

2026 REPORT TO THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY
PASTOR TERA KOSSOW, DIRECTOR FOR EVANGELICAL MISSION

Grace and peace to you, people of the Western North Dakota Synod!



Looking back on 2025, I have found so many blessings in being able to meet people all across the synod. The work we have done together was not always easy, but it was God working in our lives; meeting us right where we are. I met with individuals and councils, showed up for milestone anniversaries in congregations, attended ordinations, preached and led worship, and learned more about the synod and the people along the way. No matter if we met for joy-filled events or to recognize hard truths, it is always a blessing to be invited in.

As the DEM, Director for Evangelical Mission, I have access to grant funding. In 2025, we were awarded a grant to explore cooperative ministry in the synod. This model is one that I see would work great in several areas of our synod. Ideally, there would be about six congregations working together with one pastor and several SAMs, Synod Authorized Ministers. This is similar to a parish model, but isn't necessarily so rigid in structure, although it can be. Congregations benefit from having SAMs who serve all congregations in the coop, and who are mentored by a pastor, and a pastor who cares for all the congregations and their SAMs.

We received another grant for building up the ministry of Bethel, New Town, which allows them to participate in the lives of all people in the congregation and the community located on the lands of the MHA Nation. Their ministry of gifting star quilts for milestones in peoples' lives has deepened the relationships between congregation and community, which is an absolutely wonderful thing to have happening between our white and native communities! The hope is that this ministry will include education on how we can all be good neighbors to our native siblings so that we can all come to a better understanding of why this ministry is such a blessing to us all.



There are too many great things that happened in 2025 to mention in this short report, but I must say that attending the ELCA Churchwide Assembly was a highlight for sure. The work I am blessed to do that connects churchwide, synods, and congregations is very rewarding.

May God bless our next year in ministry for the sake of the Good News,

Pastor Tera Kossow