



Southwestern Minnesota Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

January 2, 2015

Greetings,

I would like to invite you again to consider giving me a few hours of your time to join me for a Bishop's Gathering **webinar on Monday, January 26 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Those of you close enough to join the conversation in person at our synod office are welcome to do so.** We did not get enough people signed up to pull this off the first time.

You remember, we realized after four Bishop Gatherings across this synod that we have under-heard from young adults, 18-35. If you don't know, we have been inviting key leaders and supporters within our synod, both clergy and lay, to participate in important conversations about our synod, our life together, and the dream we might embrace for a transforming future. These are important times we are in as our culture continues to change and the role of the church is taking on new forms of influence and impact. Being proactive in discerning where we are being led is of utmost importance to do as leaders. So we are going to make time, even in the midst of a busy time to listen to and have conversations with our young adults.

Again, our synod has entered into a consulting relationship with Kairos and Associates, a national resource development firm that works primarily with ELCA churches, synods and affiliated ministries. Jeff Kjellberg, principal owner of Kairos, is working with us on this process. Our desire with this relationship is to engage in a process of deep listening with our congregational members and leaders to help us together discover where God is leading us into the future. Key to this conversation is asking,

- How can we be a better synod together?
- What can be done so that you and your congregations feel more connected and served by our synod?
- How can we be more proactive and responsive to empowering, building up, and equipping congregations and leaders to maximize their impact and effectiveness?

We know that when young adults are in the room, the conversations about our congregations, parishes, synod and mission field are different and richer. The time is ripe and necessary for us to conduct this important work. We need to discover how we not only serve our current churches and members better, but also how we advance our mission to engage those we have yet to meet. I am excited for these gatherings and look forward to having you there with us.

Register by [clicking here](#) or reply to Caitlin Kodet by phone or email. **The gathering will be an online webinar Monday, January 26 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** The meeting webinar link will be sent out to those who register. Those who want to come to office can. If the weather is bad we will go ahead but without anyone at the synod office.

If you have questions call Caitlin in our office, 507-637-3904. You can also email her caitlin.kodet@swmnelca.org.

Thank you for prayerfully considering this invitation! If you are not able to attend but want to share written thoughts we are open to receiving them.

In Christ,

+ Pr. Jon Anderson
Bishop of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod