



Minneapolis Area Synod

Who Are We: Quick facts about the Minneapolis Area Synod

The Minneapolis Area Synod consists of 167 congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America located in and around the “City of Lakes.” The synod (a word which means “meeting together”) includes urban, suburban, and rural communities in the greater metropolitan Minneapolis area. It is the largest of the ELCA’s synods and home to some of the largest Lutheran congregations in the world.

Fast Facts:

Number of congregations	167 and 8 under development
Baptized membership	226,094
Annual giving	\$125,000,000
Total assets	\$300,000,000
Weekly average worship attendance	64,626
Church school weekly attendance average	43,000
Average congregational size	1,300 members
Number of rostered leaders	740 pastors, associates in ministry deaconesses and diaconal ministers
Budget of the Minneapolis Area Synod	\$4.2 million

Governance:

The Minneapolis Area Synod is governed by an annual assembly that elects a Synod Council and bishop to provide oversight and leadership between synodical assemblies. Our bishop is the Rev. Craig E. Johnson. The bishop’s staff includes program associates and skilled support staff.

What does a synod do?

Synods exist to assist and strengthen congregations and to coordinate congregations’ work with other Lutherans and Christians to accomplish together what can not be accomplished alone.

The synod:

- Provides spiritual support to rostered leaders;
- Identifies and evaluates candidates for ministry;
- Assists congregations in identifying and evaluating candidates for pastoral and professional lay leadership positions;
- Assists congregations dealing with conflict, seeking to resolve the situation in a healthy way which will lead to reconciliation, restored harmony or a peaceful separation.
- Coordinates the establishment of new congregations:
These new congregations were organized in 2005 - 2006:
 - Mercy Seat, Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
 - Living Presence Lutheran Church, Blaine
- Encourages financial support and involvement from congregations with greater resources to strengthen congregations carrying out mission and ministry in less affluent neighborhoods. The synod also enlists individual congregational members with the capacity to give extra gifts for advancing the mission of Christ.
- Serves as the primary channel for gifts to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the wider and more global mission of our church. More than 57 percent of all giving to the synod is passed on to the ELCA. Our congregations, through the Minneapolis Area Synod, and by leadership on major commissions and committees, are partners in the mission strategy of the ELCA.
- Exercises leadership to encourage the prophetic voice of congregations, challenging one another to a vision of mission and ministry beyond the local parish. Congregational and synodical leaders seek to hold one another accountable for the whole mission of the whole people of God.
- Ministers to new Americans: One-half million immigrants and their children live in the Twin City metropolitan area. This is a great challenge and a great opportunity for Christ. Congregations of our synod seek to be inviting. We also have a great opportunity to continue the Lutheran tradition of service to all people in need, regardless of race, ethnic origin or religion.

To move toward our church's goal to be a more ethnically diverse church that reflects our community, the Minneapolis Area Synod supports the work of AGORA Ministries. AGORA's mission is the training of pastors and laity to do outreach to specific ethnic groups, develop appropriate worship and educational materials to meet the spiritual needs of the new immigrants.

- Provides program support for congregations:
The Minneapolis Area Synod has three program groups, called "Tables," which provide services and support for congregational activities. Here's how they are organized:

The Mission Table: *staff, Glenny Ose*

The Mission Table “shall make Christ known” in our towns, villages, neighborhoods and metropolitan community; to grow our congregations numerically, spiritually and in discipleship; to transform lives, congregation and communities.”

Goals:

1. New ministry development and new ministry starts
2. Mission and outreach strategy for the synod (evangelism training)
3. Global mission interpretation and promotion

The Leadership Table: *staff, Pat Hansen*

The Community Table is dedicated to encouraging and selecting candidates for ministry, the calling of pastors and professional lay leaders, the equipping of and care for rostered leaders. The Community Table facilitates mutual support and networking among rostered leaders.

Programs:

Youth Ministry Network Steering Committee, Bishops’ Theological Conference, Bishop’s Lay Leadership Conference, boundaries training, pre-retirement seminar, first-call theological education and colleague groups.

The Global Companion Table: *staff, Glenny Ose, Kris Perry, DM*

The Minneapolis Area Synod Companion Synod Programs are under the direction of Bishop's Associate, Glenny Ose, and coordinated by Diaconal Minister, Kris Perry, in partnership with Archbishop Babba and the Lutheran Church of Christ Nigeria. The Leipzig Connection is in partnership with Superintendent Martin Henker and the Leipzig District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony, Germany. The purpose of the Companion Synod Program is to establish, nurture and strengthen communion relationships in mission within the body of Christ.

Engaging in life-long, congregation-to-congregation relationships, partnerships provide opportunities to participate in the life and ministry of the companions through prayer, study, communication, exchange of visitors, and sharing of resources. Companion relationships open our eyes to the many challenges of the global context and call us to deepen our commitment to be true disciples of Christ as individuals and as a community of faith.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a congregational partner or to schedule an adult forum or other educational opportunity, contact: Kris Perry at 612-418-5410 or krisp@visi.com.

The Partnership Table: *Pastor David Wangaard*

This Table is a catalyst for partnering connections between the congregations in this synod, the ecumenical church and the many co-ministries and agencies seeking the common good of the whole community in the light of the Gospel of Christ.

Goals:

1. To bridge city, suburban and rural congregations
2. To promote co-ministry and congregational partnerships

3. To explore new urban ministry starts and finding the partners to make it possible
4. Promote multi-culturalism within the church
5. Address issues of world hunger and other social concerns

The synod also coordinates and encourages the work of our many Lutheran institutions. Lutherans are known for their great work in providing services to meet social needs. Lutherans in Minneapolis built hospitals, nursing homes, social service agencies and other organizations that minister to and with people trapped in poverty. Each of these organizations is an extension of congregational ministries. The synod seeks to coordinate and channel the expertise, commitment and resources of these institutions to advance the ministry of the Church. Our partners include these “co-ministries:”

Augsburg College
Bread of Life Lutheran Congregation for the Deaf
Board of Social Ministry
Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches
Luther Seminary
Lutheran Campus Ministry
Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy
Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota
Minnesota Council of Churches

And these local partners:

Fairview-Ebenezer
CareView
The Good Samaritan Society
Plymouth Christian Youth Center
Augustana Care Corporation
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Augsburg Fortress Publishers
ELCA Board of Pensions