

BOLD GENEROSITY

Intentional • Inspired • Impactful

The church of the future will require new and imaginative ways to fund ministry, leadership and evangelism. Our synod wants to be on the forefront of this movement. This appeal will enable us to reach people with the love of Jesus in ways we cannot do with our current model of funding.

The future of our church will require innovative and capable leadership to remain relevant and effective. The world is changing at an increasingly rapid pace. The societal landscape continues to shift away from the familiar, and the Christian church is now one voice among many. However, the powerful life-changing story we have to share is needed more than ever. The church requires rostered and lay leaders that not only relate to current realities, but also anticipate and take leadership roles in shaping the church of the future. This appeal is designed to strengthen all levels of leadership in congregations across our synod so that all are equipped to live out Jesus' message of love and reconciliation as the most powerful force for change within our world. The synod exists to knit together the 199 congregations of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin in supportive, collegial, and life-giving ways so that the collective proclamation of God's redeeming love in Jesus can be amplified for the sake of the world. Together, we can be God's people, faithfully, lovingly, and courageously living out what God calls us to be and do in this new era.

There is not one answer to this leadership challenge. At our Listening Sessions the people of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin clearly stated that working together is their highest priority. This appeal focuses on building all levels of leadership in our synod—lay, rostered leaders and congregational—in order to meet this challenge. This task cannot be done in isolation. It can only be done when we unite our collective will and resources together as one, for the sake of God's church.

NORTHWEST SYNOD OF WISCONSIN

PRIORITIES OF THIS THREE-YEAR, \$1.2 MILLION APPEAL ARE:

CONNECT: Technology Grants to Congregations

We live in the age of instant communication, where the internet is a vital tool utilized to find information, to access, to ask questions, or to engage. When people want information, they often first go to the internet to research people, products and places. And for the children and grandchildren of many in our churches, this is the primary way they will search for a church or access information about their church. Without a robust and engaging presence on the internet, congregations are at a distinct disadvantage. Websites provide congregations a “face” to those who don’t know them, instant and consistent communication, a way to stay connected to others, the ability to stream inspirational videos and participate in online educational programs. Many congregations in the NWSWI do not have adequate technology or websites. Funds from this appeal will provide grants to congregations to obtain both modern technology and assistance in developing and improving their websites, and the access necessary to engage people, learning and partners online.

Why? To expand the reach of congregations to proclaim Jesus’ message of love and reconciliation to a rapidly changing world

EQUIP: Walking Together Ministry

The annual Walking Together event is recognized as an exceptional educational tool for both clergy and laity in our synod. Each year we currently reach over 500 people with engaging speakers and congregational Best Practices to energize people as they return to their congregations and their homes. To capitalize on its popularity and impact on leadership, this appeal proposes to raise funds to expand the reach and scope of this event. Funds will be used to take Walking Together on the road to more than one location in our synod and to recruit top quality speakers and resources in order to double the participation and increase the impact.

Why? So that more people, lay and rostered, will be better equipped to proclaim Jesus’ message of love and reconciliation to the world.

LEARN: Leadership Development

Through the establishment of an endowed fund, rostered and lay leaders can access leadership development grants. This is crucial in a time when we heard again and again in our listening sessions that congregations are looking for leadership, but those same congregations do not have the funding to send their pastors and leaders for the inspiration and learning they need. These grants can be used for a variety of training and educational opportunities, intended to better prepare and equip them to lead their communities of faith as they live out God’s transformational Word in the world.

Why? To empower and educate those in leadership throughout our synod to more effectively proclaim Jesus’ message of love and reconciliation to the world.

SUPPORT: Financial Health of Seminary Graduates

Seminary graduates enter our synod with a vitality and energy for ministry that is enviable. They are excited to lead our people in mission in this new day. They also enter our synod with debt that frightens and cripples them. How can one lead others in generous living when one's personal finances handcuff and limit options? Through a synod managed fund, educational debt reduction funds will be made available to recent seminary graduates who serve at least five years in the NWSWI and who engage in both first call theological education and a financial management course.

Why? To loosen our new pastors from the bonds of financial debt to enable them to boldly proclaim Jesus' message of love and reconciliation to the world.

PARTNER: Malawi

The rapid pace of change is not only true in Northwest Wisconsin, but it is also true throughout the world. We are reminded of the power of God's word to bring about dramatic change through our partnership with Malawi. The Christian church in Malawi is exploding in size as more people hear, sometimes for the first time, the stories of Jesus. They need leaders who are educated and equipped to empower this dynamic Christian community. Through an endowed fund established by this appeal, pastors, professionals and lay people will be educated for the church in Malawi for generations to come.

Why? To lift our eyes beyond the geography of Northwest Wisconsin and engage with the Christian church throughout the world as, together, we proclaim Jesus' message of love and reconciliation to the world.

SHARE: 10%

In our desire to model generosity we will share 10% of all the money raised with the Campaign for the ELCA. This campaign is raising millions of dollars through individual donors, congregations, and synods to assure the vitality of our church and expand the reach of the gospel.

Why? So that we can lift our focus beyond ourselves and share generously with others who boldly proclaim Jesus' message of love and reconciliation to the world.