



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

January 2023

Sisters and brothers in Christ of the Western North Dakota Synod,



Grace and peace in the name of our Savior Jesus the Christ!

In this Epiphany season, most of our congregations are focused on annual reports, annual meetings, election of new congregational leadership, and looking forward to what mission and ministry God is calling us into in this new year.

There is an ancient word that describes the mission and ministry we do together as church. That word is “synod.” Synod is a combination of two Greek words – *syn* (together) and *hodos* (a way). I’m grateful for the many ways that this ancient word continues to guide and shape our life and work together as people of faith across the prairies of western North Dakota, on the Way together – church together.



*“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)*



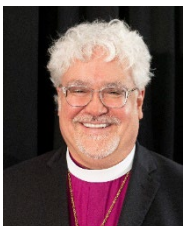
As part of the Western North Dakota synod, you and your congregation are called by God into a mission and ministry that is stronger because we are joined together as a synod. God’s mission and ministry through synods unites the ministry of local congregations with the ministry of other expressions of our church – regionally, nationally, and globally. And as part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we proclaim that we are ...

*“... a church that shares a living, daring confidence in God’s grace. As members of the ELCA, we believe that we are freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. With our hands, we do God’s work of restoring and reconciling communities in Jesus Christ’s name throughout the world.”*

Thank you for being part of this living, daring confidence in God’s grace! It is the abundant ways that you share the gifts God has first given to you – your hands, feet, voices, and financial resources – that encourage and enable any of this to happen. The mission and ministry God called us to do as church together in 2022 was impossible without you. And the mission and ministry we will do together in 2023 will also be impossible without you. May your congregation and our synod be filled with abundant opportunities to serve our neighbors in Jesus’ name in all that we do as church together in 2023!



Serving in Christ together,



The Rev. Craig A. Schweitzer  
Bishop, Western North Dakota Synod – ELCA