



South-Central Synod
of Wisconsin

Faithful Innovation

Discover the unique story God wants to tell through your congregation.

Get ideas, inspiration and tools for ministry.

Enjoy the support of interactive workshops and ongoing coaching.

Pray, learn and walk together with other SCSW congregations.

What's it all about?

Participating congregations will be discerning their unique answer to this question: **“As we listen to God, one another, and our neighbors, what future do we imagine God is bringing forth in our midst?”** The answer needs to come from Christ and our willingness to ask hard questions and listen for answers, as well as our ability to take risks, secure in our standing in Christ.

What is a Learning Community?

A learning community is a group of congregations who commit to one another in a nine-month learning experience. Through prayer, skill-building, action and reflection they address their most pressing questions about the future of God's church. The experience includes three Sunday afternoon workshops, listening experiments, and ongoing coaching calls with synod leaders and trained process coaches.

How will my congregation benefit?

- Train effective lay spiritual leaders through workshops and coaching.
- Learn to discern and respond to God's leading.
- Deepen your congregation's spirituality.
- Build connections with other congregations.
- Engage and inspire your membership.
- Affirm your faith that God has a vital role for your congregation to play.

What should I expect?

The experience includes three Sunday afternoon workshops with participating congregations around the synod gathered together as a learning community. In between workshops, the lay guiding teams at individual congregations will receive ongoing coaching calls with synod leaders to support them in their work to study God's action in their neighborhoods. Clergy will benefit from learning with their peers around the synod.

Training #1: Listen (April 21, 2024)

This first training helps equip participants to listen to God in their local contexts. Participants will dwell in Scripture together, share stories about what God is doing in the life of their local congregation, and notice where God might be at work in their everyday lives. The goal for these practices is to help the participants begin to answer the question, "What might God be up to?"

Training #2: Act (August 4, 2024)

In our second Learning Community training, we will focus on helping participants use action learning to deepen their exploration of what they think God might be up to. The idea is to help participants "behave their way into new thinking," rather than trying to think their way into new behaviors. Participants will be given simple action learning experiments to try with others in their congregation.

Training #3: Share (November 10, 2024)

Our third training will focus on learning to share what we've learned from the action learning experiments we did. Action learning requires intentional reflection on what was done so we can see what God might be teaching us!

Is there a cost?

Each congregation will be asked to contribute \$300 to cover costs. Arrangements may be made if cost is a barrier for your congregation.

How can I learn more?

If your congregation is interested in being part of the 2024 Faithful Innovation learning community, contact Rev. Walter Baires, Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelical Mission at walterb@scsw-elca.org.