



## EMBRACE GOD'S MISSION + EQUIP GOD'S PEOPLE

Dear Friends in Christ –

Thank you for all you do each day in and through your congregation. Your congregation is your home base. People come to know Jesus through you. And beyond your congregation, you belong to something bigger:

- The Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA - 234 congregations and 2 mission starts, here to embrace God's mission and equip God's people.
- The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - one church in 9,100 places, nearly 3.5 million people strong, "**members one of another**" (Romans 12:4-5) moving forward together in Christ.

You and your congregation embody what it means to be church together in so many ways:

- Pastors of the Watonwan Conference are beginning a special effort to support military chaplains and families.
- Our Laotian ministry in St. Cloud is drawing-in new members and growing leaders.
- Campus Ministry (LuMin) at SMSU is hosting a food shelf and providing meals to any students facing food insecurity.
- Congregations are welcoming interim, newly-ordained, and newly-called pastors because of the hard work of your synod ministers and synod bishop.
- Congregational leaders are excited to be growing in generosity through our partnership with the ELCA, Cultivating Generous Congregations, and The Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising.
- Equipping Congregations Day is drawing hundreds of people from across our synod to be – equipped!

**Ministries like these are possible because our Creator God has gathered us as church together in Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Spirit, is sending us into the world.**

Ministries like these continue, grow, and expand because your congregation shares Mission Support - a percentage of offerings beyond your local ministry site. Mission Support is an investment in our commitment to each other that makes possible experiences, resources, and ideas that help more and more people know the way of Life in Jesus. Mission Support allows us to act as church together for the sake of the world God loves so much. It allows us, together, to **Embrace God's Mission and Equip God's People.**

During the last six weeks of the calendar year, your congregation members will be generous in their offerings. During this season of giving, you will also prayerfully determine your 2020 spending plan. As you do, please take time to reflect on the following:

**In what ways is your congregation growing in faith and putting faith into action?**

**How is your congregation ready to courageously explore with others the complexities, tensions, and ambiguities of a changing world and today's economy?**

**In what ways has the Holy Spirit led you to respond creatively to the ministry opportunities and urgent needs facing your congregation, community, and beyond?**

**How are your actions connected to the efforts of the synod, other partners, and the ELCA to *Embrace God's Mission and Equip God's People*?**

As you discuss the Mission Support portion of your regular offerings, please prayerfully consider how your offerings provide both the foundation and the fuel to do God's work in the world. Consider how we have a greater impact in our communities and beyond because we are "**members one of another**," serving others and sharing God's abundance.

Discover stories of how the Spirit is at work through us *Embracing God's Mission and Equipping God's People*:

- See the 2019-20 edition of "Stories of Faith in Action" available online at [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org).
- Visit our synod's blog at [www.swmnelca.org/news](http://www.swmnelca.org/news).
- Take a look at the additional page to see how your Mission Support is being invested wisely.

Share these stories to make sure people know why their gifts, tithes, and offerings matter in God's vision and mission.

Thank you for your generous support throughout 2019  
and in the season of giving ahead. Most of all,  
thank you for all you do each day as you  
***Embrace God's Mission and Equip God's People***.

Grace and peace in Christ,

*Rev. Dee Pederson*  
Director for Evangelical Mission  
Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA



## How to register your Mission Support budget amount:

1. Go to [www.swmnelca.org](http://www.swmnelca.org)
2. Click on Annual Meeting Resources under Quick Links on the homepage.
3. Register the proposed amount you believe will be approved in your upcoming annual meeting.
4. Contact the synod office (507) 637-3904 if your proposed amount should change after your annual meeting.



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

[www.swmnelca.org](http://www.swmnelca.org)