

 2005: A Synod Joined in Prayer  
2006: A Synod Joined in Bible Study

## Encourage Bible Study

By Pastor Jim Ahlquist  
Congregational Renewal Team

Congregations all struggle getting more than the usual number of people involved in Bible Study. In a recent survey of a congregation, over 90% thought more Bible study was needed. But when asked if they would attend a Bible study, less than 5% said they would.

At St. John in Waseca, Pastors Vicki Hultine and David Berg are lifting up Scripture with a “Bible Minute” each week. After the welcome and announcements, worshippers are introduced to a Bible verse from the lectionary (not necessarily the theme for the day) that is printed in the bulletin. The verse is read together, briefly talked about, and then the people are encouraged to memorize it. “They walk with it throughout the week,” said Pastor Hultine.

What is working in your congregation to lift up Bible study? Please let the Congregational Renewal Team know so this can be shared throughout the synod. In the meantime, we continue to pray for congregations within our synod, seeking for ways of allowing God’s Word to renew hearts and lives.

The Congregational Renewal Team, in an effort to keep Bible study before the people, has decided to add one verse from the weekly Psalm in the lectionary to the 2005-2006 Prayer Calendar. This calendar is available online at [www.semnsynod.org](http://www.semnsynod.org) (click “2005: A Synod Joined in Prayer” on the left).

**Nov. 6 (All Saint Sunday):** Union Prairie, Lanesboro; Trondhjem, Austin; Wangen Prairie, Cannon Falls; Whalan, Whalan

**Nov. 13 (26 Pentecost):** Wanamingo, Wanamingo; United, Walters; Rejoice!, Northfield; Winona State University Campus Ministry

**Nov. 20 (Christ the King):** United, Frost; West Freeborn, Hartland; Glory to God, Rochester; Specialized ministry partners serving nursing homes, hospitals, retirement communities, and the military

**Nov. 27 (1 Advent):** Ascension, Albert Lea; Bethel, Northfield; Aurora, Owatonna; Arendahl, Peterson  
*Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.* Psalm 80:7

## Synod Explores Ways to Raise Up New Leaders

### Synod Strategic Plan Highlights, Nov. 2005

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

**Objective:** Raising up new leaders to serve Christ’s church

- Good Earth Village has applied for a Youth Leadership Initiative Grant through Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Co-sponsors include the synod, Habitat for Humanity, Holden Village, and Lutheran Volunteer Corps. If approved, this grant would provide funding for a youth leadership program. Part of the program would include hiring a part-time person to coordinate a Youth Servant Leader Institute, program development and mentorship. The intention is to have 20 youth each year participate in the program, developing skills to share with home congregations.
- The synod has applied for a “Leadership in the Church Today and Tomorrow” grant through Thrivent. If approved, this grant will provide funding for a charitable gifting program. Part of the program would include hiring a part-time person to coordinate the efforts, develop relationships and encourage giving to not only the synod and Good Earth Village, but to home congregations and other potential Lutheran partners.
- A proposal was approved by the Lay and Clergy Leadership Development Team of the synod council with short and long-term goals centered around helping youth and young adults discern vocations in ministry. More information on these efforts will be forthcoming.

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

**Objective:** Supporting healthy rostered leaders  
The Spiritual Renewal Team is offering three programs and a variety of resources that can be presented at conference meetings. The programs available include:

- “What is Spiritual Direction?”
- “Prayer 101”
- “Developing a ‘Rule of Life’”

The team is also happy to provide resources for reading and reflection, a list of spiritual directors, retreat centers, and spiritual formation programs.

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.