



THE LUTHERAN NEW YORKER

spring
2020
ISSUE



Metropolitan New York Synod 2025 VISION

Evangelism Leadership Congregations Advocacy

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THE MNYS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
is an excellent tool for your congregation to
help create awareness about your events.

To list an event, please send us an email
with the event's information, digital ads or
links (if any), and a **50-word description**
(for publication).

Help us create awareness of our email
program among your congregation
members by sharing this link:

mnys.org/email

**WE ARE CHURCH
TOGETHER!**



MNYS

LET US *gather*

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY
TO MAKE
POSITIVE CHANGE

A Message from MNYS Bishop

Paul Egensteiner



The Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathers as one people with rich diversity. Our synod also welcomes representatives of the Whole Church, our full communion partners, and the variety of religious traditions with whom we serve the common good.

Welcome to this time to be centered, together, in God's presence.

Our focus is on God, here in the power of the Spirit.

Let us come in hope.
Let us come excited.
Let us come needy.
Let us come leaning on the arms of Jesus.
Let us come in faith!

And God arrives before us, fills our lives, gathers us in, together, to be sent with a message and as a witness. Welcome to this journey we are on together; a journey of which we know the destination but not always the road we will take. We are explorers, finding a way through the wilderness to a place of rest, blessedness and peace. But not yet! My dear siblings in Christ, fellow travelers, **there is work to be done!**

Each new day gives us God's Spirit and energy for the journey and the labor. As many know, I am a New Yorker, born and raised. I have spent my entire ministry in this synod, in this territory. I LOVE this broken, blessed, brave part of God's creation. And there is a **VISION** for this appointed time and place. Look with me and see how our congregations and our ministry sites continue to serve as centers of grace and hope.

Catch the vision that I see of a Church so connected through Baptismal waters and gathered around the table of bread and wine that we know who we are, whose we are and what we are called to do—give ourselves away for the sake of the world that God so loves. And in losing our lives, find them, given back to us, more useful and beautiful than we ever could have imagined. We're not there yet, but we are headed there. We share that identity of being broken and blessed. But look with me again and see the blessedness we share! God is doing a new thing. We perceive it and say, timidly sometimes and bravely at others, "Yes!"

**We are Church Together!
We are God's People Together!**

Today, and each coming day, is our collective, resounding "Yes!" to God. I am humbled and in awe to serve you as bishop. By God's grace and to God's glory **we will journey together, explore together, work together, transform the world together...**
...in the name of Jesus

**In Christ,
+ Bishop Egensteiner**

*Then God answered me and said:
"Write the vision;
make it plain on tablets,
so that a runner may read it.
For there is still a vision for the appointed time;
it speaks of the end, and does not lie.
If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
it will surely come, it will not delay.
Look at the proud!
Their spirit is not right in them,
but the righteous live by their faith."*

Habakkuk 2:2-4

MNYS 2025 VISION: **TRANSITION & FRAMEWORK**

Bishop Egensteiner's 2025 VISION for the Metropolitan New York Synod is the extension of the strategic plan passed by the Synod Assembly in 2012. Although the mission and governance of the strategic plan will remain the same, the new priority areas of the 2025 VISION will help us to **advance the kin-dom of God in Metro New York, and beyond!**



WELCOME TO THIS JOURNEY WE ARE ON TOGETHER

"Welcome to this journey
we are on together,
a journey of which we know
the destination but not always
the road we will take.
We are explorers, finding a way
through the wilderness
to a place of rest, blessedness
and peace.

But not yet!
My dear siblings in Christ,
fellow travelers,
there is work to be done!"

MNYS Bishop Paul Egensteiner

The time frame of the original strategic plan was 2013-2023.

The 2025 VISION extends the plan for the six-calendar-year term of MNYS Bishop Paul Egensteiner: **2020-2025**.

These are the new **priority areas** of the MNYS 2025 VISION:

Evangelism Leadership Congregations Advocacy

Through the establishment of a **2025 Vision Team** that is comprised of an organized structure of **Working Groups** and **Task Forces** with clear goals and initiatives, we can work collectively to make positive change and strengthen our synod.

MINYS 2025 VISION: **OVERVIEW**

THE MINYS STRATEGIC PLAN IS EVOLVING TO ADVANCE THE KIN-DOM OF GOD THROUGH GREATER FOCUS ON:

Evangelism Leadership Congregations Advocacy

evangelism



Efforts in evangelism will work harmoniously with our current strategies to increase the impact of our **MISSION**, focusing on:

- Sharing **God's Love and Grace** in the community and public square
- Reaching people through **digital connections**
- Providing **resources** and **training** for congregations regarding evangelism strategies

leadership



Nothing significant is accomplished without strong and focused leadership. We will:

- Create networks with other leaders to share **resources, continuing education efforts, best practices** and **innovative ideas**
- Offer **training opportunities** and **continuing education opportunities** for those wonderful lay leaders who give their time and energy to the church
- Establish synod-wide **spiritual retreats**
- Expand our **Leadership Development Grants Program**

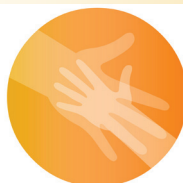
congregations



Congregations are the building blocks of the church. As we do our work in evangelism to have more people join us, and with our leaders ready to receive these new members, we must have vibrant congregations that offer places for members to **grow** and be **cared for**. We will:

- Offer **anti-racism trainings** for call committees, ordained ministers and lay leaders of our congregations
- Establish a centerpiece strategy focused on the **creation of relationships and partnerships** among different congregations
- Continue working on a **digital system** to help enhance these relationships
- Increase **congregational grant efforts**

advocacy



The ELCA and our synod have taken bold, faith-filled positions on important societal issues. Strategies include **Public Advocacy** and **Advocacy in Action**. We will be proactive when it comes to public stances on issues such as:

- Anti-Racism
- Environmental Stewardship
- Opioid Crisis
- Welcoming the Stranger
- Welcoming our LGBTQIA+ Siblings

Remember that **WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER!**
And **TOGETHER**, we are **STRONGER**.



Metropolitan New York Synod 2025 VISION

Evangelism Leadership Congregations Advocacy

BISHOP PAUL EGENSTEINER'S 2025 VISION

Implemented by The Rev. William Boenigk

"For the Sake of the Church" Working Group

The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski & The Rev. Marc Herbst, *co-chairs*

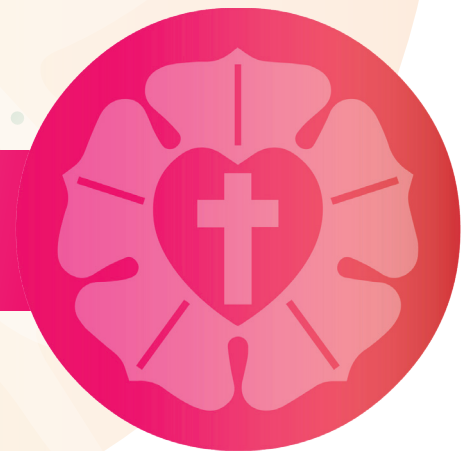


Congregations Task Force

The Rev. Sonja Maclary, *chair*

Leadership Task Force

S. Dcn. Ingrid Compton, *chair*



Your generous support enables us to implement modern-day Evangelism

VISION: STRUCTURE

VISION TEAM: Bishop Egensteiner and The Rev. William Baum, in collaboration with synod staff and the chairs of the Vision Working Groups, will implement our Bishop's 2025 VISION for our synod.

2025 VISION FOR OUR SYNOD

Baum, and the Working Group chairs

"For the Sake of the World" Working Group

The Rev. Kevin Vandiver & The Rev. Brenda Irving, *co-chairs*



Evangelism Task Force

The Rev. Paul Millholland, *chair*

Advocacy Task Force
Christopher Vergara, *chair*



Evangelism and Advocacy strategies. Consider making a donation at mnys.org



We Are Church Together

MNYS 2020 Annual Assembly

The theme for our 2020 Synod Assembly is **"We are Church Together."** This is the same theme we have been, and will be, using for all our efforts and events during the 2020-21 program year.

The 2020 Synod Assembly will be held **May 8-9** at the Marriot Melville Long Island. To see the assembly timeline and other information regarding the assembly, please visit us at **mnys.org**.

Remember that all members of our synod are invited to our Holy Eucharists during our time together. The full agenda, with our services times, will be published on April 24.

We Are Church Together 50 | 40 | 10

Following the recommendation from our memorial titled **"The ELCA's Anniversary of the Ordination of Women,"** we are planning a celebration and special recognition of our ordained women during the 2020 MNYS Annual Assembly.

We will celebrate and recognize three important milestones for the ELCA:

- The **50th Anniversary** of U.S. Lutheran Churches' Decision to Ordain Women to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament
- The **40th Anniversary** of the First Women of Color Ordained in U.S. Lutheran Churches
- The **10th Anniversary** of the ELCA's Decision to Remove the Barrier to Ordination for LGBTQIA+ Individuals (During this occasion, we will focus our efforts on celebrating women-identifying ordained ministers)

CONTRIBUTE TO MNYS' 50 | 40 | 10 CELEBRATION!

Be a part of our 50 | 40 | 10 Celebratory Reception during our synod assembly, through a contribution!

**To make a donation,
visit mnys.org/50-40-10**

Through the mutual support of one another we are a strong and effective synod, and embody our assembly theme

We Are Church Together!



"Many women in this church have shared that people continue to disrespect or ignore their voices and authority. Today, women of color continue to wait longer for pastoral calls than do all men and all white women. But there is hope.. What didn't seem possible a generation ago is becoming a reality in our church."

*The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop of the ELCA*

MNYS 2025 VISION: **GETTING INVOLVED**

Interested in being a member of a Task Force?

Share your interest with the Leadership Team online at, mnys.org/2025Vision.

How do I become a member and what is required?

You will be asked about your **current and past involvement with your congregation and/or synod**, in your areas of interest. The time commitment to be on a Task Force is **two years**, with the possibility to be re-appointed for two additional terms.

What does being a member of a Task Force entail?

Members of Task Forces are expected to attend **regularly scheduled meetings** (frequency depends on the Task Force). Meetings may be in person or by video conference.

Task Force members are responsible **to be prepared in advance of meetings**. This includes reviewing materials, responding to requests, seeking insights from others, gathering additional information, and completing assignments between meetings, among other responsibilities.



MNYS 2025 VISION: **OUTCOME**

We are Church **TOGETHER**:

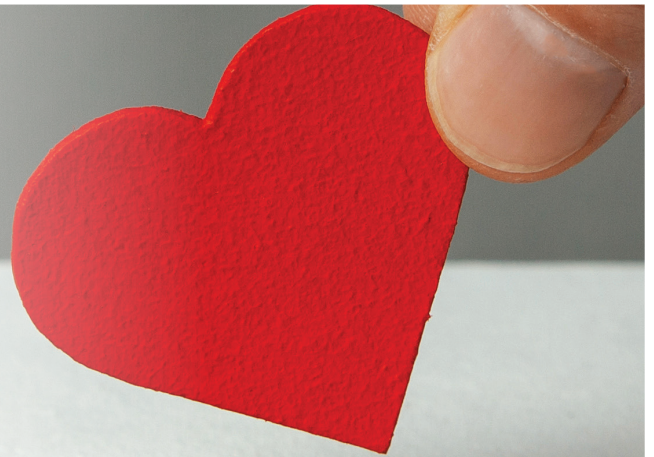
Bishop Egensteiner's **2025 Vision Team, Working Groups, and Task Forces** will work together to develop priority strategies in **Evangelism, Leadership, Congregations, and Advocacy** to advance our **2025 VISION**.

As **CHURCH TOGETHER**, our synod's goals can be met and furthered, as we continue to create a bright and positive future for all.

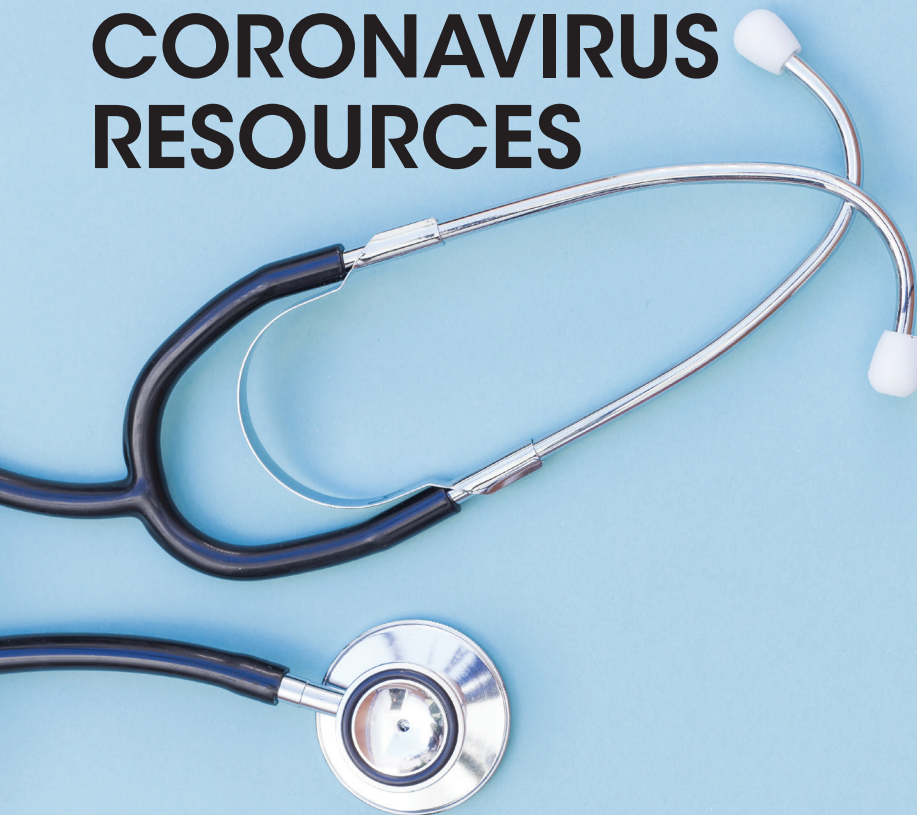
2020 MISSION SUPPORT COMMITMENT

Mission support from all, including subsidized congregations, is a sign of our partnership in the Gospel.

Make a pledge
for 2020 by
visiting [mnys.org/
congregations/2020-
mission-support-
commitment](https://mnys.org/congregations/2020-mission-support-commitment)



CORONAVIRUS RESOURCES



"We are all stronger, more efficient, and better equipped to face challenges of every degree as a calm, collected, and informed church community."

Bishop Paul Egensteiner

While the coronavirus (COVID-19) is not currently impacting metro New York in significant ways, it is important to keep yourself informed as the news about the spread of the virus is creating anxiety and worry in many communities.

Visit **MNYS.org** to find important resources to learn about healthy practices.

Together we can be more discerning and better able to aid both ourselves and those around us.

THE LUTHERan NEW YORKER

THANK YOU!



Metropolitan New York Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.