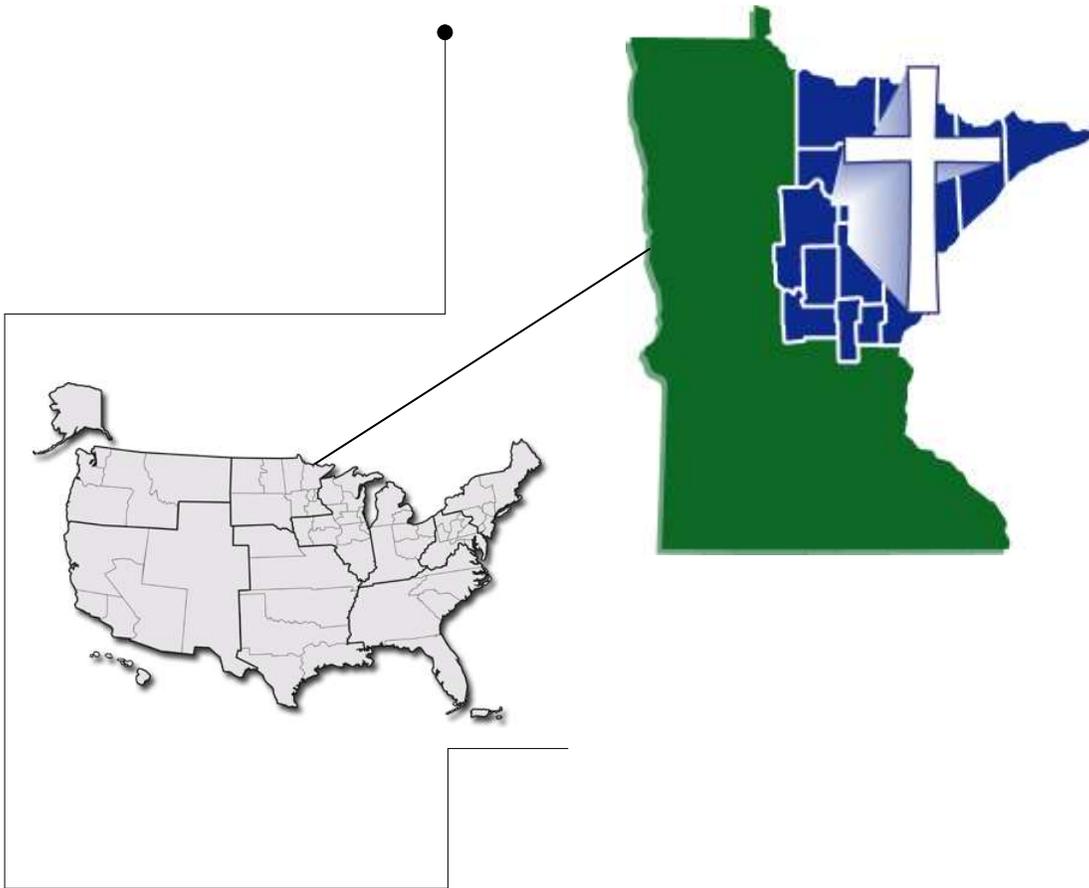


The Northeastern Minnesota Synod  
one of 65 synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
**A Look at our Ministry Together**



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

September 2018

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The word “synod” comes from two Greek words  
“syn” (together) and “hodos” (a way)

“A way together” or “walking together”

“Together” is an important idea for understanding Christianity and the Church.

- ◆ Christians are joined to the Church through baptism into Christ
- ◆ The Christian Church is understood as “the Body of Christ” with individual parts that all contribute to the whole
- ◆ The gifts given by the Holy Spirit are meant to build up the whole body through sharing

In Christ, Christians are joined together in a common fellowship. God has intended us to function at our best in relationship to each other.

**Indeed, there are some things that can't be  
done alone, but must be done together**

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## Practically speaking, this requires organization

The ELCA is organized into geographic areas called synods.

- A synod is a regional expression of the ELCA.
- The Northeastern Minnesota Synod includes the 13 counties in the northeast corner of the state. It represents:
  - over 61,000 baptized members
  - 132 congregations
  - 232 rostered leaders
  - over 1,500 elected lay leaders
- To lead and oversee its ministry together, our synod elects a bishop, provides an office staff, elects a synod council and other volunteer leaders, and organizes task forces and committees - much as a congregation does.

Broadly speaking, our synod helps congregations do together what they can't do alone. Much of this work falls under two vital areas:

- **Support and development of pastors and lay leaders for their congregational ministry.**
- **Extending and coordinating ministry beyond the local setting.**

Here are some examples of what we do together as a synod . . .

# The Support and Development of Pastors and Lay Leaders

## *The Synod Staff . . .*

- **Works with congregations in times of pastoral transition.** When a pastor leaves a congregation, the council and call committee work closely with the synod office in seeking a new pastor and in providing interim leadership.
- **Provides support and training for lay leaders** through programs, workshops, consultation, and the synod's School of Lay Ministry.
- **Provides support and training in youth ministry** for adults (paid and volunteer) who work with youth and for youth in leadership positions.
- **Coordinates the work of the Candidacy Committee** in overseeing candidates for ministry during their years of study.
- **Provides support and training for rostered leaders** through educational events, support in transitions, individual conversations and consultations.
- **Consults with congregational leaders** in times of conflict or crisis, making available workshops, trained leaders, programs and other resources that contribute to congregational health.
- **Provides help, resources and networking for congregations** in areas such as stewardship, finances, paperwork and statistics, outreach, worship, constitutional questions.
- **Helps connect synod leaders to/with national networks and opportunities.**
- **Is in touch with congregational leaders** by phone, e-mail, mail, and personal visits with congregations and staff.
- **Follows a regular pattern of prayer** for congregations, rostered and lay leaders and others in weekly staff devotions.

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# Extending and Coordinating Ministry Beyond the Local Setting

*... links congregations with the larger church and with other ministry organizations through*

- **Global Mission** connections include our companion synod relationships with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia, the South Andhra Lutheran Church in India, the Iglesia Cristiana Luterana de Honduras. Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers brings the world to our door.
- **The ELCA World Hunger Appeal and Disaster Response** receive high visibility in our synod and we are known throughout the ELCA for the effectiveness of our response, both in raising money and in raising awareness.
- **Education Ministry** includes support of campus ministries, Luther Seminary, and Continuing Theological Education Center at Luther Seminary.
- **Ecumenically** we work with the Minnesota Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and support local ecumenical efforts in our congregations and communities.
- **In the public arena** we are part of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, ECUMEN, the Lutheran Advocacy of Minnesota, and ELCA advocacy efforts to protect the poor, vulnerable, and at-risk youth. We are also a part of A Minnesota Without Poverty. We encourage the work of our synod's Immigration, Refugee and Asylum Seekers Justice Task Force.
- **Youth Ministry** offers opportunities for youth and adults who work with youth to participate in events such as the annual ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza and the ELCA Youth Gathering, Youth Convo, and Young Adult Convo.
- **National and regional representation/participation** through Conference of Bishops, ELCA Church Council, Youth Leadership Network, Churchwide Assembly, church institutions, and Churchwide committees and task forces.

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## What Difference Does Synod Ministry Make?

- ◆ ***Leadership***

A strong church requires effective leadership, both ordained and lay. Jesus devoted major energy to the leadership formation of his disciples. So must we. If you reflect on synod ministry, you notice the prominence of leadership formation, support, development and accountability. These are critical functions to the health of the church.

- ◆ ***Relationships***

The church is at its best when gifts, burdens and mission are shared. Synod ministry oversees and tends the important relationships, networks and formal structures of our ministry together, helping congregations do together what could not be done well alone.

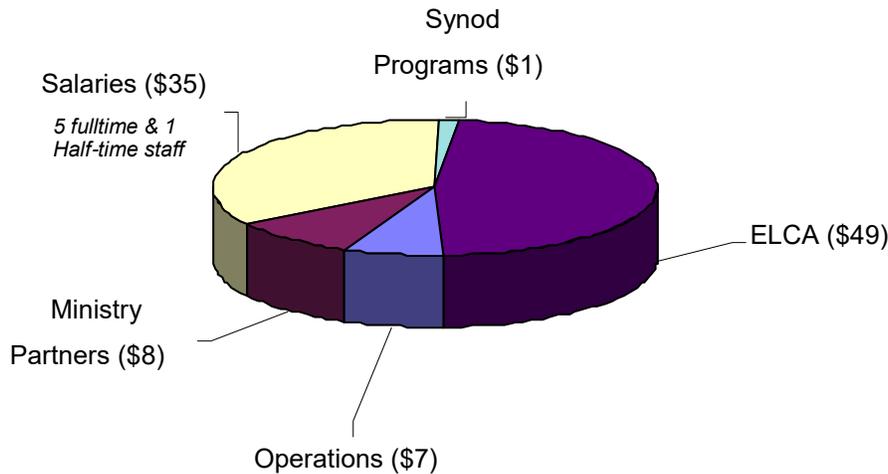
- ◆ ***Accountability***

Synodical ministries of decision-making, leadership support and development, congregational support, and extended ministry are structured around the mutual accountability of the community of faith. Decision-making is democratic; leaders are elected by their congregations or appointed by the Synod Council or the Synod Assembly. Our constitutions bind us to a confession of faith based on Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. In this way we choose to evaluate and discern our ministry by its faithfulness to Jesus Christ and his Gospel of salvation.

# What is the Cost of Supporting Synod Ministry?

Congregations base their budgets on regular giving by members. Each congregation decides annually what amount will be passed on to the synod budget as "mission support." The synod budget divides mission support into three general areas: ELCA, Ministry Partners, and Synod Ministries.

## 2018 Northeastern Minnesota Synod Budget Where \$100 goes:



### ***Our ELCA National and Global Ministries:***

- Coordinating & support of ministries at local, national and global level.
- Starting new congregations, worshiping communities, renewing existing congregations.
- Bringing forth, equipping and supporting leaders of all ages.
- Thanking, informing, teaching, inspiring and inviting people to be good stewards.
- Stepping forward as a church serving others and caring for God's creation.
- Assist global companion churches in building their capacity for mission/ministry in over 90 countries.
- Partnerships with the Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches and National Council of Churches in Christ.

### ***Our Synod Ministry Partners:***

Luther Seminary	\$23,000
Lutheran Campus Ministry	48,000
MN Council of Churches	1,100
Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers	6,000
Lutheran Advocacy of MN	3,000
Region 3 Support	6,000
	<b>\$87,100</b>

# Which of these synod ministries have you or your congregation experienced in the last year?

## Decision-making

Synod Assembly  
Synod Council  
Conference Assemblies  
Task Forces and Committees

## Leadership Support and Development

Bishops Theological Convocations  
NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge  
Practice Discipleship  
Middle School Gathering  
Cardia Deo  
LYO Training  
Synod Journey to Nat'l Youth Gathering  
Candidacy Process  
Intentional Ministry Conference  
Personal visits with synod staff  
Stewardship Seminars  
First Call Theological Education  
Personal Coaching  
Interim Ministry meetings  
Power & Boundaries Workshops  
Ministerial Health Assessment  
Fall Theological Conference  
School of Lay Ministry  
Immigration/Refugee/Asylum Justice Task Force  
Mission Interpreters  
EcoFaith Team  
Pre-Retirement Seminar  
Hunger Leadership Training  
Mission Interpreter Ministry

## Congregational Support

Call Process  
Leadership transition  
Bishop's Presentations  
Confirmation Clusters with Bishop  
Administrative support  
Crisis/Conflict support  
Preaching by synod staff at:  
    anniversary, installation, ordination,  
    guest preacher, sabbatical, crisis  
Communication via:  
    Weekly email "On-line Reflections"  
    Youth E-Chat, Web site, E-mail, mail,  
    other resources

## Beyond Local Ministries

Lutheran Campus Ministry\*  
Minnesota Council of Churches\*  
Lutheran Advocacy of Minnesota\*  
Lutheran Social Service of MN  
Companion Synod relationships  
(Russia, India, Honduras)  
ELCA World Hunger Appeal  
ELCA Disaster Response  
Lutheran World Relief  
Advocacy for At-Risk Youth  
Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers\*  
ELCA Churchwide Committee and  
    Task Force work  
Women of the ELCA  
Minnesota Without Poverty

\* synod ministry partners

## **Synod Staff:**

- **Bishop Thomas Aitken**, Leadership Support/Dev., Ecumenical and Churchwide Leadership
- **Pastor Amy Odgren**, Director for Evangelical Mission/Assistant to the Bishop, Candidacy
- **Deacon Brenda Tibbetts**, Assistant to the Bishop, Call Process, Healthy Congregations/Leaders
- **Catherine Anderson**, Coordinator of Youth Ministry
- **Kathy Wimer**, Office Administrator, Finances, Statistician
- **Tammy Segel-Crilly**, Communications/Office Support