

# 2025 Annual Report

*"To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.... Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many...If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it." (1 Corinthians 12:7, 14, 26)*

This report to the worshipping communities of the Minneapolis Area Synod is an opportunity to look back on 2025, and to look ahead to the year to come. Most of all, it is an opportunity to name and celebrate some of the ways the Holy Spirit continues to enliven God's church and our shared life as Church Together. We give thanks to you and your congregation for your partnership in this ministry we share, and for your Mission Support, financial commitments that fuel Synod ministry as well as the ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Together we accompany one another in times of challenge and joy, seeking the common good as we bear witness to the love of God that makes possible our love of neighbor. Below are a few highlights of 2025.

## Our Shared Life

- In May, we lived out the theme Church Together at the annual Synod Assembly
- We hosted two Tool Kit workshops in 2025, one in March and one in November
- We started a monthly virtual learning series called Learn Together Over Lunch
- We gathered rostered ministers for two Ministerium events and the Bishop's Theological Conference
- The deans of the conferences hosted regular conference meetings and the Conference Assemblies in February
- Leaders grew in their work through Peer Groups and Power and Boundaries Workshops
- There were several other gatherings of Synod leaders: Children, Youth and Family leaders, Leaders of Color, Retired Pastors and Deacons, Communicators, and more
- Global partnerships were strengthened in 2025. Archbishop Musa Filibus from the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria visited in October and a few people from our Synod visited the Leipzig District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Saxony in September
- The new ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry was installed in October at Central Lutheran, Minneapolis
- Lay and rostered leaders have been exploring new partnerships, creative building use, and how best to steward resources
- Our Executive Committee and Synod Council are restructuring how we fund ministry together, with a focus on more support for our New Start and Strategic communities
- The Resurrection Fund began in 2017. Seeded by money received at the Holy Closure of congregations, the fund makes possible a wide array of ministry across the Synod, including a new round of Imagination Grants beginning in 2026
- Following the adoption of a resolution on Immigration at Synod Assembly, an Immigration Task Force was formed to guide our action, and a Welcome Fund was created to channel support related to immigration

Daily I see Jesus at work in and through you, dear Synod. Thank you for your dedication, for trusting me and our staff during the tender times, and for daring to boldly live into your faith and baptismal identity.

## Transitions in our Synod Staff

In 2025, Karen Ohm and Peg Ihinger retired, and we adjusted the portfolios for many of the Synod staff.

Early in the year we welcomed six new staff members: Sarah Maslowski (CYF Connector), Liz Farmer (Assistant to the Bishop for Administration), Karen Alexander (Administrator for Candidacy, Roster, and Call Process), Pastor Jen Collins (Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality), Pastor Ryan Fletcher (Director for Evangelical Mission), and Juan Gonzalez (Director of Family Faith).



With these changes comes much learning and growth, and some intentional changes to our processes. I'm excited about our team and the gifts we bring individually and collectively. Thanks for your patience as we grow into this new season.

You are in our prayers. God bless us with grace for this day and courage for tomorrow.  
In Christ, Bishop Jen Nagel

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**137**

worshipping communities,  
including 3 new starts and 8  
strategic ministries



**142,410**

baptized members in MAS  
worshipping communities



**11**

languages spoken in worship

## Leadership

**5** ordinations of new pastors and deacons

**215**

pastors, deacons, and Synod-authorized  
ministers serving in faith communities

**21** rostered ministers installed  
into new positions

**67**

pastors and deacons serving in  
specialized ministry

**50** people in candidacy program

**379**

retired rostered ministers

**22** call processes in **21** faith communities

**18**

rostered ministers on leave from call

## Leadership

**13** Conference Deans (serving 12  
geographical conferences, and  
one for chaplains)

**17** Synod Council members

**78** serving on other Synod  
committees

**30** voting members attended the  
2025 ELCA Churchwide  
Assembly in Phoenix in August

## Initiatives

- To date, more than 25% of our congregations are or have participated in Faith and Neighboring Practices, connecting deeply with neighbors in their community. We recently received another five-year grant from Lilly to continue scaling this program even more widely across the Synod.
- Our second Lilly Funded grant, Family Faith, is taking root. It seeks to support parents and caregivers in sharing faith with their children in ethnic-specific and culturally-specific ways.
- 2025 launched the inaugural year of the Minneapolis Area Synod Youth Choir.

## Mission Support

**\$2,643,049** pledged by congregations in Mission Support, shared between MAS and ELCA - thank you!