



## 2005: A Synod Joined in Prayer

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Congregational Renewal Team

Thank you to all who returned the survey *2005: A Synod Joined in Prayer*, distributed at the 2004 Theological Conference. For those who would still like to respond, there is a copy on the synod web site (click the "Strategic Plan" link to find it). We really appreciate your thoughts and ideas. Following is a summary of those responses. We will be sharing your ideas for how we can be in prayer as a synod, as congregations and as individuals throughout the next year.

The general consensus was that there is a direct correlation between the health of our prayer lives and the amount of intentional time we devote to prayer. The time we take to be in conversation with our Creator is an essential part of our daily lives. We find ourselves praying in many situations. Some pray in bed, or while driving. Some find they pray more when they are in need or when the spirit grabs them. Some find it helpful to pray by singing old prayer forms.

However we pray, it is when we are practicing prayer that we are most ready to share that with others. We do this by sharing our own faith stories and being specific in our prayers together. You also shared with us suggestions on how to actively practice our prayer lives. It is from all of these thoughts and suggestions that we as a synod will try to find resources and ideas so that we as a whole body in Christ can renew our prayer lives.

The Congregational Renewal Team of the Synod Council encourages all congregations to make 2005 the year of "A Synod Joined in Prayer." Please include these congregations in the prayers of the Church, and in your personal prayers:

**Jan. 2 (2 Christmas):** Cross of Christ, Welch; Christ the King, Mankato; Central, Winona; East St. Olaf, Byron

**Jan. 9 (Baptism of the Lord):** Bethlehem, Myrtle; Dale, Kenyon; Epiphany, Eagle Lake; Chatfield, Chatfield

**Jan. 16 (2 Epiphany):** Evanger, Sargeant; Bricelyn, Bricelyn; Dennison, Dennison; Faith, Janesville

**Jan. 23 (3 Epiphany):** Christ, Preston; Faith, Dodge Center; Central Freeborn, Albert Lea; Faith, Wabasha

**Jan. 30 (4 Epiphany):** First, Ellendale; Cross of Christ, Houston; Gloria Dei, Rochester; Community, Geneva

The complete synod prayer calendar is available on the web at [www.semnsynod.org/prayercalendar.html](http://www.semnsynod.org/prayercalendar.html)

## Councils as Leaders Retreat Announced

### Synod Strategic Plan Highlights, Jan. 2004

• **Vision:** Called into God's Marvelous Light: To Be Strong Leaders

**Objective:** Councils as Leaders Retreat

"Dealing with Conflict" will be the topic of this year's Councils as Leaders Retreat to be held on Sunday afternoon, Mar. 13, 2005, in Owatonna.

The speakers and facilitators for this event will be Earlene Wickre of Wickre Consulting in Rochester, and Larry Johnson of Oakdale, founder and director of Mission Builders, Inc. They will be offering helpful insights and guiding discussions in ways that can help councils lead more effectively.

New and returning church council members and rostered leaders in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod are encouraged to attend this incredible learning opportunity. It's free to all attendees, so mark the date on your calendar and watch for details and a registration form in the next *River Crossings*, on the synod web site, and in the mail.

• **Vision:** Called into God's Marvelous Light: To Be Christ-Centered Disciples

**Objective:** 2005: A Synod Joined in Prayer

Congregations are including weekly prayer petitions for the congregations and institutions of our synod in the weekly prayers of the church. For a complete list of which congregations and institutions to pray for each week, visit [www.semnsynod.org/prayercalendar.html](http://www.semnsynod.org/prayercalendar.html).

A monthly column on prayer, featuring resources and ideas for how to make prayer a special emphasis in 2005, will be featured in *River Crossings* throughout the year.

Distributed in the November issue of *River Crossings* was a poster with the 2005 theme "A Synod Joined in Prayer" on it. If you did not receive a copy and would like one, please contact the synod office and request one.

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



*Called into God's Marvelous Light*

*To Be Joyful Witnesses*

*To Be Christ-Centered Disciples*

*To Be Strong Leaders*