

# Our Vision as a Synod

We ask God to:

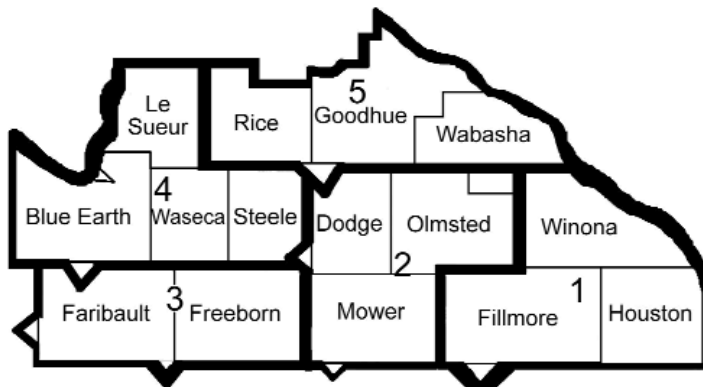
**Gather** the hopes and dreams of all,  
**Unite** them with the prayers we offer,  
**Grace** us with God's presence, and  
**Send** us in mission to

**MAKE CHRIST KNOWN!**

## Who We Are

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of 131,000 baptized people in 184 congregations as well as related institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is one of 65 synods that make up the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Its geographic area includes 15 counties in the southeastern corner of Minnesota. The synod is divided into five conferences, each one named after rivers in the area.



- 1 - Root River Conference
- 2 - Zumbro River Conference
- 3 - Blue Earth River Conference
- 4 - Minnesota River Conference
- 5 - Cannon River Conference

## Your Synod Office

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod office is located in Assisi Heights, the congregational center for the order of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi in Rochester, Minnesota. Stop and visit this beautiful place. You are welcome anytime.

If you have any questions about the 2007 Southeastern Minnesota Synod

Assembly, visit our web site: [www.semnsynod.org](http://www.semnsynod.org). You are also welcome to call us Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., at (800) 426-6376 (MN only) or (507) 280-9457. Feel free to leave a message after hours. You may also e-mail the communications director at [butler@semnsynod.org](mailto:butler@semnsynod.org) anytime.





# We Are Called into God's Marvelous Light

In the fall of 2003, Bishop Harold Usgaard asked all congregations to distribute a yellow questionnaire to those in worship the second Sunday in Advent. The questionnaire, which was developed by the strategic plan task force, contained three questions:

1. What does my congregation do to make my faith meaningful and compelling?
2. What more can my congregation do to make this happen?
3. What can the ELCA congregations of Southeastern Minnesota do together to make this happen for me and our community?

The 5,000-plus responses received by the synod office revealed many different opinions from the members of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. On Feb. 9, 2004, a group of over 40 people from around the synod came to help evaluate and compile the responses.

The results from that day are the basis for what is now the synod's strategic plan, which was unanimously approved by the 2004 Synod Assembly.

The strategic plan, "Called into God's Marvelous Light," will be carried out in the years 2005, 2006, and 2007, and it features three overarching visions:

**To Be Joyful Witnesses**

**To Be Christ-Centered Disciples**

**To Be Strong Leaders**

Within each vision are several goals and objectives. You can find the complete list of goals and objectives, along with a timeline for when everything is going to happen, on the synod web site.

Among the objectives are three yearly emphases:

**2005: A Synod Joined in Prayer**

**2006: A Synod Joined in Bible Study**

**2007: A Synod Sharing Our Faith  
Stories**

Since 2007 is the year in which we are a synod sharing our faith stories, the synod is emphasizing sharing faith in a variety of ways, including articles in *River Crossings* and suggestions in the weekly E-News (and on the website). We are also continuing to pray for each other and emphasize bible verses as we began in 2005 and 2006 (respectively). A new prayer calendar with the weekly psalm is available online.

To learn more about the synod strategic plan, visit the synod's web site, [www.semnsynod.org](http://www.semnsynod.org), and click the "Strategic Plan" link on the left.

## Featured Web Links

**[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**[www.semnsynod.org](http://www.semnsynod.org)**

Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

**[www.elca.org/prayer/](http://www.elca.org/prayer/)**

The ELCA site devoted to prayer, with daily devotions and more

**[www.semnsynod.org/prayerbible.html](http://www.semnsynod.org/prayerbible.html)** –

Updated every day, this web site features a daily prayer and Bible readings.

**[www.semnsynod.org/prayercalendar.html](http://www.semnsynod.org/prayercalendar.html)**

Use this calendar to pray for synod congregations and ministries throughout this church year.

**[www.semnsynod.org/sharingourstories.html](http://www.semnsynod.org/sharingourstories.html)**

This page offers simple ways to share your faith.

