



Strategic Plan

2019-2022



Rocky Mountain Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Ministry Result Area 1

Teach, proclaim and share the significance of our ELCA way of being part of Christ's Church with a clear and contagious vision from abundance.

Learning about our ELCA identity and witness

GOAL 1: Increase the opportunities for members of the RMS to learn about the 14 markers of our ELCA DNA through the Claiming Our Gifts teaching

- 1 A Provide Claiming Our Gifts to congregations in transition
- 1 B Provide Claiming Our Gifts to congregations that self-identify as ready to learn
- 1 C Use and expand Claiming Our Gifts as a tool of faith formation within our synod

GOAL 2: Provide resources so that congregations can regularly and intentionally learn about ELCA witness and ministry

- 2 A Continue and improve the Church Together Ambassador program in which each congregation has assigned advocates who share the story of our life and witness as a church with three expressions
- 2 B Continue and improve Better Together Sundays once a year in which all congregations share resources and information about our ELCA RMS ministry and witness

GOAL 3: Integrate language about our ELCA DNA into our synod communication related to current and contextual issues such as

- Immigration
- Racism
- Doctrine of Discovery

GOAL 4: Connect our RMS congregations to our synod's global church engagements through teams such as:

- Companion Synod
- ELCA Global Mission including YAGM
- Immigration/AMMPARO
- Peace Not Walls
- ELCA World Hunger

- 4 A Provide guidelines for the work of recognized global church teams including a mechanism for connectivity to Synod Council and Office of the Bishop
- 4 B Assist the communication of the work of these teams within the Synod
- 4 C Collaborate as needed with these team to accomplish specific and agreed-upon goals/projects
- 4 D Focus on ways that global church engagement can increase ministry vitality, especially for new and renewing congregations

GOAL 5: Engage in ecumenical partnerships for the sake of offering our ELCA gifts and receiving the gifts of other churches in shared ministry

- 5 A Explore opportunities for ecumenical collaboration in congregation ministries
- 5 B Engage in building ecumenical relationships at the synod level
- 5 C Cooperate ecumenically in public church opportunities

Affirming our ELCA identity through Public Witness

GOAL 6: Continue our history advocacy ministries with an intentional commitment to connecting the role of this ministry with our ELCA identity/theology/values

- 6 A Develop shared language for articulating the ELCA roots of our RMS advocacy work for use in congregations and with public partners
- 6 B Resource areas of our synod not in CO or NM with tools for advocacy

GOAL 7: Collaborate with existing ministry partners to develop a more intentional articulation of how these ministries relate to and express our ELCA identity/values – partners include:

- Outdoor Ministries
- Social Ministries
- Service Ministries
- Campus Ministries
- Ecumenical Ministries/Agencies



Ministry Result Area 2

Foster a Spirit of active collaboration and intentional connection across our Synod

GOAL 1: Continue an effective ministry of presence on the part of the Office of the Bishop and the Synod Council

- 1 A Develop a visitation strategy for the Office of the Bishop to connect with congregations and ministries of our synod in a timely and consistent manner
- 1 B Develop an engagement strategy for the Synod Council to connect with congregations and ministries of our synod
- 1 C Develop a protocol for the bishop's engagement at ordinations/consecrations, installations, exit interviews, special events
- 1 D Effectively accompany congregations, ministries and leaders through conflict, difficulty and significant change

GOAL 2: Continue to provide effective opportunities to gather and communicate as a synod

- 2 A Continue a communication plan by the Office of the Bishop
- 2 B Implement at 2020 Multi-Site Synod Assembly pilot and learn from it
- 2 C Explore options for Theological Conference themes, venues and programming
- 2 D Continue timely and relevant conference gatherings
- 2 E Develop a plan for connecting and gathering youth in the synod

GOAL 3: Build the capacity of conferences to serve as a mechanism for connection and collaboration

- 3 A Explore conference structures that include the leadership of lay people
- 3 B Continue to build connectivity and capacity of Conference Deans (ZOOM meetings, retreats, review of roles)
- 3 C Encourage conference and regional ministry, witness, and learning

GOAL 4: Foster collaborative ministry within specific geographies and across ministry types:

- 4 A Identify and acknowledge collaborative ministries initiatives identified by partners in a certain geographic area (ie. area ministry in Albuquerque)

- 4 B Encourage, support and resource collaboration by leaders or ministries with similar foci or realities (ie. part time ministries)

GOAL 5: Engage in regional conversation and collaboration

- 5 A Meet with Region Two colleagues for shared visioning and planning
- 5 B Continue Region Two First Call and Mobility Conferences
- 5 C Engage with CLU/PLTS in the Lilly Grant for Thriving Leadership



Ministry Result Area 3

Build healthy and vibrant faith communities by equipping lay leaders, pastors, and deacons for excellence in leadership

GOAL 1: Implement the *Excellence in Leadership Program* to form leaders and communities of faith that are courageous, resilient and faithful amid changing times

- 1 A Continue the development of the program prior to fall of 2019 including the identification of funding sources
- 1 B Launch part one in the fall of 2019
- 1 C Launch part two in the fall of 2020
- 1 D Evaluate the program
- 1 E Support pre-cohort work (ie ACT4RMS Team, Part-Time Ministry Team)

GOAL 2: Support, evaluate and grow continuing leadership initiatives

- 2 A Word and Service Roster
- 2 B Coaching pilots
- 2 C Administrative Skills Class (CLU)
- 2 D Synod Council Leadership Training
- 2 E RMS Youth Council
- 2 F Faith Formation Network
- 2 G Interim Pastors' Network
- 2 H Mission Outreach Network
- 2 I ACT4RMS Team (anti-racism)
- 2 J Part-Time Ministry Team

GOAL 3: Develop strategies to engage and support rostered ministers

- 3 A Develop more intentional means for connecting with those new to the synod, orient them to our life as synod, and invite their gifts for the sake of our life together
 - 3 B Develop protocols for connecting with first call ministers to assess whether they have necessary support for their ministry
 - 3 C Develop intentional ways to connect with rostered ministers awaiting call
 - 3 D Provide guidance, resources and support to those entering their final ministry call
 - 3 E Track and support rostered ministers with special concerns
 - 3 F Provide resources to help ministers think about vocational versatility or a multi-vocational perspective
 - 3 G Provide support for developers, redevelopers and ethnic specific ministries and network them with needed resources
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Ministry Result Area 4

Seek and promote new ways of being Christ's Church together in the world

GOAL 1: Align and streamline synod structures for effectiveness, efficiency and innovation

- 1 A Overview roles and responsibilities of Office of the Bishop staff
- 1 B Re-structure staff as needed, taking into account upcoming retirements
- 1 C Seek effective ways to support, connect and provide clarity/connectivity for Office of the Bishop staff
- 1 D Increase connectivity between Office of the Bishop staff and Synod Council
- 1 E Seek effective ways to have Synod Council operate and engage in RMS life and ministry
- 1 F Keep constitution updated to reflect ministry needs of synod
- 1 G Review and revise synod board, committees, teams as needed
- 1 H Strategic conversation around the governance structure of synod council
- 1 I Review evaluation process for Office of the Bishop staff and synod council

GOAL 2: Expand new ministries

- 2 A Pilot new ministries using the following categories
 - a. Collaborative Support
 - b. Anchor Church
 - c. Ethnic specific
 - d. Ecumenical
 - e. Holy Innovation
- 2 B Develop new strategic campus ministries as they develop
- 2 C Develop Messiah Mountain as a new outdoor ministry site
- 2 D Support new young adult ministries as they develop

GOAL 3: Accompany congregations and ministries towards being adaptive, right-sized, vital communities

- 3 A Continue and adapt our comprehensive strategic vision for congregations in transition
- 3 B Develop a strategy for congregational engagement by the Office of the Bishop that helps congregations assess how to increase their capacity to be adaptive and vital – use the learnings of the Part-Time Ministry Team to help congregations reflect on what it means to be right-sized for vital ministry and witness (see MRA 5: 1 D)
- 3 C Develop accompaniment plan for congregations including those considering Holy Closure

GOAL 4: Raise up and support new public leaders for the church's ministry

- 4 A Provide discernment opportunities for pastor/deacon candidates
- 4 B Review candidacy process for effectiveness
- 4 C Explore ways to publicly recognize and support professional church leaders who are not rostered



Ministry Result Area 5

Strengthen our financial capacity for ministry and witness relying on a spirituality of gratitude and generosity

GOAL 1: Apply for a continuing Lilly Endowment Grant and implement a second phase of *Educate, Equip, Enact (3E)*

- 1 A Complete final phase of 3E

- Stewardship for All Seasons (cohort 3)
 - Ministerial Excellence Fund – final grants
 - Systemic Issues Team
 - Part-Time Ministry – Special Grant
- 1 B Apply for a \$500,000 scaling grant for 3E from Lilly Endowment in collaboration with the Grand Canyon Synod
- 1 C Integrate the funding needs for new Lilly Grant into focused synod fund-raising campaign
- 1 D Implement second phase of 3E with focus on:
- Stewardship for All Season – development of a three-year program model
 - Ministerial Excellence Fund – target grants for pastors and deacons
 - Right-Sized Vital Ministry – use the learnings of the Part-Time Ministry Team to help congregations assess what it means to be right-sized for vital ministry and witness (see MRA 4: 3 B)

GOAL 2: Build a culture of synod gratitude and generosity

- 2 A Determine a staffing plan for the work of synod gratitude and generosity
- a. Build on work of Stewardship for All Seasons
 - b. Build on the work of the Better Together Relationship Team
- 2 B Develop and implement a strategy for deepening the culture of synod gratitude
- a. Define role of key leadership groups in gratitude work, including Office of the Bishop, Synod Council, Deans
 - b. Evaluate current tools/methods for expressing gratitude and seek ways to improve how gratitude is expressed
- 2 C Develop and implement strategies for inviting increased generosity for our shared ministry and witness

GOAL 3: Support the ministry of our ELCA Gift Planner

- 3 A Seek ways to align work of Gift Planner and the RMS Strategic Plan
- 3 B Actively promote the role of the Gift Planner among congregations, ministries and members of the synod
- 3 C Determine protocols for including the Gift Planner in meetings and communication of the Office of the Bishop staff and Synod Council

GOAL 4: Plan and implement a focused RMS fund raising campaign in order to resource strategic ministries, including:

- Educate Equip Enact (Phase Two Lilly Grant)
- Excellence in Leadership
- Future planning for Messiah Mountain Retreat Center