



## WHY THE SYNOD? - PART 4: OFFICE OF THE SYNODICAL BISHOP

What do you know about the Southeastern Minnesota Synod? Do you know what it does or what the money your congregation designates for it is used for? This issue is the fourth in a series designed to help answer those questions for you.

### *What does this include?*

Part of your congregation's offering goes to the synod. From the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, approximately 29% goes to support the office of the synodical bishop. This includes pastoral care, ecumenical efforts, word and sacrament ministry, call process, mobility, personnel, office expenses, and contingency fund. In essence, this supports the day-to-day efforts of the synod staff - everything from salaries to costs associated with performing their jobs as well as emergency funds.

### *Call Process*

Chances are, unless you just joined a church for the first time, you have experienced the transition period between pastors. The process of getting a new pastor in place is called the call process.

The ELCA understands that each pastor and each congregation has a unique personality, so not all matches work. That is why the Southeastern Minnesota Synod dedicates significant time, staff, and resources to this process.

If you have been on a call committee, you know the first step in the process is a self-study so the congregation can learn what they need in a pastor. When that is complete, the congregation can start interviewing potential candidates. When the call committee agrees on a candidate, then the rest of the congregation gets involved by voting on that candidate at a congregational meeting. Assuming they vote to call that pastor (notice that you do not "hire" a pastor, being a pastor is a vocation that is more than just a job), a letter of call is sent to the candidate and

he or she accepts or declines the call.

Another group of key players in the process is a special set of pastors who serve as interim pastors. These pastors excel at transitional ministry. They are not simply people to stand in the pulpit while the congregation waits for a settled pastor, but they are people who are called upon to provide support, encouragement, and hope during the time of transition.

### *What does this mean?*

This portion of the synod budget is just over a quarter of the total budget. It is this portion of the budget that allows the synod office to function. Without staff to make sure the operations go smoothly and without funds to care for and assist the pastors, the synod would only be a matter of geographical lines. Thanks to the support you give to your synod, we are all able to support each other in our ministries. Thank you for your support!

## FEATURED RESOURCE

*Visit the synod website to learn more.*

- Southeastern Minnesota Synod - [www.semnsynod.org](http://www.semnsynod.org)

## MONTHLY BIBLE VERSE

*We are a synod joined in Bible study. This Bible verse was selected by Harold Usgaard, bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, for everyone in the synod to study.*



"These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God."

1 CORINTHIANS 2:10

## ABOUT OUR SYNOD

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of 130,000 baptized people in 184 congregations as well as related institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Its geographic area includes 15 counties in the southeastern corner of Minnesota.

*The Bridge* is a monthly publication of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. For more information, contact the synod office:

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