thank you for your continued support, your prayers, and your partnership in this work. There is still work ahead of us, but we move forward grounded in hope and sustained by a community that believes in what this ministry makes possible.

With gratitude,
Rev. Deacon Ian Heseltine

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Heseltine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

President, Board of Directors

Thank You

We thank you for your continued prayers, generosity, and partnership in this work. Because of you, Crossroads continues to be a place where students are fed, welcomed, and reminded of their inherent worth.

Together, we trust in God's ongoing work through this ministry and look ahead with hope.

Crossroads Campus Ministry



The 2026 Lutheran Letter Campaign

The **state legislative session runs from January – May**, and we need Lutherans to take action throughout on our issues of hunger, poverty, care of creation, & love of neighbor.

While participation in our annual Letter-Writing Campaigns continues to grow, we still face challenges in raising awareness of the campaign and its issues among congregations and their related committees. Would you consider doing an **Offering of Letters during Lent next year?** Or what about **starting an Advocacy Circle** at your church?



This fall we hope to encourage **regular advocacy participation on Federal issues with monthly or bi-monthly check-in/issue update sessions over lunch.** During Lent and beyond we would like your participation on our state issues. (Lent is the best timing for letter campaigns to state legislators, while action alerts could occur at any time during session).

Take a moment to **check out this year's campaign resources.** Since it usually takes at least 2-3 years (and often more) to pass specific legislation, it is likely that many of this year's issues will be back in some form next year. You can find the 2026 downloadable resources under "Current Campaigns" in the dropdown menu under "Get Involved" at www.lutheranadvocacymn.org

POLITICAL VIOLENCE & EXTREMISM

We have a new section on our website addressing Political Violence, Division, and Extremism. If you scroll all the way to the bottom of the page, you will find our statement on Political Violence, put out after the assassination & shooting of some of our state lawmakers and their spouses. There is also a devotion available there which was led by Rev. Rebel Hurd (Northwestern Minnesota Synod) for our Policy Council following the violence. More resources and links will be added in the months to come.

[Available Under "Resources" at www.lutheranadvocacymn.org]

WEBINARS / EVENTS

Watch our Facebook page, website, and synod newsletters for information about upcoming Webinars on Election Integrity, Democracy, Civic Engagement, and more. We will also have some advocacy-focused events coming up and we'd love to have you participate.



2025 LEGISLATIVE RESULTS

The 2025 Minnesota Legislative Session came to its official close with much work left undone.

Overall Budget Negotiations – House and Senate landed in very different places in nearly every budget area. Weeks of negotiations by the leaders and governor finally resulted in a controversial agreement. The deal came so late that the House & Senate adjourned without the usual flurry of last day activity. Negotiations continued behind closed doors on the details within various budget areas, and in June the governor called a one-day Special Session to pass what was negotiated.

Affordable Housing – Thanks to lots of letters from Lutherans, steadfast advocacy by many Homes for All partners, and great bipartisan collaboration by House legislators, the House passed a housing package increasing funding by \$75 million and focused on four pillars of housing stability. Despite persistent advocacy, the Senate only passed an additional \$3 million. **Final Conference Committee negotiations added \$18 million, primarily for rental help and homeownership support**, with \$50 million in bonding to build or rehab more housing.

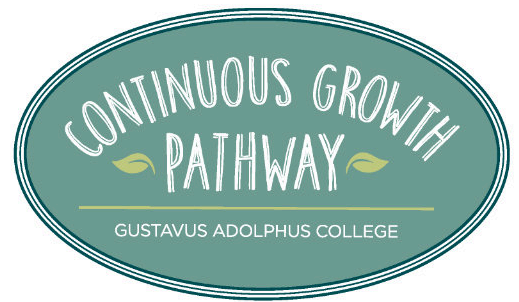


Tammy, Lutheran Advocacy-MN Director, testifies for a Senate Environment Committee hearing. Next to her is Sen. Rob Kupec, lead senate author on the electronic waste bill. Most bills must go through multiple committees.

Electronic Waste Recycling – We heard from bill author Sen. Kupec that our Lutheran advocacy was making a meaningful difference. The **proposal gained broad bipartisan support** after shifting to a manufacturer stewardship model with modest costs based on sales (similar to other waste and emissions programs). Many legislators across the political spectrum were interested and supportive of the bill. However, as concerns were raised by some manufacturers, messaging also began circulating in a few districts that framed the bill in partisan terms, creating concerns for some constituents who in turn put pressure on their legislators. In response, **some key co-authors ultimately withdrew their support, while remaining interested in the policy itself.** We continue to work with coalition partners and stakeholders on the bill.

Threats – It was clear throughout session that both Republicans and Democrats were getting threats of harm, with some legislators indicating they had increased exponentially in 2025. Following the June 14 assassination and shooting of colleagues and the spouses, many wondered if they were putting their families at risk by serving.

Making a Difference for Rostered Leaders



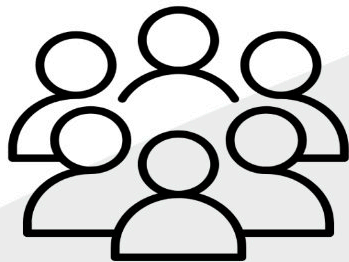
CGP 90%

say CGP is **giving them what they need**

Themes:

- Collegiality & Connection
- In Person Retreats & Events
- Timely & Relevant Learning
- Professional Support & Encouragement

"Love the connections with people and the good content. Text study is great. Lots of opportunities and good, fun people."



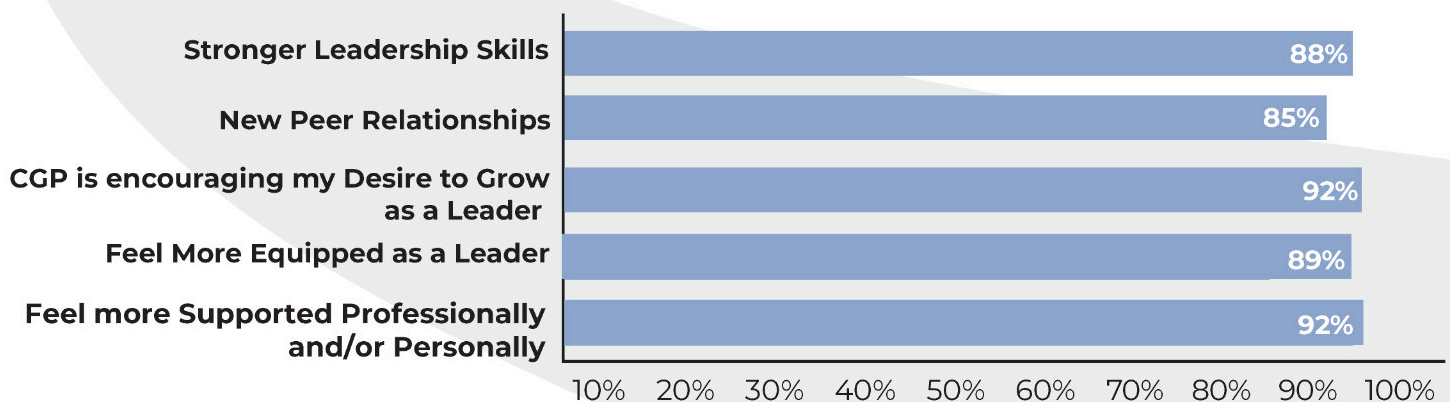
Peer Connections Matter

CGP participants frequently cite **Colleague/Cohort Groups and In Person Retreats** as the most valuable parts of CGP

"I need connections with other clergy, and I get that from CGP. I can now find someone to sit by at almost any synod gathering. This is a big deal!"

CGP MEMBERS

are experiencing **positive impacts from membership**



What is Continuous Growth Pathway (CGP)?

**CGP is a unique partnership between
Gustavus Adolphus College
+
Southeastern Minnesota Synod
+
Southwestern Minnesota Synod**

Together, we provide First Call Theological Education for Rostered Leaders in their first six years of ministry called Strong Start.

This partnership supports CGP programming for all stages of ministry – in person retreats to refuel after Easter, colleague group retreats, and time away to focus on discernment or grief.

The best thing we do together?

We remind Rostered Leaders they are in good company in this life of ministry! Connection with other pastors, deacons, and chaplains are the relationships that make all the other stuff good too.

So, what about Prairie Fire Preaching Community?

Wow, you're really paying attention. Thanks for asking.

This program will begin its second of three years this summer. Prairie Fire is not about preaching in front of your peers, unless that's what you want to do! Prairie Fire is for any ELCA preacher who is curious about their own craft of communication and wants to make valuable time to focus on one or more aspects of their own preaching process. Together with their peers, preachers set their own goals and attend quarterly retreats. At those retreats they listen to a working preacher, and 2 other experts from other fields talk about communication, inspiration, roadblocks and their view of creativity in the world.

One of our current participants said, "I wanted to like preaching again...and I wanted to figure out what my voice was with some other people. And I'm starting to like it again."

**prairiefirepreaching.com
cgpmn.org**

Questions? Want to join? Contact Rev. Laura Aase, Assistant Director for Continuous Growth Pathway at aase@gustavus.edu or **651-788-0868**

Synodical Women's Organization

“Speak Up” based on Proverbs 31: 8 “ *speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute*” was the theme for the 2025 Southeastern Minnesota Synodical Women’s Organization (SWO) Convention held at Grace Lutheran Church in Waseca. The keynote speaker was Joy McElroy, Director of Cherish All Children, a Lutheran Social Service (LSS) program to educate and prevent child sex trafficking and exploitation. During the 2024 – 2025 years the women of Southeastern Minnesota raised over \$8000 for Cherish All Children more than doubling the goal of \$4000.

Spring Events were held in all five conferences. These events are planned by conference leadership who chooses the theme and a Love Offering focus. Love Offerings are the supplies or financial resources needed by the local, regional or global charity the conference chooses. In 2025 the SWO Board invited Lutheran Campus Center (LCC) in Winona to host the Root River Spring Event. Root River had not been able to find a host congregation for two years. LCC invited the women at Grace Lutheran Church in Winona to be their co-host. Over 60 women from across the Root River Conference attended where nursing students hosted a wellness fair with blood pressure checks. Cross of Christ in Houston is hosting the 2026 Spring Event.

In celebration of their 150th years of service the women at St. John Lutheran Church in Northfield commissioned the composition of a hymn based on the Women of the ELCA’s purpose statement. This hymn has been shared with the Women of the ELCA Churchwide offices in Chicago and is available for use by any congregation that requests it. (Text by W. Bruce Benson 2025 –and is copyrighted with All Rights Reserved). The Hymn is called “For the Healing and Wholeness of the World.”

Delegates to the 2026 Women of the ELCA Triennial Business meeting (via zoom) were elected at that 2025 convention. The number of delegates is based on the number of congregational Women of the ELCA units in a synod. The SEMN Synod is allowed 6 plus the SWO President. Delegates are: Minnie Dunbar (Blue Earth River); Pamela Groves-Gaggioli (Cannon River); Terri Hanson (Blue Earth River); Judi Mickelson (Cannon River); Sharon Northouse (Zumbro River); Julie Schreifels (Cannon River) and Kathy Bolin (President).

Respectfully submitted by: Kathy Bolin, SEMN Synodical Women’s Organization President

Bolin1948@gmail.com; (507)292-0277



PATRICK THUESON, PRESIDENT

POWERING POSSIBILITIES

In September, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota celebrated its 160th anniversary at the annual Celebration for Changing Lives gala. I was happy to report then, and now, that LSS is a VERY healthy 160-year-old.

I am also pleased to share that in 2025, LSS exceeded our annual goal for the number of individuals and families we served while achieving our budget for the seventeenth consecutive year.

LSS is thriving because of the people who embrace the organization's mission – team members, volunteers, donors, funders, and the people we serve and support.

Across Minnesota, LSS team members focus on being trustworthy and delivering high-quality services – factors that we can control. In a world of uncertainty, these commitments form the foundation for our team members and volunteers who provide a broad array of services.

Wherever they serve, they follow a simple but powerful approach: First, they listen deeply to understand how each person wants to change their life; then, they work to remove barriers to independence, self-sufficiency, and resilience.

This process may be simple, but it's not easy. LSS team members and volunteers do difficult work – as do the

individuals we serve, who dare to dream bigger for themselves and their families. Seeking help takes strength and courage, and helping someone reach their full potential is a profound honor. We are grateful for the inspiration and determination they bring to the LSS mission.

Likewise, we are grateful to LSS' donors, funders, and supporters who trust us to be mindful stewards of their investments to support individuals in communities across Minnesota, North Dakota, and elsewhere. For 160 years – ten generations – Minnesotans have come together with LSS to dream bigger dreams for our neighbors.

Meaningful Work, Welcoming Workplace

In 2025, LSS was honored once again as a Star Tribune Top Workplace, based on feedback from our team members. This year, LSS also received a new distinction from them – the Cultural Excellence Award – recognizing our commitment to a positive, welcoming environment.

When asked to describe LSS, the two most common words were “welcoming” and “innovative.” These qualities shine through in the way our team members support one another and serve our communities every day. Their dedication makes LSS not only a great place to work but a place where meaningful change happens.

Empowering Our Next Chapter

One of LSS' enduring strengths has been universal and unwavering since the beginning – our ability to understand both the “how” of changing lives and the “why.” It is our mission, which remains vibrant, compelling, and vigilant: To share the love of Christ for ALL people.

The heart of this mission is seen in everyday moments across our 25-plus lines of service, as well as at the core of our recently launched comprehensive campaign, Empower What's Possible. From infrastructure projects to pilot service projects to an emphasis on sustainable funding, Empower What's Possible is kicking off LSS' next chapter of powering possibilities, big and small, for our neighbors.

Thank you for the important role you play in making that durable, ever-fresh mission a reality in so many lives today. And thank you for the special place you make in your heart for Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. Because of you, we can imagine the possibilities of an even brighter future.

With great gratitude,



Patrick Thueson
President

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS Seafarers International House

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: A Homecoming for Prisoners of Hope

Return to your fortress, you prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you.

Zechariah 9:12

Dear friends of Seafarers International House (SIH):

In February 2024, a report released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that refugees and asylees have generated tens of billions of dollars more in local, state, and federal tax revenues over the last 15 years than they have cost in direct government services — ultimately representing a net fiscal gain at all levels of government. (See text box for details.)*

And yet, throughout 2025 and especially today, many refugees and asylum seekers are being threatened with deportation and imprisonment. As SIH board member Ralie Deffenbaugh reminds us, in September 2025, the Council of Churches in Namibia convened an event titled “we are prisoners of hope,” which drew parallels between Namibia’s historical struggle for liberation and the current plight of refugees and asylum seekers. The phrase is based on Zechariah 9:12 and has historically been used by leaders like Bishop Zephania Kameeta and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. What a powerful connotation.

Here at SIH, we have been charting a course toward a grand Homecoming — a return to a new home through the purchase of a property in downtown Manhattan. Just a stone’s throw from our original site in 1873, this new space will become a true home away from

home for asylum seekers and seafarers, many of whom are “prisoners of hope.” Within these walls, our guests will find safety, welcome, and the assurance that they have reached a secure harbor.

During 2026, we will begin renovating this right-sized mission building, creating 16 guest rooms and community space to accommodate both small asylum-seeking families and individuals, as well as visiting seafarers. With these improvements underway, we are looking ahead to opening our doors in early 2027, ready to offer refuge and rest to all who arrive.

Parallel, we will be launching a comprehensive campaign to pay for the renovations, reduce the burden of a loan for the new building, and strengthen our services to seafarers and asylum seekers. We will keep you posted in the months to come.

In April 2025, we had a most successful Setting the Course reception thanks to the generosity of our honorees Susan Winfree, Willie Barrere, and notably Robert Sappio, - and their friends. The boost in event support enabled us to expand our services through a partnership with the Houston International Seafarers Center with our port chaplain Pastor Tammy Sharp in that busy port in the Lone Star State.

Thus, we continued a robust port mission in now six ports with nine port chaplains and ship visitors, and a fleet of six vans that we use to visit ships and to transport seafarers. In the summer and fall, volunteers from the Propeller Club, congregations, board members,

MISSION

Seafarers International House (SIH) is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and immigrants.

SIH offers hospitality, social assistance, and advocacy to a multi-national and multi-faith community in the Ports of Albany, Baltimore, Duluth, Houston, New Haven, and New York & New Jersey, and in New York City.

and individuals helped us assemble satchels. These efforts paid off with 3,405 Christmas-at-Sea satchels delivered to seafarers connecting donors with seafaring “prisoners of hope” who experienced the joy of Christmas.

In 2025, we served 19,519 people including 19 asylum seekers we welcomed providing them with shelter, food, and social work assistance; a far cry from the 33 and 49 in 2024 and 2023 respectively because asylum seekers are fearful of coming out of the shadows. Obviously, the curtailment on asylum seekers has had its effect.

With these positive 2025 highlights in mind, perhaps we are all “prisoners of hope” in that as we are bound together in despair, we are also bound together in hope that will not leave us imprisoned.

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

Jeremiah 29:11

Peace,



Marsh Luther Drage
Pastor and Executive Director

* From 2005 to 2019, refugees and asylees paid a total of \$123.8 billion more in taxes than they cost in government services, for a net fiscal gain of \$31.5 billion to the federal government and \$92.3 billion to state and local governments combined. Refugees and asylees paid an estimated \$363 billion to the federal government through payroll, income, and excise taxes, and \$218 billion to state and local governments through income, sales, and property taxes. Even when factoring in their spouses and children under 18, many of whom are U.S. citizens, refugees and asylees still provided a net fiscal gain, costing \$723.4 billion in government services yet paying \$739.4 billion in tax revenue, for a net gain of \$16 billion.

2025 Program Impact

19,519 immigrants and seafarers directly benefited from SIH's services (up from 19,066)

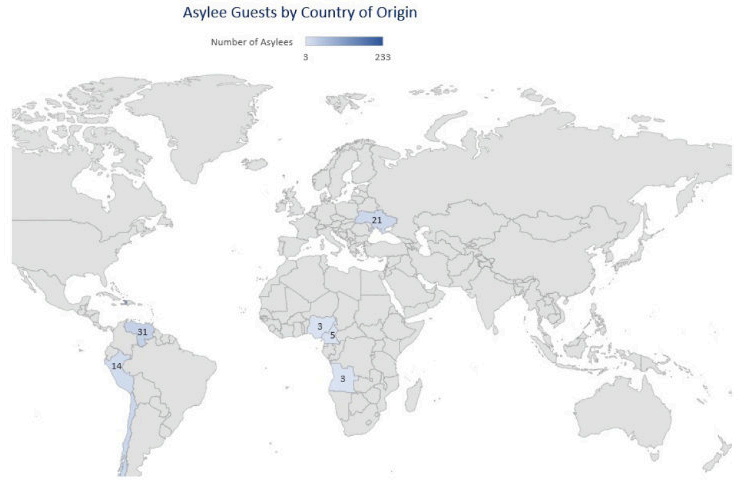
2,351 lodging nights (up from 2,225) provided to 139 seafarers in Manhattan.

14,078 seafarers were visited and counseled (up from 13,556) on 1,347 vessels, receiving essentials they requested.

1,878 seafarers were transported to a mall or medical facilities.

3,405 seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings to spread joy beyond borders and oceans.

19 asylum seekers received free lodging for a total of 1,328 nights. They hailed from Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Cuba (3), Haiti (5), Nigeria, Peru, Ukraine, and Venezuela (5). See map below.



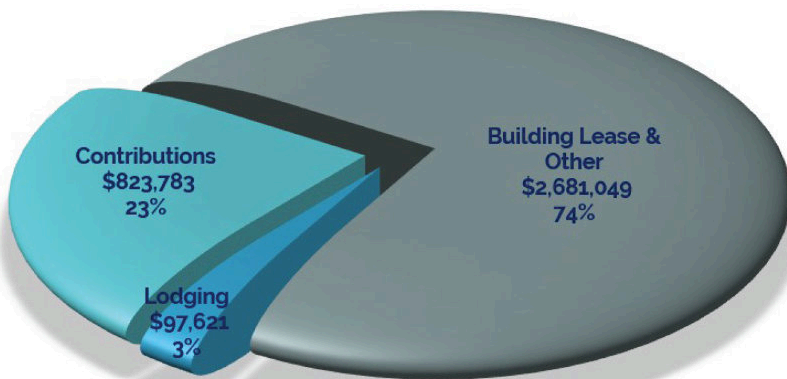
2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

In accordance with our 2024 - 2028 strategic plan, operating gains continued to help build reserves for the purchase of the new right-sized mission headquarters (\$1M). These gains also allow for capital repairs on the guesthouse (\$324,806), which is leased to Breaking Ground, a NYC-based non-profit which provides transitional housing to the community.

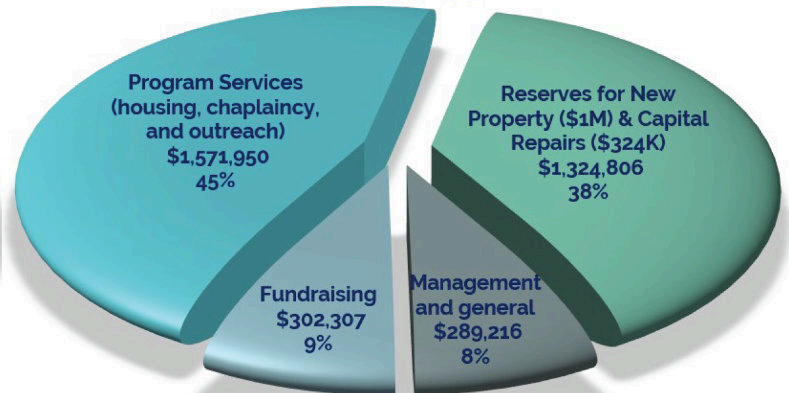
Lease revenue needs to be augmented by donations to support our services and the purchase and renovation of our new home starting in 2026. Program services and reserves accounted for 83% of expenses with only 17% spent on management and fundraising. These figures reflect unaudited revenue and expenses and are subject to change.

To request the audited 2025 financial statements please send an email to henryk@sihny.org. 


Operating Revenue 2025 (pre-audit) \$3,602,453



Operating Expenses & Reserves for New Property 2025 (pre-audit) \$3,488,279



Seafarers International House * Mailing Address: 120 West 14th Street, New York, NY 10011 * 212-677-4800 * info@sihny.org * www.SIHNYC.org

An Affiliate of the  ELCA

Follow us on



2025

ANNUAL REPORT



The Luther Seminary board in May 2025 voted unanimously to divest from our current physical campus and seek a new location that will provide us with a smaller footprint while providing the larger spaces needed for the evolution of teaching and learning. This decision is the result of many faithful and strategic conversations about how to amplify and sustain our mission of educating leaders for Christian communities over the long term.

Our mission is enduring, but how we deliver it has been changing for a long time. Divesting from the seminary's current campus is one part of an ongoing process to embrace more flexible models of education that meet the needs of our mission, the needs of the church, new forms of Christian community, and today's students. Over 70% of our current students engage primarily online from all over the U.S. Those who live away from campus serve in their local communities while engaging in coursework, then join us in the Twin Cities several times a year for intensive in-person classes. Students are learning in their church communities, not apart from them. Even as we rethink and maintain creative forms of residential learning, we have learned to deliver our mission in many new ways. Alongside our changing student body, we have been deeply engaged in the work of reimagining theological education for years. Having physical spaces configured for the seminary we are today and in the future is paramount to our educational mission.

We are in a strong position to navigate through these changes. The significant institutional shifts Luther Seminary must traverse are not easy, but we believe these changes will help us steward our resources more effectively for the sake of our students and the ministries they serve. Thanks to the generosity of many donors, we are able to offer a tuition-free education to all Luther Seminary students. The percentage of our students graduating without seminary debt continues to increase year over year, with 65% of our 2025 graduates leaving commencement without any seminary debt. This

spring, both the Higher Learning Commission and the Association of Theological Schools voted to fully accredit us for another 10 years, giving us strong affirmation after reviewing our finances, curriculum, student services, ethics and integrity, welcome, and mission. This fall, we were delighted to welcome one of our largest entering classes at Luther Seminary in nearly a decade. Our overall financial position is the strongest it has been in years. Since 2010, we have reduced operating costs, improved our cash balance and line of credit, and grown the seminary's endowment.

We are expanding on our mission, not shrinking it. Trusting the Holy Spirit, we have a tremendous opportunity not only to fulfill our mission but also to live into a more expansive vision of that mission. We continue to think of both our rootedness in a Lutheran theological witness and our outreach to new communities yearning for meaning and purpose. We are committed to change and adaptation for the sake of our mission and will continue to be open to new transformations and to meaningful collaborations with our many partners—maintaining deep, networked relationships locally, nationally, and globally. Together, we are making theological education accessible for a new generation of leaders and learners.

Please continue your remarkable and prayerful support for Luther Seminary as we move forward into a hopeful future.



Peace and blessings,

Robin J. Steinke
President

Finances 2024-25

Luther Seminary and Foundation consolidated balance sheets as of June 30, 2025, and June 30, 2024.

ASSETS	2025	2024
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$8,551,125	\$11,951,995
Other Current Assets	306,158	648,317
Total Current Assets	\$8,857,283	\$12,600,312
Non-Current Assets		
Other Assets	\$1,901,520	\$1,996,675
Investments	143,877,825	135,495,744
Student Notes Receivable, Net	1,822,113	1,887,948
Land, Buildings, and Equipment, Net	7,348,926	7,751,070
Total Other Assets	\$154,950,384	\$147,131,437
Total Assets	\$163,807,667	\$159,731,749

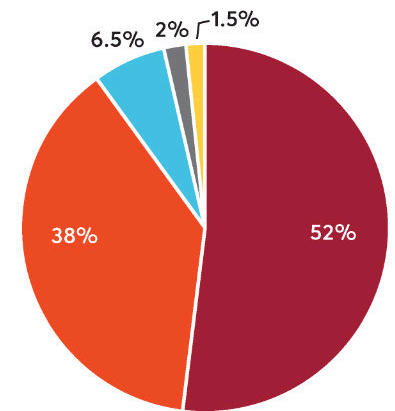
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities		
Other Current Liabilities	\$3,081,563	\$3,774,453
Notes Payable, Current Portion	166,233	159,726
Total Current Liabilities	\$3,247,796	\$3,934,179
Long-Term Liabilities		
Other Long-Term Liabilities	\$5,840,955	\$6,453,499
Notes Payable, Net of Current Portion	3,905,781	4,072,014
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$9,746,736	\$10,525,513
Total Liabilities	\$12,994,532	\$14,459,692
Net Assets		
Without Donor Restrictions	\$3,443,146	\$4,626,230
With Donor Restrictions	147,369,989	140,645,827
Total Net Assets	\$150,813,135	\$145,272,057
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$163,807,667	\$159,731,749

ENDOWMENT

Total Market Value (as of June 30, 2025)	\$142 million
Investment Returns	
1-year	9.6%
3-year	9.3%
5-year	8.5%

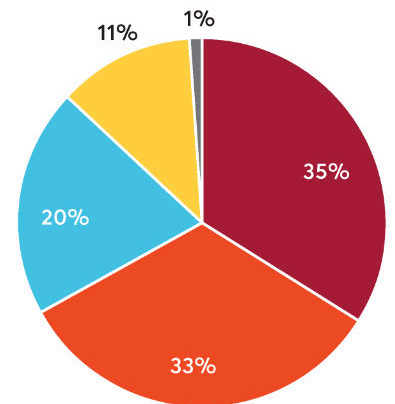
Luther Seminary's annual report numbers are also available at luthersem.edu/annual-report. Learn more about giving to support future church leaders at luthersem.edu/giving.



Unrestricted Operating Income

Donor Support	\$9,385,552
Endowment Draw	6,835,092
Churchwide and Synod Support	1,173,488
Auxiliary Enterprises and Other Income	322,604
Net Tuition and Fees	275,413

Total **\$17,992,149**



Unrestricted Operating Expenses

Student Instruction and Support	\$7,011,863
Institutional Support	6,539,922
Innovation and Faith+Lead	4,064,774
Physical Plant and Maintenance	2,177,158
Auxiliary Enterprises and Other Income	322,604

Total* **\$19,922,955**

*Includes depreciation

Spring 2026

Dear friends,

Greetings from Augsburg University. The words from Esther 4:14—“for such a time as this”—resonate powerfully on campus in a year that has been marked by violence and grief in our community. The Annunciation Catholic Church shooting in south Minneapolis occurred during our first-year orientation in August. In December, students watched from their residence hall windows as ICE agents aimed weapons at a crowd of witnesses and detained an Augsburg student in a campus parking lot. The spring semester began in mid-January, between the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti just a few miles from campus. Some of our students, along with many of our Somali-American neighbors here in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood, have been sheltering at home in recent months, fearing harassment, detention, or worse.

But in the midst of heartbreak, we know that “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:5). The gifts of our Lutheran tradition for times of grief—ritual, lament, prayer—have kept us anchored in the knowledge that God is present with those who mourn. At Augsburg, we have been sustained and upheld by the power of caring community in ways large and small. Our colleague Najeeba Syeed, executive director of Interfaith at Augsburg, calls this a “lived theology of neighborliness;” hearts that break open in service to neighbors rather than breaking apart in despair.

Our faculty and staff have risen to the challenge of supporting our students this year by offering greater flexibility, adding online courses, arranging emergency housing and food support, putting in extra advising hours, and providing individual guidance and counsel. We have also had plenty to celebrate—strong enrollment results; the first cohort of our new Doctor of Medical Science program; thrilling athletic seasons in men’s soccer and women’s hockey, boosted by a revitalized pep band; the approval of a new engineering minor; and much more. Life at Augsburg continues to be vibrant and a reason for hope.

Our work to accompany students in their vocational discernment remains central to our mission. Led by Jeremy Myers, Christensen Chair of Religion and Vocation, we are engaging vocation across the Augsburg experience through a new framework of *thriving*. Our students thrive when they are actively expressing the unique ways they are inspired, equipped, and empowered to create a more just and sustainable world. Two recent examples include Dante Austin ’29, who was recognized as one of GLAAD’s 20 Under 20 LGBTQ Changemakers of 2025 for his advocacy work within the ELCA, and Deacon Ian Heseltine ’21, who was ordained to the ministry of Word and Service here at Augsburg in September and continues to serve a call in our Institutional Advancement office. Alongside academic innovation and sustainability, investing in the future of this work is a core element of our *Promising Futures: Faithful and Relevant* fundraising campaign, which recently exceeded its \$25 million goal.

These generous gifts strengthen the foundation for future generations of Auggies to thrive in their lives. They also serve as a reminder that none of us thrives alone—we only do so in community. We are grateful for your continued prayers and support, and that we are in community together.

Faithfully yours,

Paul C. Pribbenow, Ph.D.
President

Rev. Babette Chatman
University Pastor
Director of Campus Ministry

Rev. John Schwehn
University Pastor

LUTHER COLLEGE®

Luther College inspires and equips students to courageously serve the common good through a holistic education in the liberal arts.

Greetings and prayers from Luther College and from our home here in Decorah, Iowa. We are pleased to again share with you some reflections about our campus life and work from this past year.

Last summer, after an intentional period of reflection and discernment, we adopted a new mission statement (included above), an accompanying constellation of vision and identity statements, and a foundational set of core values: Community, Curiosity, Excellence, Inclusivity, Sustainability. We remain in a season of re-engaging our campus, alumni, and community with the essential and profound pieces of our identity as a liberal arts college, founded by Norwegian immigrants, in the Lutheran Christian tradition, with a vocation to serve the common good.

We hosted a series of high-profile events on campus in this past year, each of which connected us in particular ways to our identity and mission. In April 2025, we welcomed travel author and historian Rick Steves to campus for an address that highlighted themes of global citizenship, lifelong learning, and bridge-building through curiosity, compassion, and the value of human dignity.

Homecoming Weekend in October was bookended by two significant campus gatherings. First, a presidential inauguration, themed “For the Common Good” to honor the intersections of faith, learning, and vocation that define our college’s identity. Just a few days later, we hosted a celebration convocation to welcome the visit of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon of Norway. His remarks highlighted our Norwegian relationships and emphasized the immense value and power of education to shape societies.

This January, we were thrilled to welcome Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry as our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. day lecturer, and were blessed by his remarks encouraging us to lean into our faith to find the courage to seek justice and to stand with the vulnerable.

We feel blessed and enriched by this year of learning from these key figures in our nation, church, and world. In addition to these significant visits, we continue to take joy and pride in our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and local partners—both for their accomplishments and for their character.

Luther College has been awarded the 2026 Senator Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization from the National Association of International Educators (NAFSA), honoring our long-standing commitment to making global learning opportunities accessible and impactful to students.

The Luther College Concert Band traveled to Japan for a series of performances last June, Luther College Symphony Orchestra alumni and friends gathered for the inaugural Dorian Orchestra Reunion weekend in July, and the Luther College Nordic Choir traveled the Midwest and Southeastern United States for their annual concert tour in early 2026.

The Office for College Ministries received a two-year, \$40,000 grant from the Network for Vocation in Higher Education to establish a new student internship program in fall 2025 entitled *Called Outward: Exploring Skills for Faith-Based Leadership*. This program connects students with area congregations for focused discernment, exploration, and experiential learning around core skills and topics in ministry.

We continue to give thanks for the immense generosity of our Luther College community, across the nation and world. Our 2026 annual Giving Day raised nearly \$1.4 million to support and enhance the Luther experience at the college through the Luther Fund, Luther's unrestricted current fund that supports all students, faculty, staff and community endeavors on campus. This is in addition to our annual One Team day, which raised nearly \$600,000 in a 24-hour span to support student-athletes, as well as all of the donors who have contributed to our \$24 million Gerdin Fieldhouse renovation project, which is in its final stages.

This past year for Luther College has been a time to lean deeply into our calling to seek, serve, and nurture the common good, both in our campus life and in the world beyond. It is a privilege to serve on behalf of this campus community. Together, we share a vision for the power of learning, faith, and service to shape and heal the world.

Soli Deo Gloria!
President Brad Chamberlain
Pastor Melissa Bills



Report to the ELCA Synod Assemblies - April 2026

Founded in 1874, the mission of St. Olaf College is to challenge students to excel in the liberal arts, examine faith and values, and explore meaningful vocation in an inclusive, globally engaged community nourished by Lutheran tradition. St. Olaf's current student population of approximately 3050 degree-seeking undergraduates represents 49 states and 100 countries. 21% are first-generation college students, 22% identify as domestic students of color, 11% are international students, and 22% are income-eligible for Pell grants. St. Olaf continues to be one of only a handful of higher education institutions nation-wide that meets the full demonstrated need of all admitted students through a variety of financial assistance programs, [including a new study abroad affordability commitment to be launched in 2027, thanks to the generosity of Louis and Mary Kay Smith](#). Approximately half of our students indicate that they are affiliated with a Christian denomination, with 15% self-identifying as Lutheran and another 5% as members of a denomination in full communion with the ELCA.

St. Olaf's core curriculum engages students with the full array of liberal arts disciplines, including one required course examining Religion, Faith, and Values, one on Christian Theology in Dialogue, and one on Ethical Reasoning in Context. Among our class of 2025 graduates, 97% had participated in a "high-impact educational practice," such as a mentored research experience, a learning community, study abroad/away, or an academic civic engagement course. Over the past three years, an average of 94% of our recent graduates were working, pursuing further education, or engaged in full-time military or other service programs within seven months of graduation.

Under the leadership of president Dr. Susan Rundell Singer, the college is now implementing a six-year strategic plan, focused on elevating vocation, expanding innovation, and sustaining community. Leading the implementation of the strategic plan are three implementation teams and the President's Leadership Team, including our new vice president for academic affairs and provost Dr. Tarshia Stanley and chief of staff Kathryn Lohre '99. Dr. Stanley comes to St. Olaf from Wagner College on Staten Island where she served as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Ms. Lohre comes to St. Olaf after serving for fifteen years in the Presiding Bishop's Office as the Executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations and Theological Discernment.

St. Olaf continues to offer [daily Chapel services and Sunday worship](#) throughout the academic year, led by College Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Matthew Marohl, and featuring members and friends of the St. Olaf community as speakers and musicians. Consistent with St. Olaf's identity as a "rooted and open" ELCA institution, the College Ministry team also includes an Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life and an Associate Chaplain for Muslim Life. This year, St. Olaf was ranked #4 on Niche's [Best Christian Colleges in America](#) list, recognizing St. Olaf as an academically strong, faith-based institution.

In the fall of 2025, the College named [Dr. Kiara Jorgenson, Associate Professor of Religion and Environmental Studies, as the Martin E. Marty Chair in Religion and the Academy](#). The [Marty](#)

[Chair](#) fosters ongoing dialogue that explores the intersection between significant religious and cultural issues and St. Olaf's role as a liberal arts college of the church.

The [Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community](#) continues to advance a compelling vision for Lutheranism in the 21st century, foster interreligious engagement, nurture vocational discernment, and provide thought leadership on campus and in the community. A key part of the Lutheran Center's work is to help all the college's constituencies understand the role of Lutheran tradition in supporting the things they value most about St. Olaf. The Center has recently completed or is nearing completion on two projects made possible by grants from the [Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education](#). The Life on Purpose project infused vocational exploration in St. Olaf students' experiences by supporting shifts in advising, classroom projects, and faculty and staff capacity building around vocation. The Honest Storytelling project engaged twenty staff and faculty and one student to research and tell untold and undertold stories from the college's first 150 years, and will result in the publication of a volume in honor of the college's sesquicentennial due out through Fortress Press this fall.

In 2025, grants from [Lilly Endowment Inc.](#) continued to support two complementary initiatives—the [Nourishing Vocation Project](#) and the [Nourishing Vocation with Children Project](#)—advancing congregational leadership, vocational discernment, and intergenerational, arts-enriched worship. The Nourishing Vocation Project, part of the Thriving Congregations Initiative, strengthened congregations and ecclesiastical partners by fostering peer leadership, deepening vocational discernment, and expanding practical ministry tools. Pastoral coaching pilots and adaptable resources enhanced leaders' capacity for contextually grounded discernment, while integration with broader institutional and interfaith efforts extended the initiative's reach and sustainability.

The Nourishing Vocation with Children Project advanced child-attentive, arts-enriched worship through the Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer Initiative. Resources were refined and expanded, engaging congregations across multiple states and denominational contexts. New liturgies and participatory art experiences nurtured children's faith while strengthening congregational life.

We look forward to an exciting summer 2026 at St. Olaf as we welcome back [Lutheran Summer Music](#) to campus for the first time since 1994 and the national conference of the [Association of Lutheran Church Musicians](#).

We invite lay, professional, and rostered church leaders to the [2026 Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts](#), July 20–22, 2026, at St. Olaf College, under the theme “Nourishing Vocation: Every Time + Every Age + Every Place.” We encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities and resources St. Olaf provides for education, artistic engagement, and spiritual enrichment. We look forward to welcoming you to campus, and to welcoming the prospective students you introduce to St. Olaf.

Appendix A

Minutes of the 2025 Synod Assembly



Southeastern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

2025 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly Minutes May 30-31, 2025

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod met in assembly on Friday and Saturday, May 30 and 31, 2025 at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center in Mankato, MN.

GREETING

- The Assembly began with Bishop Regina Hassanally welcoming voting members and other participants in the assembly. This welcome included a video of responses to the assembly theme questions. Following this, Synod Vice President Lisa Dierks gave a Land Acknowledgement and prayer.

WORSHIP MOMENT: REMEMBER WHAT GOD HAS DONE

- Bishop Hassanally invited Cindy Rupp from Messiah Lutheran, North Mankato, to lead the assembly in a worship moment, consisting of two hymns.
- Following this, a video was shown that introduced the assembly offering, which will be going towards the SEMN Synod's 2025 financial commitment to its mission partners.

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

- Bishop Hassanally then introduced the special guests who were in attendance:
 - Dr. Michael Chan, Concordia College, Moorhead. Dr. Chan was the Bible Study Leader for Synod Assembly.
 - Bishop Patricia Lull, Bishop of the St. Paul Area Synod.
 - Bishop Jen Nagel, Bishop of the Minneapolis Area Synod.
 - Mr. Nick Kiger, Director for Mission Support with the ELCA churchwide expression. Mr. Kiger was present to represent the ELCA Churchwide expression and share its report, but also to chair the Election of the Bishop.
- She then introduced those who were on stage:
 - Judge Tammy Pust, Synod Assembly Parliamentarian, joining us from Minneapolis, MN.
 - Ms. Lisa Dierks, SEMN Synod Vice President.
 - Rev. Josh Enderson, SEMN Synod Secretary.
- Following this, the 2024-2025 Synod Council was recognized:
 - Vice President Lisa Dierks, Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson, Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang, Bishop Regina Hassanally, Joellen Barak, Rev. Jessica Bakken Busch, Rev. Shelley Cunningham, Matthew Huggenvik, Marshall Laidlaw, Jennifer Levisen, Rev. Sam Mailleue, Karen Myers, Sami Pollack, Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Brian Scott, Mona Skare, Carolyn Solberg, Ed Taylor, Dr. Joyce Thompsen, Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne, and Rev. John Weisenburger.
- The Office of the Bishop staff was recognized next:
 - DEM and Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Emily Carson, Assistants to the Bishop Rev. Matt Larson, Rev. Barb Streed, Assistant to the Bishop Kathy Chatelaine, Director of Communications Ashley Corbett, Call Process and Candidacy Administrator Cheryse Brenno, Office Administrator and Financial Assistant Sadie Short, and ELCA Regional Gift Planner Tharan Leopold.
- She then thanked all the Synod Assembly volunteers and ministry partners and lifted up the location in the Pre-Assembly Report where those celebrating significant anniversaries can be found.
- Finally, she reminded the assembly that voting members had blue cords on their lanyards, and visitors had orange cords. Visitors were to be seated outside of the area cordoned off by black skirting. This was important throughout the assembly as we hold the Election of a Bishop.
- Following this, videos from the Lutheran Campus Ministries in Winona and Mankato were shown to the assembly.

Appendix A

Minutes of the 2025 Synod Assembly

PLENARY ONE

CALL TO ORDER & OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY

- Bishop Hassanally called the assembly to order at 2:33pm on May 30, 2025. She then led the assembly in the Litany for the Opening of a Synod Assembly.

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

- Rev. Peg Marose brought the report of the Committee on Credentials.
- Rev. Peg Marose brought the following report:

Credentials Report: Plenary One

- Lay voting members: 185
- Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 127
- Ministers of Word and Service voting members: 4
- **Total voting members: 316**
- Voice without vote: 4
- Visitors: 43
- **Total Assembly: 363**

ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF THE ASSEMBLY

- Following this, the Bishop went through important items needed for today's assembly, such as voting cards and how to make a motion.
- She then directed the assembly to the Rules of the Assembly, as printed in the Pre-Assembly Report, pages 8 and 9.
- A Motion was made by Rev. Kristi Mitchell, Redeemer, Alden, and Concordia of Pickeral Lake, Albert Lea, to adopt the rules of the assembly.

Assembly Action

SA25.05.01 Motion to adopt the rules of the assembly.

Motion approved.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE ASSEMBLY

- The proposed agenda for the assembly was presented to the assembly, as printed in the Pre-Assembly Report, page 2.
- A motion was made by Mr. Larry Iverson, Hosanna, Rochester, to approve the agenda for the assembly.

Assembly Action

SA25.05.02 Motion to adopt the agenda of the assembly.

Motion approved.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP PROCESS

- Bishop Regina Hassanally then relinquished the chair to Mr. Nick Kiger, Director for Mission Support with the ELCA Churchwide expression and who was serving as the Chair of the Election of a Bishop.
- Mr. Kiger introduced the bishop election process, such as where the bishop election process can be found in the synod's constitution, what constitutes a legal vote, and how each of the five ballots work.

FIRST BALLOT FOR THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP

- Following this, Mr. Kiger declared that the assembly was ready to cast the first ballot.
- He invited anyone not eligible to vote to move to the visitor area, and for Rev. Peg Marose to give an updated credentials report.
- Rev. Marose reported that, as of 2:30pm, 316 voting members were registered.
- Mr. Kiger then reminded the assembly that the first ballot is an ecclesiastical ballot, and that a 75% majority is required for election on the first ballot. If no one reaches 75%, this ballot is considered a nominating ballot. When voting for the first ballot closes, no further names can be added to the list of

Appendix A

Minutes of the 2025 Synod Assembly

nominees for bishop, and all nominees put forward on the first ballot will have until 6:45pm Friday to withdraw.

- He then invited Dr. Joyce Thompsen forward to give final instructions before the casting of the first ballot.
- Dr. Thompsen gave these instructions and then Mr. Kiger invited Rev. Mike Walerius forward for a moment of prayer before the casting of the first ballot.
- Following this, Mr. Kiger called for the vote, and the assembly cast the first ballot.
- Once all votes were cast, Mr. Kiger declare the first ballot for the election of the bishop of the SEMN Synod closed, and that results would be announced at approximately 5:40pm.
- Mr. Kiger then returned the chair to Bishop Hassanally.
- Videos from Lutheran Men in Mission and Continuous Growth Pathways were shown.
- The assembly then took a brief break.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- Bishop Hassanally then called on Synod Vice President Dierks for the Report of the Synod Nominating Committee.
- Vice President Dierks noted that the following positions were open, and would be voted on the following day:
 - Synod Council
 - Synod Vice President
 - Synod Council At-Large Lay
 - Synod Council At-Large Rostered
 - Synod Council Youth
 - Synod Council Young Adult
 - Committee on Discipline
 - Lay Member from Cannon River
 - Rostered Member of Root River
 - Rostered Member of Zumbro River
 - Augsburg University Corporation Board
 - She noted where the biographies for all nominated could be found in the Pre-Assembly Report, as well as the process for submitting additional nominations and the deadline for such nominations.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REFERENCE AND COUNSEL

- Bishop Hassanally invited Rev. Dr. Scott Olson forward to give the Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel.
- Rev. Dr. Olson noted that there were no resolutions last year, but one approved in 2022, Resolution 2022-02, "To be a United Church that Cares for the Community" (submitted by Mount Olive Lutheran Church Council), called for the Synod Council to organize a 3-year Housing Insecure Task Force. This resolution also called for the SEMN to include the activities of this task force to report its work in its 2025 annual report, which was included in the 2025 Pre-Assembly Report.
- He then noted that three resolutions were coming before the assembly.
- Rev. Dr. Olson noted that he would be stepping down as chair of this committee following this Synod Assembly, and spending the year assisting the next chair, Mr. Dave Holger.
- Bishop Hassanally thanked Rev. Dr. Olson for his work and the work of the whole committee.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD TREASURER

- Bishop Hassanally called on Synod Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang to present the Report of the Treasurer.
- Treasurer Dahlvang first acknowledged the generosity of congregations across the synod.
- She noted that the audit for fiscal year ending January 31, 2024, has been completed and can be found at semnsynod.org/audit/ and that the current year, ending January 31, 2025, is underway. Once completed and finalized it will be found on the same website.
- She then turned the assembly's attention to the Proposed Spending Plan for 2026-2027, Pre-Assembly Report pp. 20-22. She noted that this will be presented for adoption the following day.

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- She noted that the Proposed Spending Plan shows a \$75,000 decrease in Mission Support income. But more positively, this Spending Plan shows increases in other areas of income, such as the Annual Fund, honorariums from congregations, etc. of \$42,500.
- She lifted up that there were decreases in some expenses, such as Synod Ministry Programs and Governance.
- She noted that any suggested changes to the spending plan had to be proposed by 10:30am the following day and must be a zero net change.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: SESSION ONE

- Bishop Hassanally then introduced Dr. Michael Chan, the keynote speaker for the assembly. Dr. Chan is the executive director for faith and learning at Concordia College, Moorehead.
- He led a Bible study on Isaiah 43:14-21, going into the history of Isaiah, prophetic literature, and walked through the text verse-by-verse with the assembly.

WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION

- The assembly then moved into worship.
- The worship band from Messiah Lutheran Church of North Mankato led the music.
- Bishop Patricia Lull, Bishop of the St. Paul Area Synod, preached during the service, Bishop Regina Hassanally presided, and Rev. Anders Nelson served as the worship assistant.

RESULTS OF THE FIRST BALLOT FOR THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP

- Bishop Hassanally then relinquished the chair to Mr. Nick Kiger, Chair of the Election of a Bishop.
- Mr. Kiger called on Dr. Joyce Thompson from the SEMN Synod's Bishop Election Team to report the results of the first ballot for Bishop of the SEMN Synod.
- Dr. Thompson reported the following results:
 - Total number of ballots cast: 314
 - Total number of legal ballots: 298
 - Total number of ballots required for election: 224
 - 75% of total legal ballots is required for election on the first ballot.
 - The following names and vote totals were cast:
 - Rev. Justin Boeding-1
 - Rev. Shelley Cunningham-1
 - Rev. Carl-Eric Gentes-1
 - Rev. Heidi Heimgartner-1
 - Rev. Elizabeth Janke-1
 - Rev. Patricia Lull-1
 - Rev. Timothy McDermont-1
 - Rev. Norman Wahl-1
 - Rev. Sara Yotter-1
 - Rev. Dan Doering-2
 - Rev. Kris Ferkin-2
 - Rev. John Weisenberger-2
 - Rev. Emily Carson-9
 - Rev. Regina Hassanally-274
- Mr. Kiger declared that there was an election of a bishop on the first ballot, and that Rev. Regina Hassanally was reelected as Bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. He then asked the assembly to show its appreciation to all who were willing to discern a call to bishop.
- The assembly then took part in the Affirmation of Ministry at the Re-election of a Synod Bishop.
- Bishop Hassanally then addressed the assembly.
 - She reminded the assembly of comments she made when first elected: She had noted the story from Exodus and Moses leading the people, that we are all called and sent together as people of the SEMN synod, and that we are on the journey together.
 - She thanked those who have supported her: family, people across the synod, the Office of the Bishop staff, rostered leaders.
- Mr. Kiger returned the chair to Bishop Hassanally.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CLOSING OF PLENARY ONE

- Bishop Hassanally then invited Vice President Dierks to give some final announcements.
- Vice President Dierks noted that registration will close at 8:30am on Saturday, and Plenary 2 will begin promptly at 8:30am.
- Bishop Hassanally then declared the assembly in recess until 8:30am, Saturday, May 31, 2025.

PLENARY TWO

WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

- On Saturday, May 31 at 8:30am, registration was closed.
- Bishop Regina Hassanally welcomed the assembly and began with an opening prayer.
- She then declared the assembly back in session at 8:32am.

WORSHIP MOMENT: PREPARE FOR WHAT GOD WILL DO

- Bishop Hassanally welcomed Cindy Rupp to lead the assembly in a worship moment with two hymns.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- She then invited Synod Vice President Lisa Dierks to give some announcements for the day.
- Vice President Dierks noted the deadlines for proposed amendments to the Spending Plan, as well as nominations.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

- Bishop Hassanally then invited Rev. Peg Marose forward for a report of the Committee on Credentials.
- Rev. Peg Marose brought the following report:

Credentials Report: Plenary Two

- Lay voting members: 191
- Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 135
- Ministers of Word and Service voting members: 4
- **Total voting members: 330**
- Voice without vote: 4
- Visitors: 43
- **Total Assembly: 377**

LSS SERVANT OF CHRIST AWARD

- The LSS Servant of Christ Award was presented. It was presented by Rev. Amanda Simons to Bethel Lutheran Church of Rochester.

REPORT OF ELCA CHURCHWIDE

- Bishop Hassanally then welcomed Mr. Nick Kiger to give the Report of the ELCA Churchwide. As he was coming to the stage, she directed the assembly's attention to page 42 of the Pre-Assembly report, which contained the Report of the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA.
 - Mr. Kiger noted those from the SEMN Synod who serve on Churchwide boards and thanked them for their work.
 - He lifted up and thanked the SEMN Synod for its generosity in various areas of giving to the larger expression of the church:
 - Mission Support: \$665,000.
 - ELCA World Hunger, which he noted is celebrating 50 years of operation: \$224,836
 - Lutheran Disaster Response: \$121,000
 - He noted the task force which is working on the new social statement: "Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-Being of All".
 - Mr. Kiger discussed the work of the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church, noting that they recently completed their work and have passed on their recommendations the ELCA Church Council and to the upcoming 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

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- He noted that the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly is coming up in August and highlighted some of the items that will be on the agenda at this assembly.
- Following his spoken report, he shared a video report from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT

- Bishop Hassanally called on Synod Vice President Dierks to give the Report of the Synod Vice President.
- Vice President Dierks noted the structure and work of the Synod Council and Executive Committee, as well as the flow of the council's year.
- She thanked Synod Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang and the Budget Task Force for their work on bringing forward a budget that reflects the values of the synod.
- She thanked the lay and rostered members of the synod who offer their time and talents as members of council and encouraged all to think of ways that they can use their gifts in service to others.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD SECRETARY

- Bishop Hassanally then called on Synod Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson to give the Report of the Synod Secretary.
- Secretary Rev. Enderson noted that there are no changes to the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, or Continuing Resolutions to put before the assembly this year. He also noted that the minutes from last year's assembly could be found in the Pre-Assembly Report.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: SESSION TWO

- Bishop Hassanally invited Dr. Michael Chan back to the stage to give the second session of his presentation. This session focused on Deuteronomy 4:9.

BREAK

- The assembly took a brief break following the keynote.
- Following the break, a video showing more responses to the assembly theme questions was shown.

REFERENCE AND COUNCIL: RESOLUTION 2025-01

- Bishop Hassanally drew the assembly's attention to the Pre-Assembly Report, to Resolution 2025-01: Resolution for Expanded Preaching and Teaching on the Stories of Women in the Bible and Use of Female Imagery of God and God's Work in the World.
- She called on Rev. Beth Krolak to present the submission of this resolution.
 - Resolution for Expanded Preaching and Teaching on the Stories of Women in the Bible and Use of Female Imagery of God and of God's Work in the World.
 - WHEREAS the ELCA's social statement entitled "Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action," adopted at the churchwide assembly, August 2019, sets a precedence for the church to take meaningful action to combat sexist attitudes including but not limited to the following:
 - Sexism is sinful and that women and girls in particular suffer a range of harm and injustice due to sex (biological), gender, or both.
 - The ELCA teaches that God's Word of Law and Gospel speaks through Scriptures and that their continued misuse contributes to maintaining hierarchies and patterns of inequity and harm.
 - The ELCA recognizes that the body of Christ is called to honor and support women and girls from a variety of backgrounds, identities, and personal experiences in ways more consistent with life-giving theology and faith practices.
 - Whereas Martin Luther emphasized that Scriptures should be read by paying attention to what proclaims Christ-what carries the gospel message of God's grace and mercy to **all** people.
 - The ELCA specifically commits to promote the practice and use of scriptural translation and interpretation that acknowledge the contexts in which the Scripture were written and reject the misuse of Scripture that has supported sexist attitude and patriarchal structures and,

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- WHEREAS the lack of preaching and teaching of women's stories in Scripture and female imagery of God in Scripture sends an incomplete gospel message of God's grace and mercy to the people of the church and,
- WHEREAS established lectionaries and resources used by our faith communities are often written by men and often do not contain exegesis of Scripture in supporting justice for women and therefore do not contain a fair balance of stories of women and Scriptural uses of imagery for God and for God's work in the world and,
- WHEREAS our faith communities do not get to hear the fullness of Scriptures and understand its context in way we can knowledgeably combat misuse of Scripture and,
- WHEREAS, corporate worship, inclusive of preaching is one of the primary ways in which faith formation is nurtured.
- Be it RESOLVED that each pastor and faith community commit to preaching and teaching the stories of women in Scripture and exploring female imagery of God in Scripture and,
- Be it FURTHER RESOLVED that this synod encourages pastors and leaders in preparation for teaching and preaching intentionally seek out commentaries and resources written by women, depart from commonly used lectionaries if necessary to present the stories of women and to share resources necessary to do so with each other.
- Submitted by: Pastor Sue Leibnitz, Pastor Kira Anderson, Pastor Carrie Chatelaine, Rev. Dr. Char Rachuy Cox, Pastor Hannah Bergstrom De Leon, Submitted by the Cannon River Conference Assembly.
- Approved by the Cannon River Conference Assembly on February 16, 2025
- The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommended both the consideration of this resolution and its passing because the resolution is in alignment with our social statement and it serves as a reminder to pastors and congregations of this need.
- Rev. Beth Krolak, as a representative of the Committee on Reference and Counsel, made a motion to accept Resolution 2025-01: Resolution for Expanded Preaching and Teaching on the Stories of Women in the Bible and Use of Female Imagery of God and God's Work in the World.

Assembly Action

SA25.05.03 Motion to accept "Resolution 2025-01: Resolution for Expanded Preaching and Teaching on the Stories of Women in the Bible and Use of Female Imagery of God and God's Work in the World."

Motion approved.

REFERENCE AND COUNCIL: RESOLUTION 2025-02

- Bishop Hassanally then drew the assembly's attention to Resolution 2025-02: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them, and asked Rev. Krolak to present it.
- Rev. Krolak noted, as a point of information, that resolutions 2025-02 and 2025-03 were originally submitted as a single resolution. The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommended it be divided into two, as both seemed to be of consequence and deserving of attention.
- Resolution 2025-02: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them
 - WHEREAS the greatest two commandments of our faith are to love the Lord our God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:35-40, Mark 12:28-31, Luke 10:25-28, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Leviticus 19:18);
 - WHEREAS Jesus himself instructs us to show our neighbor mercy (Luke 6:36, 10:29-37) and calls us especially to care for the marginalized and the "least of these" (Matthew 25:31-46), including the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the imprisoned, and the stranger;
 - WHEREAS Jesus calls the poor and hungry blessed (Luke 6:20-21, Matthew 5:1-10) and likewise blesses the merciful and the peacemakers;
 - WHEREAS we are called in our baptism "to serve all people, following the example of Jesus," and "to strive for justice and peace in all the earth" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship pp 228, 236-237); and

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- WHEREAS the motives and integrity of our Lutheran serving arms, including LSS (Lutheran Social Services), Global Refuge, AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities), and others have been publicly called into question; now, therefore, be it
 - RESOLVED, that we as the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA affirm our commitment to living out our baptismal vocation in daily life; and
 - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we likewise affirm our support for LSS, Global Refuge, AMMPARO, ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all our serving arms that do the work of showing mercy and care and love to our siblings around the world; and
 - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage all individuals and congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod to engage in the ongoing work of serving and seeking justice and peace for our neighbor by supporting the work of our serving arms.
 - Submitted by the Mission Leadership Team of People of Hope, Rochester.
 - The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends both the consideration of this resolution and its passing because the committee recognizes that, given the public discourse around our Lutheran partner ministries, we want to stand with our Lutheran partners and all people.
- Rev. Beth Krolak, as a representative of the Committee on Reference and Counsel, made a motion to accept Resolution 2025-02: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them.

Assembly Action

SA25.05.04 Motion to accept “Resolution 2025-02: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them.”

Motion approved.

REFERENCE AND COUNCIL: RESOLUTION 2025-03

- Bishop Hassanally then drew the assembly’s attention to Resolution 2025-03: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them, and asked Rev. Krolak to present it.
- Resolution 2025-03: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them
 - WHEREAS the greatest two commandments of our faith are to love the Lord our God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:35-40, Mark 12:28-31, Luke 10:25-28, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Leviticus 19:18);
 - WHEREAS Jesus himself instructs us to show our neighbor mercy (Luke 6:36, 10:29-37) and calls us especially to care for the marginalized and the “least of these” (Matthew 25:31-46), including the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the imprisoned, and the stranger;
 - WHEREAS Jesus calls the poor and hungry blessed (Luke 6:20-21, Matthew 5:1-10) and likewise blesses the merciful and the peacemakers;
 - WHEREAS we are called in our baptism “to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,” and “to strive for justice and peace in all the earth” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship pp 228, 236-237); and
 - WHEREAS the motives and integrity of our Lutheran serving arms, including LSS (Lutheran Social Services), Global Refuge, AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities), and others have been publicly called into question; now, therefore, be it
 - RESOLVED, that we as the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA affirm our commitment to living out our baptismal vocation in daily life; and
 - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to standing up for the rights and dignity of all God’s beloved children, especially for our siblings of color, our queer and transgender siblings, our migrant and refugee siblings, our hungry siblings and those experiencing homelessness, our siblings with disabilities, and all our siblings whose rights are being threatened; and we commit ourselves to speaking out against discrimination and prejudice in all places and all ways.
 - Submitted by the Mission Leadership Team of People of Hope, Rochester.

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- Reference and Counsel recommends both the consideration of this resolution and its passing because the committee recognizes that, given the public discourse around our Lutheran partner ministries, we want to stand with our Lutheran partners and all people.
- Rev. Beth Krolak, as a representative of the Committee on Reference and Counsel, made a motion to accept Resolution 2025-03: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them.

Assembly Action

SA25.05.05 Motion to accept “Resolution 2025-03: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them.”

- It was noted that Matthew 25, as noted in the resolution, speaks of the thirsty, along with the hungry, and this was missing from the language of the resolution.
- A motion was made by Ms. Jeanette Sanford, Our Saviors, Owatonna, to amend resolution 2025-03: to add word “thirsty” to line 9, 10, and 23 of the resolution.
 - The amended sections now read:
 - WHEREAS Jesus himself instructs us to show our neighbor mercy (Luke 6:36, 10:29-37) and calls us especially to care for the marginalized and the “least of these” (Matthew 25:31-46), including the sick, the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the imprisoned, and the stranger;
 - WHEREAS Jesus calls the poor and hungry and thirsty blessed (Luke 6:20-21, Matthew 5:1-10) and likewise blesses the merciful and the peacemakers; ...
 - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to standing up for the rights and dignity of all God’s beloved children, especially for our siblings of color, our queer and transgender siblings, our migrant and refugee siblings, our hungry and thirsty siblings and those experiencing homelessness, our siblings with disabilities, and all our siblings whose rights are being threatened; and we commit ourselves to speaking out against discrimination and prejudice in all places and all ways.

SA25.05.06 Motion to amend Resolution 2025-03 to add word “thirsty” to line 9, 10, and 23 of the Resolution.

Motion approved.

SA25.05.07 Motion to accept “Resolution 2025-03: Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them” as amended.

Motion approved.

- Bishop Hassanally thanked Rev. Krolak and the entire Committee on Reference and Counsel for their work.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/TABLE BLESSINGS/RECESS

- Bishop Hassanally invited Synod Vice President Dierks to give announcements for lunch, as well as a table prayer.
- Bishop Hassanally declared the assembly in recess until 12:30pm.

PLENARY THREE

- Bishop Hassanally welcomed the assembly back together and invited them into a time of centering worship of song and prayer.
- A video was shown sharing responses to the assembly’s theme questions.
- She declared the assembly back in session.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

- Bishop Hassanally then invited Rev. Peg Marose forward for a report of the Committee on Credentials.
- Rev. Peg Marose brought the following report:

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Credentials Report: Plenary Three

- Lay voting members: 192
- Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 136
- Ministers of Word and Service voting members: 4
- **Total voting members: 332**
- Voice without vote: 4
- Visitors: 43
- **Total Assembly: 379**

GLOBAL MINISTRY VIDEO

- The Synod's global ministry initiatives were presented to the assembly through a video shown to those gathered.

ADOPTION OF THE 2026-2027 SPENDING PLAN

- Bishop Hassanally welcomed Synod Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang forward and invited the assembly to find the 2026-2027 Spending Plan in the Pre-Assembly Report.
- Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang motioned to adopt the Proposed Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry 2026-2027.

Assembly Action

SA25.05.08 Motion to adopt the Proposed Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry 2026-2027. Motion approved.

ELECTION OF SYNOD COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- Bishop Hassanally then asked the assembly to find the Ballot for the Election of Synod Council and Committees.
- She noted that the following names were put forward from the floor, and were to be added to the ballot:
 - Committee on Discipline, Rostered, Root River
 - Rev. Jackie Short
 - Committee on Discipline, Rostered, Zumbro River
 - Rev. Lisa Janke
 - Augsburg University Corporation Board
 - Rev. D.J. Chatelaine
 - Rev. Nichole Rockne
 - Rev. Dr. Paul Miller
 - Rev. Anders Nelson
- Since there is an equivalent of smaller number of nominees for each vacancy on the election of synod council and synod nominee position ballot, she declared those nominated elected.
- Those elected were:
 - Synod Council
 - Synod Vice President
 - Lisa Dierks, 2nd Term (2025-2029)
 - Synod Council At-Large Lay
 - David Holger, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Barbara Lake, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Bradley Leathers, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Roy Srp, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Edward Taylor, 2nd Term (2025-2027)
 - Synod Council At-Large Rostered
 - Rev. Shawn Brooks, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Rev. Anna Ferro, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Rev. Cheryl Indehar, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Synod Council Young Adult
 - Sam Pollack, 2nd Term (2025-2027)

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- Committee on Discipline
 - Lay Member from Cannon River
 - Dr. Mary Vieseth, 1st Term (2025-2031)
 - Rostered Member of Root River
 - Rev. Jackie Short, 1st Term (2025-2031)
 - Rostered Member of Zumbro River
 - Rev. Lisa Janke, 1st Term (2025-2031)
- Augsburg University Corporation Board
 - Rev. Dr. Carl-Eric Gentes, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Rev. D.J. Chatelaine, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Rev. Nichole Rockne, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Rev. Dr. Paul Miller, 1st Term (2025-2027)
 - Rev. Anders Nelson, 1st Term (2025-2027)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: SESSION THREE

- Bishop Hassanally invited Dr. Michael Chan back to the stage to give the third session of his presentation. His final session focused on Psalm 77.

RESULTS OF THE ELECTION OF SYNOD COUNCIL & COMMITTEES

- Bishop Hassanally then invited Vice President Lisa Dierks to announce the results of the ballot election.
- She noted that there was a unanimous consent ballot and announced the names of those elected.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY OFFERING UPDATE

- Bishop Hassanally called on Rev. Emily Carson to give an update on the Synod Assembly offering.
- Rev. Carson noted the generosity and stewardship of the congregations of the synod.
- She then announced that the 2025 Synod Assembly Offering was \$18,745.63

THANKS TO OUT-GOING SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Bishop Hassanally then thanked all out-going synod council members, as well as those ending their service on the Conference of Deans:
 - Out-going Conference of Deans members: Rev. Mary Iverson, Rev. Lisa Janke, Rev. Kurt Bockoven.
 - Out-going synod council members: Karen Myers, Mona Skare, Carolyn Solberg, Rev. Shelley Cunningham, Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne, Rev. John Weisenburger, Marshall Laidlaw, Brian Scott, and JoEllen Barak.

INSTALLATION OF SYNOD COUNCIL AND CONFERENCE DEANS

- Bishop Hassanally then invited the Synod Council and Conference of Dean members to stand. They were then installed.
- The following individuals were installed:
 - SEMN Synod Council (Continuing): Vice President Lisa Dierks, Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang, Secretary Rev. Joshua Enderson, Bishop Regina Hassanally, Matthew Huggenvik, Samantha Pollack, Rev. Jessica Bakken Busch, Jennifer Levisen, Rev. Samuel Mailleue, Dr. Joyce Thompson, Ed Taylor, and Samantha Pollack.
 - SEMN Synod Council (New): David Holger, Barbara Lake, Bradley Leathers, Roy Srp, Rev. Shawn Brooks, Rev. Anna Ferro, and Rev. Cheryl Indehar.
 - Conference of Deans (Continuing): Rev. Drew Yackel, Rev. Inger Hanson, Rev. Sarah Walk Brown, Rev. Kristi Mitchell, Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne, and Rev. Timothy Bowman.
 - Conference of Deans (New): Rev. Heath Queen, Rev. Sam Mailleue, Rev. Kris Kincaid, and Rev. Michael Mandsager.

COMMISSIONING OF CHURCHWIDE VOTING MEMBERS

- Voting members from the SEMN Synod to the upcoming 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Phoenix, AZ were then commissioned.

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- These voting members are: Layla Ludington, Samantha Pollack, Lisa Dierks, Mary Boormsa, JoEllen Barak, Jennifer Loven, Constance Mudore, Ronald Jensen, Paul Streed, Jeff Vetsch, Burton Svendsen, Emmanuel Koghondi, Bishop Regina Hassanally, Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne, Rev. Inger Hanson, Rev. Deborah Lyanga, Rev. Drew Yackel, Rev. Mark Boorsma, Rev. Timothy Bowman, Rev. Benjamin Loven, Rev. Yang Tut, Dalton Ludington.

REPORT OF THE SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD

- Bishop Hassanally then relinquished the chair to Vice President Dierks.
- Vice President Dierks called on Bishop Regina Hassanally to give the Report of the SEMN Synod.
 - She began with noting Moses' words to the Israelites in Deuteronomy, where Moses calls on the Israelites to keep God's words close to them, as well as the words from Psalm 77. She called on the assembly to remember where you have seen God in your life, in your congregation, and in your larger community.
 - How can we be a people of faith that has learned to tell of what God has done? We learn by doing, by making mistakes.
 - She shared stories of ordinations and lifted up in particular Rev. Yang Tut's ordination to a call to community.
 - She noted the mutual support of leaders within the synod.
 - She highlighted some of the new ministries and initiatives that have started up within the synod, such as the Kidz Rock program at the Good Hope Parish in the Kiester/Bricelyn area. She also noted the energy of confirmation classes, VBS, Sunday School, etc.
 - The Bishop noted her travel to global partners in Columbia. She noted the life-changing impact of the Lutheran church in Columbia, even though it is smaller than some churches in our synod.
 - The work and impact of the Councils as Leaders event was lifted up.
 - As we look to the future, she noted the reality of finances and demographics, but that we shouldn't bury our heads or run away from these things. We shouldn't fear such things, but that we should trust in God's faithfulness and know that God still has things to do.
 - What is God opening us up to do? How is God still at work in you, your congregation, your community, and preparing us for the world to come?
 - She noted that we will continue to support the ministries of the synod, because God has been at work in these in the past. But, as we live into these, as times change, things may shift.
 - There have always been challenges, but God has always been there too.
- Following the Report of the SEMN Synod, Vice President Dierks returned the chair to Bishop Hassanally.

CLOSING OF THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- Bishop Hassanally then led the assembly in a closing prayer and litany.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY

- Bishop Hassanally declared the 2025 SEMN Synod Assembly adjourned at 2:40pm on May 31, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Josh Enderson
SEMN Synod Secretary

APPROVED BY SEMN SYNOD COUNCIL 07/15/2025 JE

Appendix B

Worship

Prelude Music *worship musicians*

Waterlife (ELW #457)

God of Promise, Let These Signs of Grace (ACS #959)

Come to the Water/I Will Run to You

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

We gather at this font, O God,
creator of oceans and rivers, rain and snow.

We praise you for the Zumbro, Minnesota, Cannon, Root, Blue Earth, and
Mississippi Rivers, and for the water you provide us each day.

We praise your Spirit, hovering over this font.

We bless you for this cleansing water of rebirth, this flood of endless mercy,
and for all the baptized around this blue planet.

All the waters are yours, O God, even stagnant rivers, and wells nearly dry,
and lakes that are merely puddles.

We beg you to heed the cries of everyone suffering from drought.

As you saved Hagar and Ishmael in the desert,
so now save all those creatures dying of thirst.

Pour down rain and fill up the wells, that the people may live.

We ask you, almighty Provider, to give us the water we need,
and we praise you for the sustenance you grant at this font.

By the water of our baptism empower us to pour out ourselves for others
and to safeguard the waters of your earth.

To you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

Sea of holiness, Spring of salvation, Cloud of mystery, be all praise and thanksgiving,
now and forever.

Amen.

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Gathering Song

Wade in the Water (ELW #459)

Text: African American Spiritual. PUBLIC DOMAIN.

Arrangement: by Russell Robinson, ©2020 Alfred Music (octavo #48409)

Appendix B

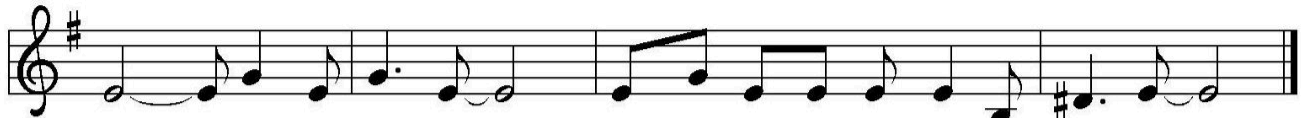
Worship

Refrain

All



Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,



wade in the wa - ter, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Leader

All



- 1 See that host all dressed in white,
- 2 See that band all dressed in red, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the
- 3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?
- 4 If you don't be - lieve I've been re - deemed,

Leader



wa - ter. the lead - er looks like the Is - rael - ite.
looks like the band that . . . Mo - ses led.
the Ho - ly Ghost a - com - ing on me.
just fol - low me down to . . . Jor - dan's stream.

All

Refrain



God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Appendix B

Worship

Word

1 Peter 2:4-9

Matthew 14:22-33

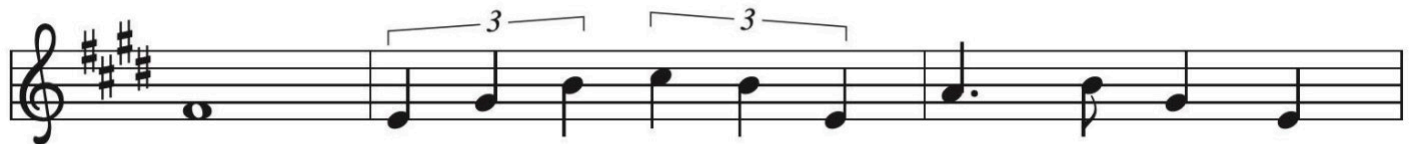
Sermon

Bishop Regina Hassanally

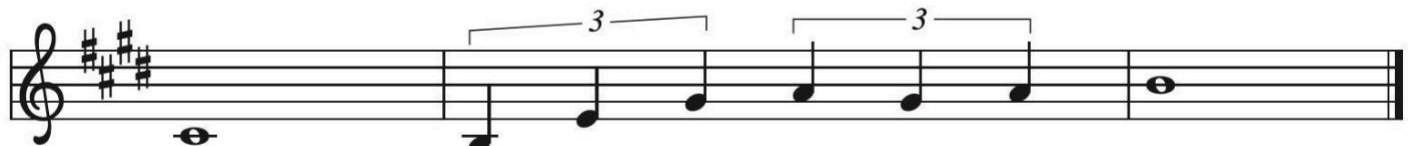
Hymn of the Day **Come to the Water of Life** (ACS #955)



1 All who are thirst - y for mer - cy, all who are thirst - y for
2 All who are thirst - y for heal - ing, all who are thirst - y for
3 All who are thirst - y for beau - ty, all who are thirst - y for
4 All who are thirst - y for jus - tice, all who are thirst - y for



love; all who are thirst - y for love, for mer - cy,
touch; all who are thirst - y for touch, for heal - ing,
truth; all who are thirst - y for truth, for beau - ty,
peace; all who are thirst - y for peace, for jus - tice,



come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943

Music: WATER OF LIFE, Ray Makeever

Text and music © 1999 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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Appendix B

Worship

Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*Or, "who proceeds from the Father." The phrase "and the Son" is a later addition to the creed.

Appendix B

Worship

Prayers of Intercession

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Meal

Offering Music

Rivers of Living Water

worship musicians

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.
Abiding God, under the cover of darkness, you bring forth life. Nourish us with earth's bounty, that we may freely share the gifts you have first given us, through the one who gives his life for the world, Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.
Amen.

Dialogue

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

In keeping with this synod's resolution last year to encourage centering stories of women in scripture, today we'll be using the following thanksgiving at the table which was commissioned by the ELCA and written by Gail Ramshaw for use in worship at its 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

All praise to you, glorious God of grace.
Throughout the ages you have blessed us with ancestors of the faith.
With Sarah, we bless you for your gift of life.
With Ruth, we praise you for family and food.
With Miriam, we celebrate our escape from the foe.
Remembering Deborah, we honor the words of your prophets.
Remembering the woman at the well, we laud you for living water.
Remembering Junia, we thank you for those who minister among your people.
One with the daughter of Jairus, we wake to life in you.

Appendix B

Worship

With Mary, we magnify your name:
My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Remembering Martha and Mary, we join Jesus at this meal.
Living, he healed the bleeding woman;
dying, he cared for his mother;
risen, he sent Mary Magdalene in mission.

On the night before he died, he took bread, and gave thanks,
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With Mary, again we magnify your name:
My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Mighty God of mercy,
as you heard the prayers of Hannah, so now hear us.
Send your Spirit on this bread and wine,
that sharing the body and blood of Christ we become his body in the world.
Send your Spirit on this assembly, that like Phoebe,
we serve one another with zeal.
Send your Spirit on the church, that like Anna,
we tell others of your mercy.
Send your Spirit into our hearts, that like Dorcas,
we care for the poor and needy.

With Mary, once more we magnify your name:
My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

All praise to you, powerful God of peace.
We adore you, our God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
you who mother and feed and comfort us,
today, tomorrow, and forever.

Amen.

Appendix B

Worship

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Communion

Appendix B

Worship

As the Grains of Wheat

Refrain



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from
all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.

1 As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst,
2 Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when

Refrain



may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

Text: Didache, 2nd cent.; Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: AS THE GRAINS, Marty Haugen

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Appendix B

Worship

Bread of Life from Heaven

Refrain



Bread of life from heav-en, your blood and bod - y giv - en, we



eat this bread and drink this cup un - til you come a - gain.



- 1 Break now the bread of Christ's sac - ri - fice; giv - ing
- 2 Seek not the food that will pass a - way; set your
- 3 Love as the one who, in love for you, gave him -
- 4 Dwell in the one who now dwells in you; make your
- 5 Drink of this cup and de - clare his death; eat this



thanks, hun - gry ones, gath - er round. Eat, all of you, and be
hearts on the food that en - dures. Come, learn the true and the
self for the life of the world. Come to the one who is
home in the life - giv - ing Word. Know on - ly Christ, Ho - ly
bread and be - lieve Eas - ter morn; trust his re - turn and, with



Refrain

sat - is - fied; in Christ's pres - ence the loaves will a - bound.
liv - ing way, that the full - ness of life may be yours.
food for you, that your hun - ger and thirst be no more.
One of God, and be - lieve in the truth you have heard.
ev - 'ry breath, praise the one in whom you are re - born.

Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952

Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, BREAK NOW THE BREAD; Argentine traditional, refrain; Marty Haugen, b. 1950, stanzas

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Appendix B

Worship

Eat This Bread *Jesus Christ, Bread of Life*

Refrain

“Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and nev - er be hun - gry.
OR Je - sus Christ, bread of life, those who come to you will not hun - ger.

Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.”
Je - sus Christ, ris - en Lord, those who trust in you will not thirst.

Text: Taizé Community

Music: BERTHIER, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994

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Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

Living God, as the disciples ate and drank with their risen Lord, we have been nourished with the very presence of Christ. Through this meal may we be strengthened to keep your word and to proclaim the power of your love in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Appendix B

Worship

OPENING OF A SYNOD OR CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

As in one body we have many members,
so we, who are many, are one body in Christ.

Where two or three are gathered in my name, says the Lord,
I am there among them.

Live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called,
with all humility and gentleness,
making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit
in the bond of peace.

**Let us pursue what makes for justice and peace,
and for mutual upbuilding.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people
by sending into us your Holy Spirit.

Direct us by the light of that Spirit,
that we may have a right judgment in all things
and rejoice at all times in your peace,
through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

I declare this assembly to be in session
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Song **I'm Going on a Journey**

Text: Kenneth D. Larkin. Music: Wet Saints, Edward V.
Bonnemere, 1921-1996. Text and music © 1994
Amitty Music, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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Appendix B

Worship

I'm Going on a Journey



1 I'm go-ing on a jour-ney, and I'm start-ing to-day. My



head is wet, and I'm on my way. Christ's mark is on me;



it's on you, too; it says he loves me, and he loves you, too!



2 I'm be-com-ing this day a saint of God. It



real-ly does-n't mat-ter what roads I trod. Wher-ev-er I go, God's



been there, too. God's love has touched me and will car-ry me through.



3 There are oth-er saints who have said a-men. They'll



keep me faith-ful to my jour-ney's end. A-long the way



I want to be the kind of per-son that God set free.