



A Stated Meeting of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies was held September 28 and 29, 2025, via Zoom.



Jeff Dickinson



Scott Prouty

Jeff Dickinson, Ruling Elder (RE) from the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley, and **Scott Prouty**, Teaching Elder (TE) from the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys were elected to the roles of Moderator and Vice-Moderator, respectively.

Opening Worship was led by the worship team of Deb DeMeester, Director of Leadership Development, Jim Koon, Synod Director of Finance and Treasurer, Carolyn Grice, TE, MRV and Gordon Moen, TE, NCI. A Reading by Three on Remembering was shared based on Deuteronomy 5:15, Luke 24:6-7, Colossians 3:12, Deuteronomy 8:17-18, and Acts 20:35. The video, “[Is Racial Justice Possible?](#)” was shown. Rev. Dr. Bart Roush from the Oak Grove Presbyterian Church, Bloomington, MN preached using Matthew 5:1-16 as a text. Communion was served. We ended with the hymn, “God Has Work for Us to Do.” [Click here for the video series.](#)



Rev. Dr. Bart Roush. (photo Oak Grove PC)

The Synod spent time in Fellowship groups and break out rooms sharing stories from our presbyteries and talking about the Synod’s Mission, Purpose, Values, and Strategic Focus. The guiding format appears on page 4.

On Monday, the discussion from the day before continued with guest speaker Dr. Corey Schlosser-Hall, Deputy Executive for Vision and Innovation, PC(USA). He spoke with commissioners on the opportunity of sharing stories of faithfulness and visions as a means for developing statements of Mission, Purpose, Values, and Strategic Focus.

Sharing stories of faithfulness and visions helps us to imagine and create the future of the church and encourages us to strengthen our relationships.

"Storytelling has been central to the Judeo-Christian way of life and discipleship, as exemplified in Acts 15:12. 'The whole assembly kept silence and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders God had done among the gentiles.'"

Schlosser-Hall led the assembly through an exercise of thinking of the Synod as an Ecosystem of Meaning Making. Commissioners were asked to engage in working on what the future of the church will be by sharing stories of where and how the spiritual landscape is changing. To continue to do things as they have been done when that no longer fits the community is not helpful to anyone.



Dr, Corey Schlosser-Hall

How can church meet the needs of people, if people don't know what is happening in the building? Here are some examples of ways churches are reaching out to their communities:

- New River Presbyterian Church:
<https://vimeo.com/showcase/11312886?video=956627311>
- The Wilmington Kitchen Collective (WKC):
<https://vimeo.com/showcase/11312886?video=1044776632>
- Hand in Hand Business Center of First PC of Gulf Shores, AL: <https://fpcgs.org/hand-in-hand>
- Mowtown Teen Lawn Care: <https://mowtownteenlawncare.com>
- Hope Village is a ministry of Westminster PC, Olympia, WA:
<https://www.wpcoly.org/hope-village>

In 2026 the denomination will meet at General Assembly in [Milwaukee](#), an opportunity for us to share our mission and stories of faith and community with the denomination.

Communications Committee

Synod Sunday materials are available on the [Synod website](#); congregations are to use this information as they see fit. They are also working on training videos for Pastoral Nominating Committees.

Finance Committee

In 2025 the Synod projects that it will provide services and support to presbyteries, churches, camps, and regional and national missions estimated at a rate of \$1.08 per dollar received in per capita and shared mission receipts. Per Capita for the Synod for 2026 will remain the same at \$5.50. The Assembly approved the 2026 budget which allowed for an operating deficit of (\$125,677).

Personnel Committee

The committee is working on clarifying personnel policies. Annual reviews with the Synod staff will be held this Fall.

Committee on Racial Equity Ministry

CREM is receiving applications for the annual racial ethnic scholarships. To date more than twelve applications have been received from new and continuing college students as well as one seminary student. The committee will make awards later this fall.

Committee Highlights

Strategic Service and Witness Committee

In addition to continuing support of tribal colleges and institutional partners, the committee has supported activities with the Minnesota Council of Churches and other Matthews 25 initiatives including the annual Overcoming Racism Conference. Other priorities include supporting camps and conference centers as well as indigenous educational institutions.

Transforming Communities/Vital Leaders Committee

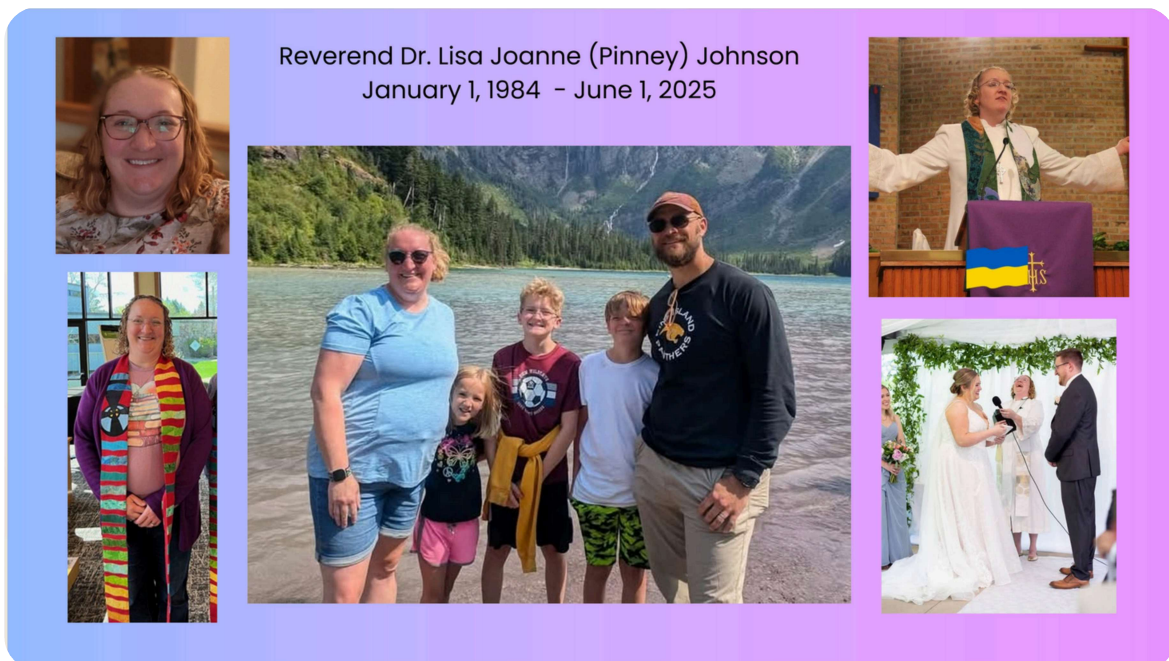
continues to work on a process and procedure for the development of grants for cohorts and congregational vitality. They are also developing a directory of coaches.

Presbyterian Women

This past June over 100 women from across the Synod gathered in Watertown, SD for the Synod PW gathering. The Synod PW offers scholarships to indigenous students at Sisseton Wapheton College and Oglala Lakota College; anyone can contribute to these scholarships. They also hold Sit and Sip a monthly discussion group, an online Horizon Bible Study, and an online Book Study group open to anyone within the Synod. Learn more at: <https://www.lakesandprairies.org/presbyterian-women>.

In addition to these six standing committees, reports were received from staff members, the Committee on Self-Development of People, the Synod School Committee, and the Synod Nominating Committee.

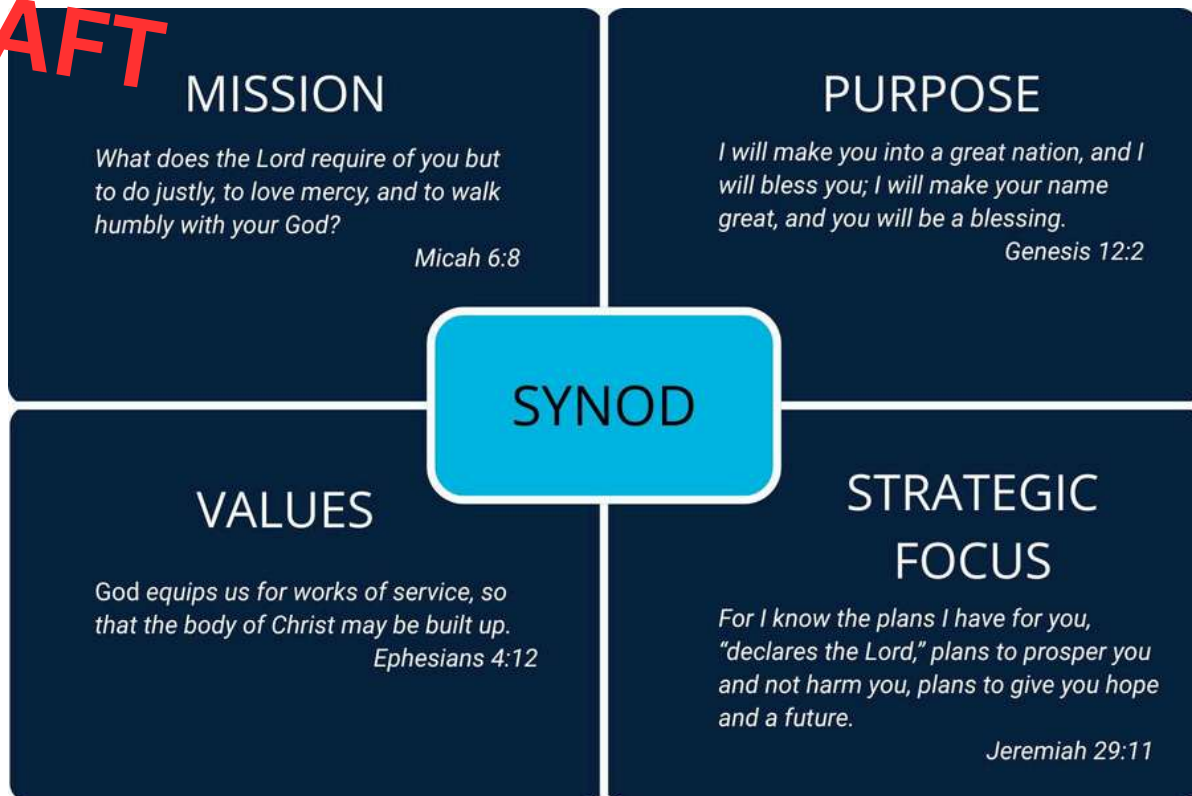
Commissioners completing a term were recognized. The Synod Moderator and Vice-Moderator were installed. We had a moment of silence in memory of Lisa Johnson TE, Vice-Moderator, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.



The next Synod Meeting will be April 26-28, 2026, in person.

The Meeting Summary is an unofficial report of synod actions published shortly after each meeting of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Comments regarding the publication should be addressed to gmilloy@lakesandprairies.org.

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Key question: Why do we value what we value?

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Mission: Micah 6:8

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to love God and love our neighbors as we love ourselves. We believe this means do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

Purpose: Genesis 12:2

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies is blessed to be a blessing[i] to the Presbyterians within our bounds as well as those beyond as we embrace the call of God to support the community of faith, hope, love, and witness to the work and hope of God in our midst. (Book of Order G-3.0401)

We seek to boldly use our resources as catalysts and empowerment for meaningful mission and ministry as partners with our presbyteries. As agents of hope, we want to inspire and support presbyteries, congregations and individuals as they embody the urgent realities of being the Church in our changing emerging future. Key to this mission is sharing new stories of faithfulness, and visions of opportunity.

Using our abundant resources to inspire, _____ and equip.

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Values: Ephesians 4:12

We seek to build up the body of Christ through mutuality, generosity, creativity, empowerment, diversity, connectionalism, and interdependence.

When one suffers, we all suffer.

Strategic Focus: Jeremiah 29:11

Hope needs to be bold, loud and brave. Therefore, we will:

- Invest (ex: in programs and people)
- Innovate (ex: tell stories of new ways of doing things)
- Inform (ex: provide resources for learning)

[i] I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. Genesis 12

Purpose of Blessings:

All things are from God, and their purpose is to be used in a way that benefits others, whether by sharing material goods, providing support, or demonstrating the principles of faith. (AI)

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