



Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Our Mission is to nurture safe and healthy spaces for the ministry of the Gospel to unfold and shape an abundant future for all in Northwestern Minnesota.

Freed by God's grace to be wholly devoted to Jesus and our neighbor in love.

FAITHFUL in relationships. AUTHENTIC in our welcome. LOVE that makes a difference.

Quick Stats:

Congregations: 216

Total Baptized Membership: 79,350

Rostered Ministers: 291

Synod Authorized Ministers: 48

Synod Staff (job areas on the website)

Bishop: Rev. Bill Tesch; btesch@cord.edu

Associate to the Bishop: Rev. Genelle Netland; genellenetland@cord.edu

Director for Evangelical Mission: Rev. Rebel Hurd; rebelhurd@cord.edu

Office Administrator: Cheryl Zeh; czeh@cord.edu

Director of Communications, Events and Youth Ministry: Kristina Dernier; krisdernier@cord.edu

Financial & Data Systems Specialist: Joan Meulebroeck; jmeulebroeck@cord.edu

Minister for Vocations: Rev. Jon Olson; jonolson1@cord.edu

Ministers for Community and Leader Engagement: Kathy Levenhagen (Conferences 1 & 2 and SAM Coordinator) klevenhagen@cord.edu; Rev. Chris Leach (Conferences 4 & 6) chrisleach@cord.edu; Rev. Dennis Preston (Conferences 7 & 8) dennispreston@cord.edu; Bp. Bill Tesch and Rev. Genelle Netland (Conferences 3 & 5)

ELCA Regional Gift Planner: Rev. Keith Pearson; keith.pearson@elca.org

Minister for Mental Health & Wellness: Rev. Dr. Aaron Suomala-Folkerds; aaron.suomalafolkerds@mnstate.edu

F.A.C.E.S Coordinator: Rev. Kari van Wakeren; vanwakeren@cord.edu

Rural Revival Mission Developer: Rev. Melissa Pickering; mpickering001@luthersem.edu

Ways to Connect:

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (elca.org) - Rostered minister forms; congregation best practices; worship resources for special times; constitution helps; annual appeals and more!

Northwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA (nwmnsynod.org) - Synod staff contact information; transition updates; pulpit supply list; resources; candidacy, upcoming events; shared resources

Social Media - Events; inspiration; information - Facebook: @nwmnelca; Instagram: @nwmnelca; X/formerly Twitter @nwmnsynod

Quarterly Zoom meetings for rostered ministers and SAMs; quarterly Zoom meetings for council presidents

Bi-monthly Zoom meetings for those who do ministry with and for children, youth, and families

Northwestern Minnesota Synod

Physical Location

310 14th Ave S, Moorhead, MN 56560

Mailing Address

Concordia College, Moorhead, MN 56562

Phone: 218-299-3019 or 800-452-3692

Website: www.nwmnsynod.org

Save the Date!

February: Giving Hearts Day (Feb 8) - *Programming Fundraising*

April: Joint Theological Day* (April 18 with Eastern North Dakota Synod)

May: Synod Assembly* at Concordia College (May 17-18); Spring Appeal - *Grant Fundraising*

Late Summer/Fall: Synod Road Trip (Coming to a town near you!)

September: Theology for Ministry Conference*

November: Give to the Max - *Programming Fundraising*; Middle School Youth Gathering

December: Year-end mailing - *including materials and reports to be returned to the Synod Office*

May/June 2025: Synod Assembly* at Concordia College (May 30-June 1)

***Required for all rostered ministers per Letter of Call, and SAMs per Letter of Appointment**

Did You Know?

- **We offer a seminary debt reduction program** for rostered ministers. Applications available in February
- **We have Bible camps:**
 - Luther Crest: luthercrest.org - Year-round programming for all ages
 - Pathways: pathwaysbiblecamps.org - Year-round programming for all ages
- **We have Lutheran education:**
 - Oak Grove Lutheran School: www.oakgrovelutheran.com; Concordia College: www.concordiacollege.edu; Lutheran Campus Ministry of Bemidji: lcm Bemidji.org; Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry at MSUM: www.crossroadsmsum.com
- **We have ministries with our Indigenous neighbors:**
 - Peoples Church, Bemidji: www.facebook.com/peopleschurchbemidji
 - The Way, Fargo-Moorhead: www.facebook.com/p/Native-American-Christian-Ministry-of-Fargo-Moorhead
- **We have a Companion Synod:** Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church of India (AELC)
- **We have an active Synod Women's Organization:** www.nwmnsynod.org/pages/synod-womens-organization
- **We have a strategic plan for our synod:** It can be found at the bottom of this page: <https://www.nwmnsynod.org/about>

Pulpit Supply: If you need a supply preacher, you can find the link here:

<https://www.nwmnsynod.org/pages/pulpit-supply--130> . This site is password protected; please email krisdernier@cord.edu or czeh@cord.edu for the password.

One-Day Licensure: If you need someone to preside over the Sacraments of Holy Communion or Holy Baptism, and you have asked a lay person (not an ordained pastor/Word and Sacrament Minister) to serve you, you will need to request a one-day licensure for them to preside at communion, which will authorize that lay person on that one day that is requested in that specific congregation/parish. The pastor or council president should request this in writing (email) at least 10 days in advance to Bishop Tesch.

Synod Authorized Ministry (SAM): This is a growing way for lay people to serve as leaders of congregations. New expectations have been set for this work and partnership in our synod. To learn more about becoming a SAM, having a SAM serve as your congregational leader, OR being a SAM mentor, please read this handbook for more information: <https://www.nwmnsynod.org/pages/sam-process>

ELCA Constitution Support: Your congregational constitution is the foundation for all good mission and ministry to thrive. If your constitution needs to be updated, there are tools and resources to help you along the way: www.nwmnsynod.org/pages/constitution-resources