



TOGETHER - WE EMBODY THE WORD

Southwestern Minnesota Synod Narrative Budget Overview - Fiscal Year ending January 31, 2025



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

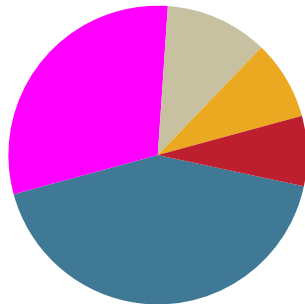
We are church together. The synod’s identity echoes Scripture:

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.

Mission Support Makes Ministry Happen.

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 anticipates receiving \$1.82 million in Mission Support gifts for Fiscal Year 2025. In addition, we receive financial resources from grants, registrations, and partnerships. Together, these gifts help provide your congregation with resources for your local mission field and support the ministry areas listed below:

Total budgeted expenses for 2025:



- Ministry Beyond: National and Global – 42.31%
- People Resources – 30.23%
- Equip and Lead – 11.39%
- Local Ministry Partners – 8.55%
- General Administration – 7.52%

Ministry Beyond: National and Global - 42%

Your Mission Support dollars help support national and global ministry. We continue to share 51.5% of the Mission Support gifts we receive beyond ourselves through ELCA ministries here and abroad. This means that 42.31% of our total budgeted expenses supports this work. Through your 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 one full-time staff member – Director for Evangelical Mission (D.E.M.) Rev. Dr. Troy Pflibsen, as well as Regional Gift Planner Rev. Keith Pearson, who works directly with congregations and endowments. They represent our Mission Support at work right back here at home.

People Resources - 30%

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 227 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 - 11%

St. Paul talked about how 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. 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 and the Congregational Resource Team provides resources to support rostered ministers and congregations as they seek awareness, clarity, and action to move their ministries forward.

Local Ministry Partners - 8.5%

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 - 7.5%

General Administration is the scaffolding that undergirds our work of ministry. This provides for such things as internet and phone communication. It includes vehicle maintenance and car insurance so synod staff can travel to your congregation to assist you. Careful stewarding of administrative costs has allowed for maximum use of your Mission Support dollars. For example, the use of Zoom meetings has allowed us to keep the cost of travel low for group meetings and staff travel.

And because we can’t say it enough, “Thank you!” for your generosity. **Together - We embody the Word.**



Southwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

