



Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Dear rostered minister/congregational council president,

At the 2019 Northwestern Minnesota synod assembly, the Holy Spirit will guide us through a call process to elect a new bishop for our synod. Bishop Larry Wohlrabe has served faithfully as bishop of our synod since 2007, and has announced that he will not be seeking another term. Bishop Wohlrabe's announcement has provided us with an opportunity as a synod to do the work of "preparing the way" for a new bishop. We now have the opportunity over the next several months to examine ourselves, to ensure that by the time of the synod assembly in 2019 we are a ready synod, looking for the right bishop, who will begin with a running start.

As part of this process, the Synod Council has established a 2019 Bishop Transition Commission that is working with Holy Cow! Consulting. Their task is to create a **Ministry Site Profile (MSP)** for the synod that will be presented at the 2018 synod assembly.

This synod MSP will be similar to MSPs that call committees draft as they seek new rostered ministers for their congregations. The synod MSP will be used between the 2018 and 2019 synod assemblies to help us focus on the gifts for ministry we will seek in our next bishop. It will also guide the people of the synod as they raise up names of potential nominees for bishop.

Beginning on January 11, 2018, YOU are invited to participate in this crucial process. On January 11, you will receive a link via email to an assessment tool called the *Landscape*. The *Landscape* will provide critical information to the Bishop Transition Commission as the synod's MSP is written. All rostered ministers, congregational program staff, congregational council members, and synod leaders are invited to complete the *Landscape*. **Once the link "goes live," you will have 30 days to complete the assessment before the link is closed on February 9.**

It is critical that we hear your thoughts and perspectives. We want to know what you think about our synod right now, as well as where you believe we need to invest our synod's energy in the future. Please mark your calendar to complete the *Landscape*, and spread the word to your congregational program staff and congregational council members that their completion of the *Landscape* is vital to having all voices heard from across the entire synod.

We know there are some congregational council members who do not have access to email. In this case, we ask that council presidents print paper copies of the *Landscape* for people with this need, and then manually enter their responses to the link.

We look forward to where the Holy Spirit is leading us together. Thank you for your participation in the work of our synod, and thank you for spreading the word about the *Landscape*!

God's Blessings,

2019 Bishop Transition Commission

The Rev. Matt Peterson

The Rev. Nate Bendorf

The Rev. Jonathan Dodson

Sue Ellwanger

Matt Greenwaldt

Kenneth Greiner

The Rev. Greg Isaacson

The Rev. Jean Ohman

Maddie Olson

Jerry Peterson

Allen Westby