



WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER.

Mission Support Dollars Fund Ministry and People

Southwestern Minnesota Synod Narrative Budget Overview - Fiscal Year ending January 31, 2024

“For we are God’s servants, working together.” 1 Corinthians 3:9.

We are church together. Our synod’s identity echoes Scripture:

*God places us in cities, farms, and towns together under one prairie sky.
The Risen Christ surprises us with opportunities to plant God’s Word in the world.
Walking together in confidence we cultivate life-giving congregations,
nurture partner ministries, and cooperate in the life of the ELCA.
By God’s grace together we have what we need.*

Thank you for the Mission Support your congregation shares with this synod. Each Mission Support dollar is carefully invested to love and care for God’s children in local communities and throughout the world. The synod’s \$1.74 million Mission Support budget, plus additional financial resources from grants, registrations, and partnerships, will not only help provide your congregation with resources to be used in your local mission field, but will also help support each of these ministry areas – every day.



Ministry Beyond: National and Global - 41%

Of every dollar received from congregations as Mission Support, 51.5% supports national and global ministry. This equals 41% of the synod’s total receipts. Through these financial gifts and with your prayer support, the ELCA plants and supports new congregations; enables congregations to renew their ministries; and develops and shares resources for faith formation, discipleship, prayer, and worship. We send missionaries, including Young Adults in Global Mission, to serve in more than 48 countries around the world. Our daily ministry includes supporting and developing current and future leaders in the ELCA through seminaries, colleges, and universities; recruiting, preparing, and implementing a system for the placement of rostered ministers; providing leadership opportunities for youth and young adults; and providing ministry resources and opportunities for networking for lay leaders. As part of the ELCA together, our churchwide organization provides our synod with a full-time synod staff member: the Director for Evangelical Mission. Our D.E.M., Pastor Troy Pflibsen, represents our Mission Support at work right back here at home.

People Resources - 30.5%

Members of the synod staff embody your Mission Support dollars. *Synod pastoral* staff walk with congregations during times of transition, assisting with the call process, meeting with congregation councils, navigating conflict, facing sudden crises, and planning for the future. At any given time this year, synod pastoral staff are walking with 50 out of 228 congregations in various phases of the call process and transition. We also walk with congregations considering area partnerships. *Administrative staff* provide the essential functions of responding to questions over the phone and email, communications, supporting the candidacy and first-call process, managing the official call process and rostering of leaders, working with financial administration, and facilitating governance for your congregation and of the synod.

Equip and Lead - 13%

St. Paul talked about how the God gave gifts “to equip the saints for the work of ministry which is for building up the body of Christ.” Much of the work of the synod is to equip God’s people for ministry every day. We support congregations in adapting to this new time even as we practice new ways to do synod ministry. Online gatherings for rostered ministers and lay leaders with the bishop, synod staff, and other speakers equip congregations for the vital work of leadership in this new age of mission. The Fall Theological Conference provides high-caliber presentations to nourish and equip rostered ministers. The Continuous Growth Pathway (CGP) is a partnership with Gustavus Adolphus College dedicated to helping Rostered Ministers grow and thrive in ministry together. Events like Equipping Day have taken a new shape by traveling closer to people in various corners of the synod. Faithful Innovation is an initiative of renewal, vitality, and transformation for congregations as they adapt to the new challenges and opportunities of our changing culture. Coaching Ministry provides resources to support rostered ministers and congregations as they seek awareness, clarity, and action to move their ministries forward.

Local Ministry Partners - 9%

Your generosity allows us to direct your gifts to support our Shared Ministries, including Luther Seminary in St. Paul, where we train the next generation of pastors and deacons. We provide Lutheran chaplains on the campuses of public colleges in our synod, including St. Cloud State University, Southwest Minnesota State University, and the University of Minnesota in Morris. We help support Shalom Hill Farm, a rural ministry learning center near Windom. Plus, there are efforts to address hunger with our fellow believers through the Minnesota Council of Churches and speak God’s word of justice through Lutheran Advocacy-Minnesota. Our Shared Ministry Partners continue to adjust to changing circumstance and challenges.

General Administration - 6.5%

We accomplish this work of ministry with an administrative cost of 6.5 cents of every dollar of your Mission Support. This provides for internet and phone communication, as well as travel for synod staff to go to your congregation to assist you. The use of Zoom meetings has allowed us to keep the cost of travel low for group meetings and staff travel. This careful stewarding has allowed for maximum use of your Mission Support dollars. In the near future, the synod website will have a new look to better help congregations as you love God and serve your neighbors.

And because we can’t say it enough, “Thank you!” for your generosity. **We are church together!**



Southwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God’s work. Our hands.

