



Western North Dakota Synod
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.

Synod E-news

March 30, 2026

News & Events from the Western North Dakota Synod



EVENTS CALENDAR



MINISTRIES



TRANSITIONS



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER NOW](#)

2026 WND Synod Assembly

Rough Rider Center | Watford City, ND

May 29 - 31, 2026

Look for news and event updates posted on the [Synod Assembly page](#) as they become available.

“Jesus said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’” (Luke 10:2)

Grounded in Jesus' sending of the seventy in Luke 10:1-9, the 2026 Western North Dakota Synod Assembly gathers under the theme **Walking Together**. The word “synod” literally means “walking together”. As people of faith who call the congregations of this synod their faith home, we are called into relationship and sent into the world two by two. At this year's synod assembly, we will gather for worship, holy conversation, and faithful decision-making. As we listen for the Spirit's guidance, we will be invited to deepen our connections, strengthen our common life, and recommit ourselves to God's mission of healing, hope, and peace in our congregations, communities, and across western North Dakota.

Equipping Storytellers: Practical Tools for Storytelling in Your Church

Friday, May 29, 2026 1:30 - 4:30 PM CDT

Stories build connection and bring faith to life. Join pastor, speaker, humorist, and award-winning storyteller Nathan Mugaas for a practical and engaging workshop designed for both preachers and lay leaders. Drawing on his roots in western North Dakota and early ministry in the synod, Nathan offers

simple tools for discovering and sharing meaningful stories that strengthen connection and enrich congregational life.



Inn at Hunter's Run
3617 6th Ave NE
(701) 444-1100
\$99.00 + tax and fees
(Breakfast included in room price)



Little Missouri Inn & Suites
109 9th Ave SE
(701) 842-6262
\$99.00 + tax and fees
(Breakfast included in room price)

Reserve Your Room for Synod Assembly

Hotel room blocks have been made at the following places and are reserved under "Western North Dakota Synod".

Room blocks are reserved until April 29th, after which rooms will likely be unavailable.



Roosevelt Inn and Suites
600 2nd Ave SW
(701) 842-3686
\$99.95 + tax and fees
(Buffet breakfast available for a fee)



Teddy's Residential Suites
113 9th Ave SE
(701) 842-6480
\$109+ taxes and fees
(Breakfast can be purchased next door at Little Missouri Inn)

Walking Together to Make Sacred Connections



Bethel Lutheran, New Town, has made *Sacred Connections* by *Walking Together* with the indigenous community of the MHA Nation. They need to raise \$10,000 in matching funds in order to receive a \$10,000 grant from the ELCA for this ministry. Please come to Synod Assembly prepared to help this ministry by bidding for a chance to win a quilt or a handmade item. All proceeds will be used to meet the matching funds needed to maximize this grant's potential.

The most significant part of this ministry is gifting star quilts and other quilts for milestone life events such as funerals, weddings, and baptism.

Contact [Pastor Tera at the Western North Dakota Synod Office](#) to donate a star quilt or other type of quilt, or to make a monetary donation.



Worship News

Copyright Guidelines for Worshipping Communities

Do you have questions about copyright and permissions when using worship materials? "[Guidelines for Worship Use of Material Under Copyright](#)" is a resource on the Augsburg Fortress website. This document contains information to help you navigate and report resources. It includes a handy chart based on the kinds of permission you are seeking.



JUST MOVE RACIAL JUSTICE COHORT FOR CHURCH LEADERS

An 8 week online cohort to help leaders catalyze courageous conversations about culture, power, and race in their ministry contexts

REGISTER NOW



Tuesdays @ Noon from
Apr 7 to May 26



For more info, go to:
JUSTmoveculture.com

JUSTmove: A Racial Justice Cohort for Church Leaders

Pastor Mary Dickman-Parris just finished this course led by David Scherer and Joe Davis. And Pastor Mary whole-heartedly recommends it to all church leaders!

Pastor Mary shared that, "I loved the opportunity to connect with other church leaders and learn about culture, power, and race in a grace-filled group with a biblical foundation."

A new cohort will start on April 7th and meet every Tuesday at noon for 8 weeks.

This is a cohort designed to connect and equip leaders with tools and resources to catalyze justice and inclusion in their ministry. It addresses the question of, how do we "work for peace and justice in all the earth" and proclaim God's welcome for ALL people without tearing our congregations apart or being accused of being "too political"?

- **CONNECT** with other pastors who are willing to share best practices
- **UNPACK** our own real issues as they arise in real time with real people
- **EXPLORE** topics of Culture, Power, and Race (CPR) with a biblical lens
- **LEARN** developmentally appropriate frameworks for leading social change
- **IDENTIFY** goals and next steps for ourselves and our organizations
- https://www.eventbrite.com/e/justmove-a-racial-justice-cohort-for-church-leaders-tickets-1984596829541?keep_tld=true

BOUNDARIES WORKSHOP

APRIL 16TH
(in Burlington, ND)

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APRIL 17TH
(in Bismarck, ND)

ONE DAY ONLY
BOUNDARIES
workshop



Western
North Dakota
Synod

Evangelical
Lutheran
Church in America

Merriam-Webster defines a boundary as "something that shows where an area ends and another area begins." As a synod, we are committed to providing you with opportunities to explore the intersections of healthy boundaries and your core identity as a beloved child of God. We are also committed to providing a safe and supportive space in which we explore what this means together.

Join us from 9:00am-3:30pm on April 16th at Peace Lutheran Church in Burlington or April 17th at Bismarck Veterans Memorial Library in Bismarck for a one-day boundaries workshop, led by Pastor Emily Carson, Director for Evangelical Mission & Assistant to the Bishop for Generosity, Stewardship and Financial Administration, in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. Pastor Carson

has been facilitating power and boundaries workshops for lay and rostered people across the country for the past 9 years.

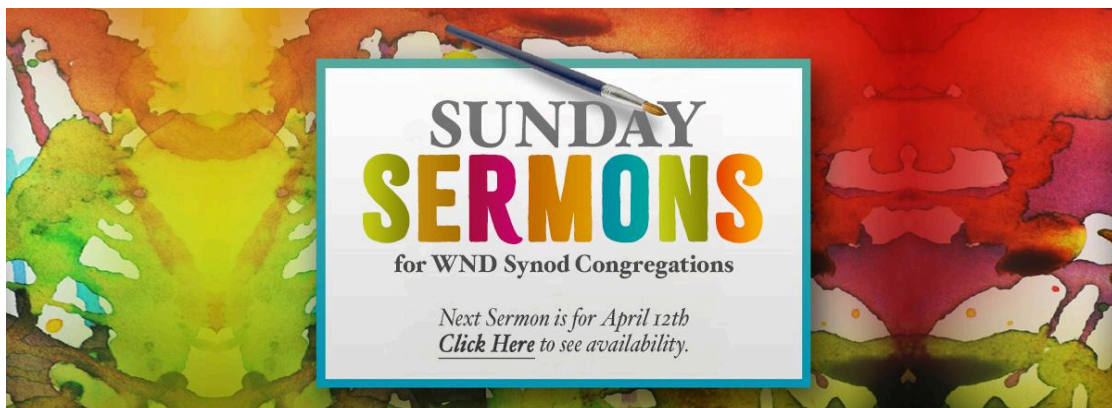
Each session is limited to 35 participants.

[CLICK HERE to register for the Burlington workshop.](#)

[CLICK HERE to register for the Bismarck workshop.](#)

WE HAVE MOVED!

As of February 23, 2026, the offices of the Western North Dakota Synod of the ELCA are located at **1830 North 11th Street in Bismarck**. We invite you to stop by and check out our new digs!!



To help satisfy a growing need, DEM Tera Kossow has arranged for pastors of the WND Synod to provide one video sermon and manuscript to share each month.

The next monthly sermon will be for **Sunday, April 12th**. When videos and manuscripts have been produced, the links are activated for download on the [Congregations](#) page of the WND Synod website. You can find the complete list of sermon videos and manuscripts on that page.

The list of available sermons will be updated on this page as they become available. Check back often.



Rejoicing  Spirirts



502 N 4th St.
Bismarck, ND 58501

Rejoicing WORSHIP Spirirts

2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
AT TRINITY LUTHERAN @ 2 PM

This innovative ministry is an inclusive worship service that provides people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (and people who love and support them) with an opportunity to worship and to be themselves while actively participating in an inclusive faith community.

All are welcome

WATCH THIS



2027 ELCA Youth Gathering

Minneapolis, MN will host the ELCA Youth Gathering in 2027! The Gathering's theme, **Imagine More**, is based on Ephesians 3:20 (Inclusive) and will be a space for young people to Imagine More - love, welcome, joy, courage, and grace.

SAVE THE DATE



2026 BISHOP'S CONVOCATION

When: September 20th, 21st & 22nd, 2026

Where: Metigoshe Ministries, Bottineau, ND

Accommodation Options:

On-site through Metigoshe Ministries - (701) 263-4788

Lake Metigoshe Quilt Inn - (701) 263-6500

Cobblestone Inn in Bottineau, ND (701) 534-2121



LED *by* FAITH

An academy for Lay Ministry, Enrichment, and Discernment.

About LED By Faith

LED By Faith is a Lay Ministry Training Academy in ELCA Region 3. It prepares lay leaders to serve faithfully in their congregations and communities through practical courses, spiritual growth, and mentorship. Courses are offered in a hybrid format (in-person and Zoom) to make participation accessible.

Why Join LED By Faith?

- Strengthen your leadership & ministry skills
- Deepen your spiritual growth
- Connect with peers across Region 3
- Experience a flexible hybrid format

2026 Courses

May 7-9, 2026

Leadership/Stewardship

Aug 27-29, 2026

Pastoral Care

Oct 1-3, 2026

Worship

Location

Luther Crest Bible Camp, Alexandria, MN

Format

In-person & Zoom

Schedule

Thurs 7-9 p.m.

Fri 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Sat 9-11 a.m.

2027 Courses

- Lutheran Confessions
- Bible
- Preaching

Learn More & Register: <https://region3ledbyfaith.wixstudio.com/led-by-faith>

LED By Faith - Lay Ministry, Enrichment, & Discernment

Building Leaders, Growing Faith, Serving Communities

Woven Together

ROSTERED MINISTERS GATHERING

JULY 6-9, 2026

INDIANAPOLIS,
INDIANA

Registration for the [2026 Rostered Ministers Gathering](#), happening July 6-9 at the JW Marriott in Indianapolis, Ind., is **now open!** All ELCA deacons, pastors and bishops (under call, on leave or disability, or retired) and candidates approved for call are invited to a time of intentional connection when we can renew our strength, enjoy camaraderie with colleagues and reflect on the Holy Spirit's work among us.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER TODAY](#)

Your registration fee includes access to sessions with keynote speakers, small-group discussions, affinity groups, workshops and more.

Early Registration: Jan. 9–March 31
Registration fee: \$325

Regular Registration: April 1–June 5
Registration fee: \$400

A limited number of scholarships are available. For more information on how to apply, visit the [Rostered Ministers Gathering webpage](#). Gathering participants will be responsible for arranging their own travel and event accommodations. You can find more information about accommodation options on the [Rostered Ministers Gathering webpage](#).

Comfort & Renewal Spring Grief Session

Thursday April 16, 2026

In Person Option:

9:30-11:30am CST

at CHI St. Alexius Hospital, Bismarck



Online Option:

5:30-7:00pm CST

Online Only Via Zoom

To Register Call 701-530-4563 or email
angie.kutzer900@commonspirit.org

(Location and online link provided once registered)





Soul Shop: Ministering to Faith Communities Affected by Suicide

May 7th, 2026

8:30am - 4:30pm

It's estimated that one out of every two people in a given congregation has personally been affected by suicide. Soul Shop trains faith community leaders to offer support, hope and connection to those in their congregations.

Co-sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Soul Shop equips participants with the resources and guidance they need to foster hope and healing in their community.



Program Details

Who should attend?

Faith-based leaders and anyone who feels CALLED to respond to suicidal desperation.

Location

Clarion Hotel Convention Center
2200 E Burdick Expy
Minot, ND 58701

Cost

\$25, includes all training materials, CEUs, breakfast, lunch, and snacks.

Register

afsp.org/SoulShopMinot

or use the QR code

Questions?

Barb Hanson

BarbHanson2309@gmail.com

Samantha Christopherson

SChristopherson@afsp.org

Access to Luther Seminary Archives Temporarily Paused for Inventory Work

Access to the Luther Seminary Archives will be temporarily paused for church partners and external researchers from April 1 through August 31, 2026.

During this period, archives staff will focus on inventory, processing, and preparation of the collections for the seminary's anticipated move to a new location in the Twin Cities following the 2026–27 academic year.

Archives staff will respond to individual research questions on a case-by-case basis throughout the spring and summer. Please contact archives@luthersem.edu for support.

To learn more visit [Luther Seminary online](https://www.luthersem.edu).



EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



LUTHERAN FAITH COMMUNITY
NURSE ASSOCIATION

Lutheran Faith Nurses

A national search is on for Registered Nurses who are trained as Faith Community/Parish Nurses and who are interested in joining the Lutheran Faith Community Nurse Association. If you are or know a Faith Community/Parish Nurse, please consider joining this vital network. A search is also on for ELCA churches that are interested in beginning a Health Ministry Program.

[Learn more and join this association.](#)



DIALOG
WORKS

Conversations to shape
a congregation's future.

Conversations Shaping the Future

Here you will find practical tools to help leaders develop skills, confidence, and capacity for the future.

[Browse upcoming live courses.](#)



SPIRIT IN THE DESERT

Connect. Refresh. Renew.

Spirit in the Desert hosts programs and retreats for participants of all faiths to experience reconciliation, renewal and healing.

[Browse upcoming events.](#)



Suicide Prevention Skills for Rural Ministries

Together with a cohort of other faith leaders, you will learn approaches and skills that equip you for prevention, intervention, and postvention (bereavement) tasks so you can effectively care for people struggling with thoughts of suicide or those impacted by suicide.

[Learn More and Register for this course](#)



Global Refuge
Welcoming Newcomers Since 1939

Welcoming the Stranger

Guided by our call to welcome the stranger, Global Refuge (*formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service*) has developed resources especially for you and your congregation.

- [Welcome the Stranger Worship Order](#): Everything you need to lead worship highlighting scripture, prayers, liturgy and hymns about seeking and providing refuge.
- [Journey to Welcome Educational Simulation Exercise](#): An educational and service-based activity which is a great fit for students, church youth groups and even adults.
- [Disinformation Toolkit](#): a toolkit for countering disinformation through common myths and facts as well as talking points and stories to share with community.
- [Fresh Change Service Project Opportunity](#): Pack bags to welcome our neighbors at the border and throughout the country with care and dignity.
- [Bulletin Inserts](#): Download bulletin inserts about our new name and what we do to share in your community.



Our [most recent Mission Support memo](#) persuades us to realize how closing a congregation can develop a new ministry, just as Memorial Lutheran let go to become Riverside Commons in Nashville, TN. Explore how Riverside Commons will be a “neighborhood space for the sake of the world,” aiming to serve as a spiritual, artistic and social hub for East Nashville. Also learn how to join an important ELCA Town Hall: "Introducing The Church Property Resource Hub" with three days and times in March.

In these times, staying connected through our stories seems vitally important, so please share your stories by contacting us at missionsupport@elca.org.

As always, you can get the [memo in pdf](#).

We cherish hearing about the inspiring stories in your synods, regions and congregations - feel free to reach out to Karen at karen.kretschmann@elca.org.



Lutheran
Disaster Response

Lutheran Disaster Response Training & Engagement Catalog

[Click to Download Your Copy, Now](#)



2026 Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts (CWTA)

The 2026 Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts (CWTA) is a high-quality, affordable conference, full of practical ideas that you can adapt to your own setting, along with meaningful worship experiences...for ministry practitioners, by ministry practitioners. It will be held **July 20-22, 2026**, on the campus of St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN.

You are invited to participate!

CWTA attracts participants from many different roles, including experienced and first-call Pastors, Deacons, and other church professional leaders; Lay people including lay leaders; Church workers – volunteer and paid; Children youth and family ministers/leaders; Artists; Church musicians; Christian education professionals; Outdoor ministry professionals; Seminarians; Others interested in deepening theological understandings and spiritual practices; and Members of congregations that are reimagining their vocation. **We'll provide opportunities for you to find those people at the conference so you can connect and share experiences.**

More information about the exciting program and registration can be found on our website. We invite you to explore it and [register today!](#)



PHISHING ALERT
SPAM - SCAM - SPWARE - MALWARE

PHISHING SCAMS PERSIST

Congregations of the WND Synod
are not immune to
these malicious attacks!

PROTECT YOURSELF

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE

Email phishing is one of the most frequent forms of cybercrime, but despite how much we think we know about these scams, they still catch us far too often. According to Proofpoint's State of the Phish Report, 83% of organizations fell victim to a phishing attack last year.

Meanwhile, a Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report found that 25% of all data breaches involve phishing. These figures help explain why phishing is considered to be among the biggest cyber security risks that organizations face. With a single email, criminal hackers can steal our personal information or infect our devices with malware.

Fortunately, preventing these attacks can be as simple as knowing how to identify phishing emails. But how do you spot a scam email? [CLICK HERE](#) to read about five real-life examples demonstrating the common signs that someone is trying to scam you.

In Search Of...



Will you host a baby shower? A diaper drive?

Heart River Bridges of Hope is inviting you to help us meet a need at the Heart River Correctional Center, a women's prison located on the same campus as the Youth Correctional Center. There are currently about 70 women incarcerated at that facility, and a much larger women's prison is under construction on the same campus.

Unfortunately, some of the inmates are pregnant and babies will be cared for by family members or friends during the mother's incarceration. HRCC staff have reached out and asked for help with baby items. Here's the message we received:

We are in need of some baby items as we continue to have pregnant women transferred to our care. We love to be able to send them off with some starter items to help ease the burden of families and to make their pregnancy time feel special. I don't know if the church can assist with any of these, but here are some of our current needs if you are able to help us out:

1. Newborn diapers (smaller packs are best)
2. Baby wipes
3. Baby hygiene items (lotion, baby wash, diaper cream, towels etc.)
4. Bibs/Burp cloths
5. Baby socks and onesies
6. Baby hats/glove sets
7. Footed snowsuits
8. Newborn or 0-3 month clothing (especially neutral or for girls).

We still have plenty of receiving blankets and washcloths. We are totally okay with gently used items.

Please contact Pastor Gail Hagerty with questions info requests – pastor.gail@heartriverlutheran.org.

Thank you for the ongoing gifts of quilts and fresh start kit supplies. Our ministry to youth and women who are incarcerated is truly a ministry of the synod and a ministry that touches lives.



Employment Opportunities

If you or someone you know is being called to work as a congregational leader, [CLICK HERE](#) to check our website for job openings at some of our WND Synod Congregations.



Introducing: The New ELCA.org



If you've visited ELCA.org lately, you might have noticed the new look and feel. Updated and enhanced features include:

- **ELCA.org** provides a central location to nurture your faith and discover community.
- With [Enhanced search and guided exploration](#), **ELCA.org** including the ELCA's resource library, congregation profile information, Living Lutheran articles and the ELCA's seeker site to provide better search results. Navigate resources, learn about key topics and find communities of support.
- Easier navigation to find and connect with ministries and programs to help you act on your faith.
- The clean and modern feel allows you to enjoy an inviting, clutter-free design.
- It's made for everyone following accessibility best practices.

[Explore ELCA.org today](#) and discover more about who we are as a church.

[Visit the WND Synod Website](#)

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