



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

Synod E-news

News & Events from the Western North Dakota Synod

September 29, 2025



EVENTS CALENDAR



MINISTRIES



TRANSITIONS

Installation of the Presiding Bishop

Saturday, October 4, 2025 | 2:00 p.m. CDT
Central Lutheran Church | Minneapolis, Minn.



Hunger Sunday, October 12th

The first official Hunger Sunday will be celebrated in WND Synod on October 12th, 2025. [Here you will find a worship liturgy to use.](#) It is our hope that these worship resources could be used by congregations so that in unity with other ELCA congregations we can pray and seek an answer to the crippling hunger needs of our time. You are welcome to use all or some of the liturgy, sermon, children's sermon, hymn suggestions etc. to enhance your worship experience. When it has been prepared, a recorded sermon will be found on the [Congregations](#) page of the WND Synod website.

OCTOBER 20TH . OCTOBER 21ST
(in Minot, ND) (in Bismarck, ND)

ONE DAY ONLY
BOUNDARIES
workshop



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.

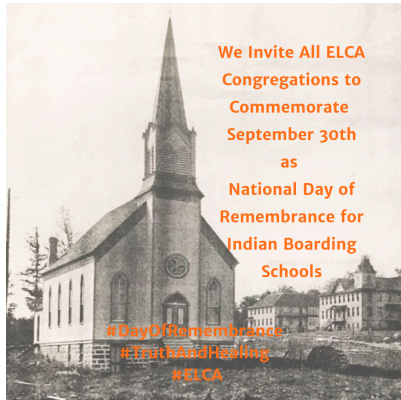
Join us on **October 20th in Minot** or **October 21st in Bismarck** for a one-day boundaries workshop, led by Pastor Emily Carson, Director for Evangelical Mission & Assistant to the Bishop for Generosity, Stewardship and Financial Administration, in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. Pastor Carson has been facilitating power and boundaries workshops for lay and rostered people across the country for the past 8 years.

If you are unable to attend one of these sessions, more will be offered in the spring of 2026.

Each session is limited to 35 participants.

Register for the MINOT workshop

Register for the BISMARCK workshop



Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools

On **September 30**, you are invited to join this movement by wearing orange to raise awareness and commemorate those harmed by Indian Boarding Schools.

Learn more about this time in American history from organizations such as the [National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition](#) and learn about the grassroots [Truth Seeking and Truth Telling Initiative](#) taking place in the ELCA to reckon with our own role in this era.

Quilting Needs Persist

First, we want to send a big thank you to all who participated in making the quilts donated to Heart River. It was heart-warming to see the response.

Recently, we became aware of an on-going need for **STAR QUILTS** for the indigenous ministries of Bethel Lutheran in New Town.

If you google "native american star quilt," you will notice these are made with triangles, not square blocks. Alternatively native prints or bear paw patterns may be culturally sensitive.

If you, or members of your congregation, are interested in participating in this ministry, star quilts may be left at the synod office.



FALL CLUSTER GATHERINGS

The **Upper Missouri Cluster** will be held Saturday, October 4, 2025 at Grace Lutheran Church, Wildrose, ND. Registration the day of the event will be at 9:30am CT with Cluster activities starting at 10am CT.

The **East Missouri Cluster** will be held Saturday, October 11, 2025 at Peace Lutheran Church, Lincoln, ND.

Registration the day of the event will be at 11:30am CT with a light meal and day's events to follow.

The **Heart River Cluster** will be held Saturday, October 11, 2025 at Zion Lutheran Church, Beulah, ND. Registration the day of the event will be at 9:30am CT with Cluster activities starting at 10am CT.

The **Lonetree Cluster** will be held Saturday, October 11, 2025 at Grace Lutheran Church, McClusky, ND. Registration the day of the event will be at 9:30am CT with Cluster activities starting at 10am CT.

The **Turtle Mountain Cluster** will not be held this fall. Members of the Turtle Mountain Cluster are encouraged to attend a neighboring cluster gathering if possible.

Bishop's Convocation

at Metigoshe Ministries

September 14-16, 2025

WND Synod Pastors, Deacons, and SAMs,
It was such a blessing for our Western North Dakota Synod Pastors, Deacons, and SAMs to gather at the 2025 Bishop's Convocation at Metigoshe Ministries. Below you will find a link to an evaluation that will assist in planning future events and offer your insight about this year's event. Please help us out by taking a few minutes to fill out and submit the evaluation. Thank you!

Click [here](#) for the evaluation

SAVE THE DATE

GIFTS Event

Karoline Lewis, author of "A Lay Preacher's Guide: Crafting A Faithful Sermon" will be speaking at the GIFTS Lay Preaching Academy

October 11, 2025
Springbrook Bible Camp
Epping, North Dakota

One-on-one coaching will also be available with a local pastor.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER NOW!](#)



LYO 2025: Wanted

Gather your group and get to the event of the year! **LYO 2025: Wanted** will be held October 16 & 17 (high school) and October 17 & 18 (middle school) in Dickinson, ND. [CLICK HERE to find the details and to register online.](#)

[The Adult Leader Guide is downloadable here.](#)

Also, we are taking youth nominations for the LYO Board. Fill them out, along with an Adult Recommendation form, and get them to [WND Synod LYO Coordinator, Lora Isakson.](#)

WATCH THIS



A Tribute to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

We give thanks for Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and the twelve years she spent leading the ELCA. Take a look back on these fun and meaningful moments from her ministry.



2025 Advent Worship Resources based on ***“Ground Floor Grace”*** by John Stevens

Resources will be posted on the [synod website](#) as they become available. Check in often!!

WND SYNOD PRESENTS

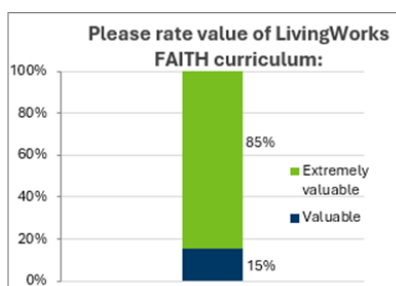
SUNDAY SERMONS

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 is for **September 21st**. It has been uploaded, and you will find it on the [Congregations](#) page of the WND Synod website. You can find the complete list of sermon videos and manuscripts on that page. When the next video and manuscript have been produced, the links will be activated and can be downloaded for use.

For those who like to plan ahead, the October sermon will be done to go with the liturgy for Hunger Sunday on October 12th.

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



LivingWorks FAITH Curriculum

Last year, the MN Department of Agriculture and partners in Wisconsin and South Dakota offered a Suicide Prevention for Rural Ministry course, which paired the online [LivingWorks FAITH](#) course with four virtual discussion sections.

This program reached 75 faith leaders in MN, ND, SD, and WI and received strong positive reviews from participants.

We have 40 additional enrollments for LivingWorks FAITH available, and we want them to be used! The course typically costs \$150 per person, but we're making it available to rural clergy and ministry leaders from any denomination or faith tradition at no charge. The simple online application form is [here](#).

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

[Farm and rural suicides](#) happen more frequently than in urban areas and are frequently shrouded with stigma. People may turn to clergy and other ministry leaders for help, but you may have little training in knowing how to ask someone about thoughts of suicide, how to connect them to help, or how to provide ministry after a suicide attempt or death.

ABOUT LIVINGWORKS FAITH

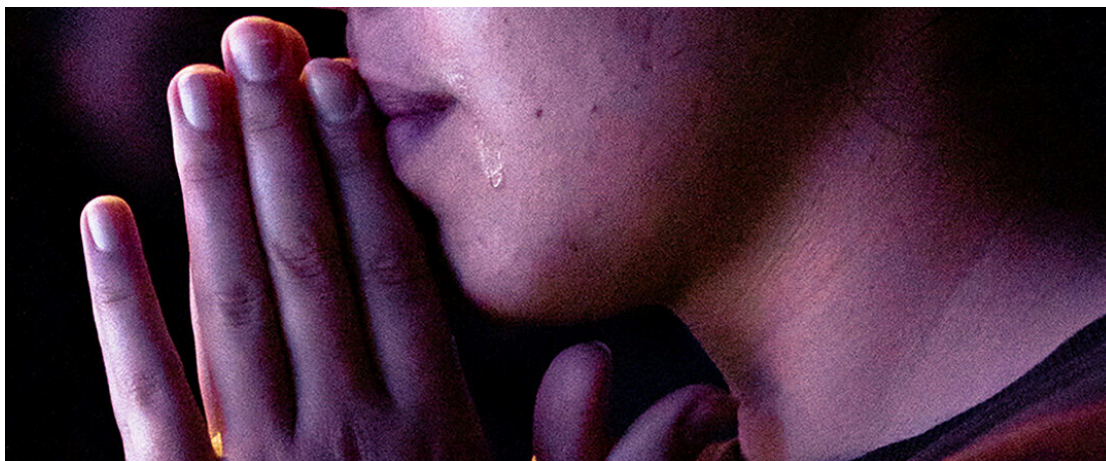
The course is interactive, online, and asynchronous (at your own pace). It takes approximately 6 hours to complete and teaches approaches and skills that will equip you for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (bereavement) tasks so you can effectively care for people who are struggling with thoughts of suicide or who have been impacted by suicide.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be clergy or other ministry leaders who work in a rural area of Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota, or North Dakota.

HOW TO APPLY

Visit <https://forms.gle/jq9hcY5EHmcJ9r5t7> (this is a MN Dept. of Agriculture Google Form).



A Prayer Without End

by Sarah Carson

Have you considered ways to "pray without ceasing" in your actions and in your motives? Through dance? Through love of another or through reading a book? Sarah Carson shares the benefits of praying in different ways. What kind of prayer do you practice? **Stop into the [Bold Cafe](#) to learn more.**

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

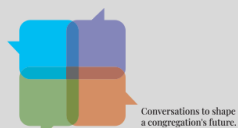


**LUTHERAN FAITH COMMUNITY
NURSE ASSOCIATION**

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](#)

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.



**Signs
Along
the Way**

**Oct 31st -
Nov 2nd
BERKELEY, CA**

Discernment Weekend
4:00 pm Friday - 2:30 pm Sunday

plts
PACIFIC LUTHERAN
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Discernment Weekend

Are you wondering if seminary might be right for you? Consider joining Signs Along the Way at PLTS in Berkeley, California to connect with others in discernment, get to know PLTS faculty, and explore what it's like to be an online student in the MDiv, MA in Spirituality and Social Change, or Lutheran Year programs. PLTS is transitioning to only offer online study with in-person intensives, so this weekend is designed for those interested in online learning. PLTS covers lodging and meals during the event and can offer travel assistance for those who need it.

Visit plts.edu/signs to learn more and sign up.



The most recent [Mission Support Memo](#) offers a glimpse into Mary's path from accompaniment to advocacy as a Young Adults in Global Mission in Mexico City. Mary had her sights set on YAGM from early on and was eager to engage in this ministry. She was introduced to the core values of mutuality, inclusivity, vulnerability, empowerment and sustainability, allowing her and all YAGMs to explore what it means to join ongoing ministries — to serve, to learn and to share. Learn how, through her YAGM year, Mary grew in her passion to work for justice and give dignity to all God's children. We encourage you to also check out a new initiative of the ELCA, the [Church Property Resource Hub](#), developed in response to requests from synod and congregational leaders for support in navigating the challenges and opportunities that buildings and land present for both congregational vitality and the broader mission of the Church.

You can even get the [memo in pdf](#) too!

If you want to access the memo in other ways, attached is both a .pdf and in Word .doc. 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.



A leadership summit for female-identifying and non-binary
Rostered Ministers in Region 3 - ELCA

Monday - Wednesday

Jan 12-14, 2026

Holiday Inn, Alexandria MN

Gather for a time of honest conversation and exploration of what makes a “quality call” experience. Our time together will be shared in scripture study, small groups, experiential learning, and the belief that “the wisdom is already in the room.”

Eight leaders will be selected from each of the 9 synods in Region 3 to participate.
Application and more information coming soon!

Funded in part by the Quality of Call Initiative for Women in Ministry of the ELCA.

LATINE MINISTRY COMPETENCY WORKSHOP



RESISTING - RESTORING - RENEWING

RENEWING THE CHURCH THROUGH THE
FAITH AND WITNESS OF THE LATINE
COMMUNITY

There are 1,000+ ELCA congregations with significant Latinx population in their zip code. Is your church one of these?

How are you equipping yourselves for cross-cultural ministry among the fast-growing Latine community?



THE REV. DR. RUBEN DURAN, leads three sessions on Latine Ministry Competency along with a team of experienced practitioners. Through Coaching, Consulting, and Cross-Cultural Immersions, Pr. Duran equips leaders for Evangelism and Justice ministries in church and world.



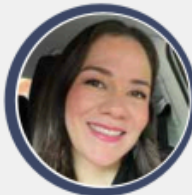
Rev. Patricia Avila



Rev. Alvaro Nova



Rev. Peter Olson



Ms. Elizabeth Sanchez



Rev. Violeta Siguenza

The Latine community is moving forward with deep faith and courageous spirit, despite the negative narrative, divisive rhetoric, and a culture of fear at work in the public arena. You are invited to be in dialogue with a group of learners and practitioners seeking to share insights and strategies to start or enhance ministry among the diverse Latine community in your context. Learn ways to become an ally and accompany your Latine neighbors at this crucial time. Open your church to be renewed by the faith and witness of the Latine community.

This initiative is part of an ELCA churchwide effort to "activate ourselves so that more people may know the way of Jesus and experience community, justice and love."

Cost: Individual \$250 or Congregation \$600

Register: Online at wartburgseminary.edu/CTLM

Three Sessions:

October 2, 2025
5 p.m. – 8 p.m. (CST)

October 3, 2025
5 p.m. – 8 p.m. (CST)

October 4, 2025
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. (CST)



*Braving
Budget Season
for Women
in Ministry
with
Dr. Crystal Hall*

*Starting Monday,
September 29*

www.CrystalHallPhD.com

Braving Budget Season for Women in Ministry

One series over five days to feeling more confident during budget season.

When it comes to fraught conversations, difficult meetings and uncomfortable asks this is the place for you.

To be supported in community by an expert coach so you know exactly where to go from here.

Join Braving Budget Season for Women in Ministry.

[Click this link to enroll for free now.](#)

Youth Musicians Invited to LSM 2026

Enrollment is now open for Lutheran Summer Music (LSM) 2026 at St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN! LSM is a faith-based residential music academy for high school students who come together to immerse themselves in musical excellence and build a supportive and fun community. Musical experiences include large ensembles (band, choir, orchestra), chamber music, private lessons, and electives like handbells, jazz, musical theatre, composition, conducting, church music, and more.

Priority enrollment deadline: December 1
Standard enrollment deadline: March 1
Learn more at LSMacademy.org/program





AWAKENING THE CHURCH

Virtual Training Conference
October 23, 2025
10 a.m.- 6 p.m. Central

"He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners"
- Isaiah 61:1

FEATURING



DR. KATE GAUDET
Dispelling the Myths
"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free"
- John 8:32



REV. DR. ED TREAT
The Wounds That Bind Us
"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds"
- Psalm 147



PASTOR JOHN SUTHERLAND
Story of Redemption
Cross Lutheran, Wisconsin



PASTOR GREG DELANEY
Make it Happen in Your Church
"Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead"
- James 2:17



DR. NICOLE LABOR
Neuroscience of Addiction
"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made"
- Psalm 139:14



REGISTRATION: \$50.00
addictionandfaith.com



Join Bishop Craig A. Schweitzer and the Western North Dakota Synod on an unforgettable journey to Egypt—a land where ancient wonders and vibrant culture come to life.

Stand in awe before the Pyramids of Giza, sail along the majestic Nile River, and wander through temples that have stood for thousands of years. Feel the pulse of Cairo's bustling bazaars, marvel at sweeping desert landscapes, and, if you wish, unwind along the pristine shores of the Red Sea. Discover Egypt's deep Christian heritage as you visit historic Coptic churches, including the Hanging Church and the Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus—believed to have sheltered the Holy Family during their time in Egypt—as well as the sacred St. Catherine's Monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai. From exploring its pharaonic treasures to savoring the bold flavors of Egyptian cuisine, every moment in this captivating country will leave you with memories to treasure for a lifetime.

DETAILS:

- Trip departs on January 22, 2027, and returns on January 31, 2027

PRICING:

- \$3,790.00 per person based on double occupancy (*Land Only*)
- Single room supplement - \$790.00

PAYMENT PLAN:

- \$300.00 deposit per person with registration to secure space
- Balance due on or before September 26, 2026

REGISTRATION:

- Registering online? [CLICK HERE](#) and fill out the online form; you can pay by check or with a credit card (*a nonrefundable 4% platform fee applies*)
- Registering by mail? Please download and complete the registration form (both the personal information page and the terms and conditions page signed at the bottom) with a copy of your passport and a deposit of \$300.00 per person made payable to Elias Tours and mailed to 4941 Chalden Ln NE, Marietta, GA 30066



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.

[Visit our Website](#)



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