

EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD

Our Life Together: 2025 Annual Report

Being The Church Together

"For just as we have many members in one body and not all the members have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another".

This scripture text continues to be both my prayer and vision for us as a synod and the Body of Christ: that we are church together. Or as our EaND strategic plan names: to be radically connected as the people of God.

In this radically connected way of being church, each entity (individual, congregation, ministry, synod, churchwide) is deeply rooted in collaboration and shared ministry, while also having distinct expressions of ministry. You as congregations are called to be local communities of worship while you provide direct service and care[BL1] to your communities. Synods are hubs for resourcing and convening, providing support and accompaniment for leaders, ministries, and congregations. Our Churchwide Organization is rightly positioned to steward our global witness and hunger and disaster initiatives. And because we are interconnected, you get to fully claim the ministry of global mission and disaster response as YOUR ministry, done by YOUR church.

This radical connection also means that there is ministry that can only be done together. The candidacy process for new pastors and deacons has touchpoints in each expression. Each part needs to play their role in supporting and equipping new leaders in the church. Radical connection also means that we commit to supporting neighboring congregations, developing new partnerships, attending synod and conference events, and sharing our resources for the sake of the flourishing of the entire Body of Christ.

My invitation to you in this coming year is to lean in even more. I invite you to take one step as an individual, ministry, and congregation further towards connection and community, whether that's with another congregation, a partner ministry, or a synod event. And when you do, share the story so we can celebrate and learn with you.

With gratitude for your ministry,

Bishop Tessa



Ministry Spotlight

Connecting with Congregations

As the landscape of congregational leadership continues to change, a gap in connectivity was identified: the majority of synod communications were centered around a congregation having a called or contracted leader, which is no longer the reality for all. In 2024-2025 three initiatives were introduced to live into our commitment to **"radically connect the people of God"**:

- Re-introducing a mailed, paper newsletter
- A series of listening sessions with congregation members who do not have a called/contracted leader.
- A part-time Congregational Relator to connect with those congregations and parishes.

2025 By the Numbers

- 140 ministry visits
- 45 committee/team meetings
- 32 conference gatherings
- 4 ordinations
- 10 installations
- 33 learning and equipping events
- \$352,000 anticipated mission support shared with our Churchwide Organization
- \$162,900 grants received from our Churchwide Organization

Mission and Priorities

United in Christ, we dare to
invite, connect, and act.

Invest in robust, diverse, and well-equipped leadership for each ministry

Radically connecting the people of God

Living with extravagant grace as the body of Christ

Flourishing as a vital church into the future

Radically Connecting the People of God

Ministry Together in 2025

- Congregational Relator and intentional connection with congregations without a minister
- Launch of new SLM Cohort
- Retired Rostered Ministers Brunch
- 1st Third of Life Ministry Brunch
- Sunday worship, conference gatherings, council meetings
- Synod Authorized Minister & Mentor Retreat
- Fall Theological Conference
- Synod Assembly
- Pizza & Possibilities Events
- Interim Network
- Castaway Youth Retreat
- Worship Workshop Road trip
- Newsletter & Synod Communications
- Synod Council and Synod Teams
- Technology Survey & Analysis

Looking ahead to 2026

- Retired Rostered Ministers Brunch (west location)
- Post First Call Cohort
- Professional Development Day
- Stewardship Planning Day
- Conference Caucuses
- Joint Theological Day
- Youth Road Trip (led by Campus Ministry)
- Congregations gathering for weekly worship
- New partnership and parish agreements
- Holy Innovation Grants
- Resurrection Fund Grants
- Vital Church Conversation Events

