

**NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD, ELCA, AND
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF INGRIA IN RUSSIA
GUIDELINES FOR FRIENDSHIP CONGREGATIONS**

Friendship congregation relationships provide an excellent opportunity for churches in the Ingrian Church and the Northeastern Minnesota Synod to support one another in their ministries. As sisters and brothers in Christ, we have much to learn from one another as we reach out in Christian love. These guidelines are provided as a starting point for the establishment of friendship congregation relationships.

Assignment

- The Northeastern Minnesota Synod's Ingria Task Force will coordinate the assignment of friendship congregations.
- Northeastern Minnesota congregations interested in becoming friendship congregations should contact the synod office.
- The Ingrian Church will be asked to coordinate and to provide names and addresses of Ingrian congregations interested in such a partnership.

Prayer support

- Congregations and individuals should remember friendship congregations in prayer on a regular basis.

Communication

- Contacts between the congregations should take place at least two to four times per year by e-mail or letter.

Sharing

- Information shared between the congregations may include:
 - Name, address, e-mail address
 - Listing of pastor and staff of the congregation
 - Name of contact person or committee
 - Description of the community in which the congregation is located
 - Brief history of the congregation
 - Activities, special events, retreats
 - Small group ministries such as Bible studies
 - Personal stories of faith
 - Youth ministry, camping ministry
 - Sunday School
 - Pictures
 - An object to display: cross, banner, textile, map, local handicraft, etc.
 - Church calendar
 - Album of photos
- When items are mailed, the friendship congregation should be notified.

Gifts

- Northeastern Minnesota Synod congregations should send monetary gifts for the Ingrian Church to the Synod Office, designated for the friendship congregation. A note or e-mail should be sent to the friendship congregation indicating that the gift will be deposited into the congregation's account.
- When gifts are received from either a Northeastern Minnesota congregation or an Ingrian congregation, the friendship congregation should send an acknowledgment by e-mail or letter.

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