



We all are **one in mission**; we all are one in call, **our varied gifts united by Christ**, the Lord of all. A single great commission compels us from above to **plan and work together** that all may know Christ's love.

(ELW 576)

Dear friends in Christ,

We all are one in mission. GOD's mission, that is! God's mission of reconciling the whole world to God in Christ. From small congregations on the prairie to large congregations in cities (and everything in between), we live out the Matthew 28 Great Commission together as the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. **Thank you** for the financial gifts you share as **Mission Support** to sustain our shared ministries.

"Mission Support" is not "missionary sponsorship" - although you could think of it that way, and part of it does that! Mission Support is the portion of offerings that ELCA congregations share with synods and then synods share through the churchwide organization to unite us in God's life-giving work. Mission Support sustains the ministries of the synod and partners close to home, across the ELCA, and around the world. As we look to 2024, there are vital opportunities ahead. Changes and challenges? Of course. That is the nature of life. So, Mission Support will come back to equip your congregation to share Life in Jesus as it:

Expands leaders' capacity to guide congregations. Still emerging from the pandemic, lay leaders, pastors, and deacons are all experimenting and adapting to consider what ministry looks like in this new time.

- If you have attended a training for lay or rostered leaders, consulted with synod staff about a call process or conflict, participated in synod assembly or fall theological conference, or benefited from the work of Luther Seminary or The Continuous Growth Pathway... Mission Support makes these ministries possible.



Southwestern Minnesota Synod
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Grows the faith of youth. The most frequent concern we hear from congregations is about supporting youth & families and the leaders who work with them.

- If your congregation sends young people & adults to the Jr. & Sr. High Youth Gatherings, National Youth Gathering, or connects youth leaders through the Youth Ministry network...These ministries in the synod and beyond happen because of your Mission Support.

Invests in evangelism, outreach, and partnerships. New mission congregations are supported by ELCA grants, and area partnerships are convened by Director for Evangelical Mission, Pr. Troy Pflibsen.

- If you're curious about evangelism and what's new for the future, we have stories to tell! Reborn Lao Lutheran in St. Cloud regularly welcomes adults through baptism. Many congregations are considering how to partner in a variety of ways with others in the area. The ELCA provides Pr. Troy's full-time position on our staff, to focus especially on outreach and planning for the future.... All possible, thanks to your Mission Support.

Connects us to ministry partners close to home and around the globe. Through our ELCA partners, we do together what we could not do as congregations alone.

- Ever wonder how you can spread the good news? Well, know that you do already! You send missionaries, partner with churches around the globe, work to alleviate poverty, bring healing in disasters, and send hope - along with quilts - through Lutheran World Relief. With our hands, we do God's work of restoring and reconciling communities throughout the world.... thanks to Mission Support.

As you consider your congregation's Mission Support for 2024, will you prayerfully consider growing that Mission Support for the coming year? We are called to join in God's work in the world using all the gifts God has entrusted to our care. We encourage your church to increase your percentage or level of Mission Support as you make your financial decisions for next year. Whatever amount you share, we are one in the Great Commission.

It is an honor and a joy to walk with you in ministry. If you have any questions about these opportunities, please reach out. Dee.pederson@swmnelca.org. I'd love to listen, learn from you, and share more! Thank you for your partnership in God's mission. We plan and work together "that all may know Christ's love!"

+ grace and love in Christ,
Rev. Dee Pederson, D.Min.
Bishop, Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA



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