



Re: Celebrating Pastor Espinosa's New Leadership Role

Dear Saint Paul's Congregation,

We are pleased to share wonderful news from the 69th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. On July 19, our own Pastor Espinosa was elected to serve as regional vice president for the West-Southwest Region and as the third vice president among the synod's six regional vice presidents. His official title will be **LCMS Third Vice-President**. This election is a great honor and reflects his faithful leadership, theological insight, and respected service among the congregations and leaders of our synod.

Pastor Espinosa will be installed in St. Louis in mid-September 2026. Before beginning his new role, he will step down as chair of the Board for National Mission, concluding that responsibility as he assumes his new position. Pastor Espinosa will represent the synod president, Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, among the five districts within the region. He will attend meetings in St. Louis with approximately the same frequency as he did in his previous synod role. Additionally, he will also represent the synod president at various regional events like district conventions.

Most importantly, Pastor Espinosa will remain our pastor and will continue to teach, preach, provide pastoral care, and minister faithfully to our congregation. While his new responsibilities may occasionally require him to be away, we do not expect them to significantly change his ministry among us. When needed, Vicar Miles and trusted supply pastors will help ensure continuity in worship and pastoral care. Pastor Espinosa will also continue to be supported by the Pastoral Advisory Committee (PAC), the Church Council, and the Board of Elders.

Pastor Espinosa shared the following reflections on his new role:

"Despite the significant challenges facing the Christian Church in the United States, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod continues to shine the light of Christ's saving Gospel. Our synod supports more elementary and high schools than any other Christian denomination in the country except the Roman Catholic Church. Through our schools, universities, seminaries, military chaplaincy, international missions, life and family ministries, church planting, congregational revitalization, and ministry among people of many cultures, the LCMS carries out an extraordinary range of work.

At the same time, important challenges remain. We must do more to care for our pastors, commissioned ministers, teachers, and other church workers. We also need to strengthen existing congregations and plant new ones.

We must also prepare for the impact of artificial intelligence on our economy, society, and the Church. Cultural worldviews, competing religions, and complex bioethical questions require us to remain deeply rooted in God's Word and to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The gifts I bring to this role include the ability to bring people together and build bridges for communication. My training in sacred theology will help keep us grounded in God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions while applying them faithfully and wisely. My focus on faith and culture will also help us face new challenges without fear and recognize opportunities to share the Gospel.

This role will benefit Saint Paul's by giving me firsthand knowledge of synod resources, ministry opportunities, and emerging issues that I can share directly with our congregation."



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We rejoice with Pastor Espinosa as he begins this new chapter of service. We are grateful for the gifts God has given him, and we pray that the Lord will guide, strengthen, and sustain him in this important responsibility.

As we move forward together, we place our trust and confidence in the Lord our Savior.

In Christ,

Debbie Dannemeyer, President

Debbie Dannemeyer

Mike Padilla, Presiding Elder

Mike Padilla