

1. Q1: Which of the following best describes you? Lay person? Rostered Leader? Other (please clarify)?

Rostered Leader

Rostered Leader

Rostered Leader

Rostered leader retired

Lay person

Lay person

Lay Person

Rostered Leader

Rostered leader (retired)

Lay person

Lay

Rostered leader

lay person

Rostered leader, retired.

Retired pastor

Retired pastor

Rostered Leader, council leadership

Lay person

Lay Person, past council member

Rostered/retired

roster leader - clergy

Lay person

Lay person, church council president

Lay

Lay

Lay

Lay person and church staff

Rostered Leader

Rostered leader

lay person

Lay person

Rostered Leader

Lay person

Lay person

Retired rostered leader

Other. I hop into where ever the church needs me

Rostered Leader

Lay Leader in specialized ministry

Lay Person

Rostered Leader
Rostered clergy
Lay
Other - seminarian
Lay
Rostered Leader
Rostered Leader
Lay person
Lay Person
Lay person
Rostered Leader
Lay
Lay
Rostered Leader - hospice chaplain/supply
preacher
Rostered leader
Lay person
Lay
Lay person
Lay Person
Lay person
Rostered Leader
Lay person
Rostered
Lay person
Rostered Leader
Rostered Leader
Lay person
Retired "Rostered Leader"
Rostered Leader
Rostered Leader
Rostered leader
Lay person
Rostered Leader
Interested lay person
Council Member
Rostered Leader Retired
Retired pastor
Rostered LEader
Lay
Rostered leader (retired) congregation member
Rostered Leader
Rostered leader (Word and Sacrament)

Rostered leader--not currently in call.

Lay Person

Lay

ROSTERED LEADER

Rostered Leader

Mission Developer

Rostered Leader

Rostered leader

2. Q2: What is your age?

51

60

60s

73

60

53

68

56

77

71

72

57

39

79 yeears

85

90

45

75

65

73

41

34

44

69

75

66

36

74

42

na

60

63

60

60

73

37

63

43

78

40

72

72

54

40's

67

51

74

81

52

59

65

60

68

59

60

74

47

75

56

61

72

Middle aged

52

65

56

75

71

48

66

57

50

65

87

35

65

74

29

72

76

70

35

83

76

70

61

54

31

63

62

3. Q3: What is the average weekly worship attendance of your congregation?

120

50

45-50

?

25-30

45-60

60

24

60

125

130

600+

60

85

120

?

9

50

16

350

60

10

60

76

80?

50

50

28

50

40

50

80

40

50

40

Currently 35-40 but pastor is on sabbatical

45

20

75 in-person; 80 online

100

50-60

60

35

?

80

Approximately 100 with more viewing online

40

65

12

52

20

70

I don't have my own congregation

75

45

90-110

25

130

Maybe 8

25 at Christ 40 at Zion in person and 120
online

45

about 90

9

25

I am a chaplain

12

?

45

100 to 150 at 2 services

30-40

30

80 in person plus 100 on line

45

30

~20

Low

700 + (~500 in person and about 200 online)

ish

75

20-25 persons

35

200

N/A

130
100
60
45
40
50
45

4. Q4: Your congregation is a member of which cluster?

Spokane Valley Cluster

Mt. Spokane

Upper Snake River Cluster

Lower Columbia

Spokane Westward

Treasure valley

Grape

South Central Washington

Spokane

Northwest Intermountain Synod

Treasure Valley

Mt Spokane (or whatever itâ€™s called now)

treasure valley

Spokane

Spokane area cluster

i live in Eastern Oregon, near Pendleton

Palouse

Treasure Valley

Pullman, Moscow, Potlatch, Colfax, Genesee, Troy

Spokane

north idaho

North west

Lower Columbia basin

Mt Spokane

Grape

Lower Columbia Basin (G)

On the Palouse

Treasure Valley

Spokane Westward, Cluster L

don't know

Spokane Westward

Treasure Valley

North Central Washington

Spokane Westward

Eastern Idaho/Wyoming

?

Lower Columbia Basin Cluster

Treasure Valley

Treasure Valley

Lower Columbia Basin

Treasure Valley

Treasure Valley

Palouse
Spokane Valley
North Central Washington Cluster
North Central Washington
Cluster G
Tri-Cities/Walla Walla
Palouse
Upper Snake River Cluster
Spokane valley
Treasure Valley
I supply preach in various clusters
F South Central WA
Treasure Valley
Don't know
Spokane
Treasure Valley
? Near moscow idaho
Big Bend
Treasure Valley Cluster
xyz cluster
Snake River
Spokane Valley?
Advent
unknown
Spokane Valley?
Treasure Valley
Treasure Valley
West Spokane
Treasure Valley
G - lower columbia
Mid Columbia
Cluster B, Treasure Valley
Spokane Valley - K
Don't know
Mt. Spokane? Joel Skindlov's
South Central
Treasure Valley Cluster
I serve Grace Episcopal so we are not in a cluster
Spokane Westward
Wenatchee?
Treasure Valley, Idaho
Lower Columbia Basin
TREASURE VALLEY

Treasure Valley, UMC congregation
Dave Haven is the head of our cluster
North Idaho
Lower Columbia basin

5. Q5: Where have you seen God active in the NWIM Synod?

Campus Ministry, Camps, LWF Quilts from many congregations, Conversations among congregations about cooperation-consolidating-partnering.

Everywhere the Gospel is preached in its purity, using words when necessary. In people who show up week after week, giving of their time and resources, and share life's struggles. In guys who cut and deliver wood for those in need. Praying together.

In providing for the community, in doing mission, in participating in ecumenical activities and worship, and in ministering to the needs of our congregation.

Support of rostered leaders through weekly Zoom.

Our biggest problem locally is homelessness. Catholic Charities has been effective in providing additional housing, but they cannot keep up.

During Covid. So much supportive assistance and help with ideas. Also grace and support for home and in line communion.

at the synod gathering

Mostly in the feeding ministries scattered throughout the Synod

Among urban congregations trying to live out their calling of service in challenging times, among small rural congregations keeping the faith in the face of major demographic changes, and in those congregations welcoming all.

Local mission work: feeding the homeless and Christian Aid Center and giving handmade quilts.

In our cluster and at Luther Heights Camp

In word & sacrament. Anything else is speculation

I can't speak to the synod as a whole. In my congregation I see God active as we care for the community through housing, food access, support of the schools, and our care for one another in intergenerational Sunday school, inclusive tech and support.

The Haven program for clergy and other leaders.

Being with pastors and congregations during this time of Covid adjustments.

Trinity Lutheran in CDA, the people united and faithful.

Within individuals

A grant from Synod is enabling 5 congregations from two states to embark on a whole new approach to Stewardship. Synod has worked overtime to accompany all the many congregations that have been in vacancy over the past 2.5 years

That's tough because the last two years have been anything but normal and because of that many of us don't even know what's going with NWIM Synod

SHARE Fund, Treasure Valley cluster cooperative ministry,

In and through the people of the Northwest Intermountain Synod. I regularly see people prayerfully making difficult decisions instead of choosing what is easy.

I can't say. But God is active everywhere, in every life, every day, whether we see it or not. Faith not sight.

Discussions, book groups, and congregation discussions on race and LGBTQIA+. Stirring up the need to reconcile how to really show welcoming love to all people and still work toward being a community that welcomes all - that is God's work. Serving the homeless in downtown Spokane.

Working together to alleviate hunger, helping people worldwide through deliveries of quilts, helping to fund a school in Tanzania, studying ways to reach out to those who need help/support, etc.

1. In the myriad of service projects/initiatives undertaken by the many of the Synod's congregations.
2. Dedication of the Synod's rostered leadership to their respective ministries during these turbulent times.
3. In every baptism and confirmation.

I have seen God at work when I volunteered up at Camp Lutherhaven, where I witnessed NWIMS Pastors, current and retired working together to make camp wonderful and filled with the Holy Spirit for all children attending that week. It was energizing!

Our cluster and Luther Heights

Congregations standing up against white supremacy with compassion and strength, ministries that provide housing in an increasingly hostile market, outdoor ministry sites helping people see God in nature and in themselves, and in the land and water. all over

With outreach and support to those who are hungry

In our Cluster, in the cluster confirmation, as we gather for retreats, at Luther Heights Bible Camp, as we gather for worship, as we celebrate ordinations, retirements and new colleagues, at Synod Assembly

I have seen it in my church and a bit in my cluster, but outside of that I have NO idea what is going on in the Synod. Honestly, I feel like we are untethered from one another as congregations.

In the continued gathering of believers every week both in person and in online worship

Active participation by most congregations in community service organizations. New Day in Idaho Falls is active in the community Pantry, the Soup Kitchen, and in providing lunches for school children in city parks during the summer.

No

God is active in many ways, including the harvesting of the fields, the provision of water for watering the crops, the calves nursing from their mothers in the pastures, the tall corn stalks as they grow and reach for the sun, the call of the cranes.

Congregations and other Lutheran organizations working together collectively.

Openness to trying new things ... regional gatherings.

Zoom meeting, trainings, etc.

Grant opportunities for those serving in ministries across the Synod.

Faithfully providing leadership in the local congregations and clusters by persons who are unassuming, don't believe they "can", but have a passion for the Gospel.

The regional gathering on Faith Formation - building relationships across generations and inspiring congregations in the Faith Formation ministry.

That we can be the body of Christ connected from so many places.

Retired clergy, Certified Educator

A culture of openness and invitation to people who have lived in the area a long time as well as to newcomers

I have seen God active in the areas of loving hospitality toward strangers as well as a mission of love toward those who mourn, primarily widows.

In congregation worship and outreach

Local congregations employing innovative ways to worship and gather for meetings, Bible Studies, etc. via Zoom, Livestream, etc.

God is also very active in the Synod Office via Cathy. She is a rock and an essential component for goodwill.

I have noticed "uptick" in numbers of people in worship at congregations (including ours, somewhat), and a few have also shared there is more interest in young teens engaging in confirmation programming.

Our leadership

In serving the homeless. In encouraging others with faith. In LWR projects.

People showing up for others in their time of need, even from other churches, offers to help other churches in their ministries, quilt ministry in Bonners Ferry, community garden, housing a good bank in Genesee, college student outreach in Moscow and

In the developing connections among pastors and lay people, in the ministry of Luther Heights Bible Camp, in the broader connections that I have developed with pastors and lay people outside of our synod,

Through LWR, through our camps,

Feeding and housing ministries

Some of the anti-racism work being done in various congregations. Outreach to feed children.

Calling new people to the office of ministry, both pastors and deacons. Financial giving at my congregation has been good even through Covid. Live streaming worship services, which is here to stay even after Covid.

Pastoral vacancies being filled!

Always at Holden Village, also at my home congregation in Walla Walla. And TODAY, when our bishop, Kristin, visited and preached! I am a life-long Lutheran, but only joined this church after moving from Seattle.

In the people of the church

In the mission work being done by local churches.
Bishop support and now faithful innovations

In the faithfulness of staff in keeping us connected through some very trying times.
I don't get outside of my area very often but I think the Nampa/Boise area Lutheran churches are very active.

... in congregations' ability to adapt to, endure, and continue ministries in the midst of the pandemic.

Help through disaster relief and support of luther heights.

The Regional Gathering was incredible. We brought 10 members and they came back excited. We also learned so much through the ReBoot Workshops. I love the monthly rostered leader gathering - catching up and dwelling in the Word. Great support for

Team collaboration among pastors. Eccumenical relationships. Gathering to plan greater eccumenical and local church involvement in campus ministry.

Synod has been generous with our small congregation with grants that allowed us to have a youth ministry both after school and VBS. Many volunteers helped in these projects.

Good question. Not in addressing the current issues of today: evil politicians, racism, divisive and hateful dialogue, gun violence, opioid/fentanyl proliferation, Russian aggression, Christians who support immoral leaders, homelessness environmen

Candidacy and Mobility, Companion Synod relationship, adaptations and creativity by congregations throughout and coming through the pandemic, outdoor ministries

The way we adjusted during pandemic

The support we have for leaders both lay and clergy

The number of programs we offer that speak to ministry sites

I see God active in the creative ways congregations are finding to stay connected and to serve their communities. I also see god active int he supporting relationships between clergy leaders.

amongst the people

Offering a place for leaders to check in during the unusual days of pandemic.

Work with our Companion Synod and care so many congregations give to the UKD.

Hunger awareness resources

Election of Bishop

God's Word, Our Hands. We participated this year after we got the emails about the event. We increased our food supply for our food pantry and decorated bags for the food pantry meals.

I see many congregations and rostered leaders, our bishop and synod staff, endeavoring to serve in an incredibly stressed and changed environment. By God's help they're keeping on.

In baptism, Lords Supper and I'd like to see God active in the preaching. This is where God has promised to be active. Otherwise who can tell for sure?

Communion, Baptisms, Preaching

I think God is active and present in all things, but know that God
In my congregation

During COVID, I have particularly seen God active in the synod through the ways our cluster congregations

have worked together to support each other--in particular, the ways in which we have worked together through

TVPrays.org.

Global Mission/ World Hunger Committee.

Color Amazing preaching project, cluster gatherings, synod assembly

Outdoor worship at Faith in Leavenworth. Also, how the congregation has stepped up to leadership responsibilities as they undergo the call process.

Well, I don't know much about what is happening outside our small area of the Treasure Valley. I see God active in the cooperation of the churches in our cluster. Both rostered and lay leaders stepping up to work together to impact our communities.

Geographically, everywhere. Institutionally, I haven't had a opportunity to participant in any activities but I see inspiration in the reports and newsletters.

IN CLUSTER ACTIVITIES - CONFIRMATION, LEADERS RETREATS, TEXT STUDY GROUPS
HAVEN outreach, leaders & congregations who remained committed to church mission while everything else changed through COVID.

I have seen God active in the churches which are engaging with antiracism work, and LGBTQ+ youth. Socially active churches that are moving into the community and showing up for Justice are inspiring.

I may have seen God working through the cluster and synod check-in times, when we needed mutual support and connections during a very trying time.

I have seen God at work in my congregation and in our ministries to our neighborhood. a NWIMsyn cong.

Connections we have never made before through technology. People being able to view other congregations' worship services.

6. Q6: What are your primary hopes for the NWIM Synod and the ELCA as a whole in the next 6 years?

Seeing each other as family and not segregated camps of people whether city or rural, political, identity, or economic. Being better at sharing the depth of our theology instead of trying to be like "other" churches.

To be more supportive of all leaders and congregations, not just designated ones. More adaptive to change. Be known as a voice for the voiceless in communities that are trying to stifle true faith. Creative. Imaginative. Forming new ministries.

More emphasis on renewing our congregational practices to make our churches into places of welcome, not museums to ancient norms.

Adapting to the every changing world

Step back from liberal rhetoric. Conservative members are not pariahs - we are people. Bring some balance back to the conversation. Unity does not mean Conformity.

Ongoing support and leadership to find local leaders as we have many openings in our cluster. Ideas for solidifying membership in our congregations.

The we share the grace message that is so common to us we don't know that not everyone knows.

For us to rediscover the "why" of the church, rediscover that the church does not exist in order to exist, we must reclaim our place in the public square

To lift up the ministries of those congregations offering vibrant worship and open/welcoming communities of faith, especially for refugees from America's religious right. To use those congregations as models for others to emulate.

Increase ministry and membership of younger populations. I support youth ministries - we are building numbers in children's ministry but have very few teens and young families.

My adult children volunteer frequently but are unchurched.

Continue to speak out on issues of social justice

Work ecumenically

Provide greater assistance with call process, and simplify current forms like MSP, etc.

That it won't become an echo chamber of any one political or social ideology but reflect the kingdom of God - a place filled with sinners of every stripe finding our commonality in our confession of sin & promise of forgiveness and salvation in Jesus

Clear vision, active training for congregations on how to do innovative things: How to start a housing ministry, how to sponsor a refugee family, trauma informed ministry, how to support the mental health of your community, how to be open and affirmi

An effective reorganization that takes seriously the institutional decline of the church.

That our churches proclaim clearly our Lutheran theology. Our emphasis is not the same as the majority of Christian churches.

The trajectory of which I'm aware seems right. I know, however, the our Lord is the ultimate Director of Synod.

Staying in touch with all congregations

That we keep energized and facing hopefully toward the future. There is temptation to whine with nostalgia or hunker down in a defensive mode during times of change. I don't think that's God's perspective, and should not be ours.

I would like to see the ELCA back out of politics or backing one political agenda over others. The ELCA needs to remember our church community is made up of both liberals and conservatives. Conservatives have been feeling under represented.

Responsive to the public hunger for meaning in life. Faithful to unmerited grace in the Gospel.

That the guiding question be "What is the most faithful next step?" and not "how do we survive?"

Get out of politics and stop dividing.

I want this Synod to be the place that people of a variety of backgrounds can mix and feel heard, appreciated, and worthy. Our gender, marital sexual orientation, appearance, or history should not make us question if we will be welcomed in a church.

Be more vocal about our Lutheran beliefs. Let our light shine in helping our neighbors. Consider and act on consolidating churches to make congregations more viable.

I hope as a synod we can do a better job of advocating for those on the margins of society.

1. More integration between Synod Office and congregations.
2. Increase collaboration among co-located congregations.
3. Significant reduction in number of congregations looking to call a pastor.
4. Improved timely communications among all.

That we become more connected and that others that work in the church have opportunities to build community. I would love to see office administrators and music directors able to share with one another. I would love to share my passion with others.

A much more relational synod in that the Bishop and the office of the synod is really connected to each congregation and understands the joys and the hardships.

To be both rooted in God's love and reaching out to serve others. To nurture relationships among leaders and in communities. I also pray the ELCA move away from tokenism and genuinely seek an anti-racist, jubilee-centered future.

keep working on honest relationships with communities and each other

Goals are clear articulation of vision

That the system can be changed and have leaders who think outside the box.

That we engage with equity issues beyond our doors. We aren't going to have diversity in our pews until we are learning to interact and love in our larger communities. Ensure there is financial equity for pastors & staff serving communities of color

Support for local ministers and ministries

It is hard to raise the NWIM Synod visibility in communities so heavily dominated by the LDS Church. Focusing on those things where we differ from them because of our Gospel orientation is critical to our mission here (e.g. welcoming LGBTQ+ members).

To survive

I would like to see our synod and the ELCA more focused on what God is doing rather than on how we should feel about social justice issues. Sharing God's love and grace will go a long way toward fixing social justice issues rather than the other way

Outreach to new populations and more to those facing great need ... houselessness, food insecurity, etc.

Guidance and direction provided to small congregations that may be the best path forward is to close or join with an ecumenical partner.

I would hope the NWIM Synod better understands its "vast" environment--rural, remote, suburban, urban, and the divide of "north" Idaho and "south" Idaho. I believe the ELCA as a whole is carefully working through divergent views on so many areas.

For more emphasis on connecting with each other - congregations and lay leaders especially. To be able to encourage each other in the body of Christ and walk together in ups and downs. Continued emphasis on anti-racism work, justice for women, LGBTQ.

There will be a greater realization that the mission of the church exists outside the walls of a church building.

Become a church of far greater flexibility. Worshipping communities should be able to form themselves as circumstances require -- bricks and sticks don't make a congregation. Explore new forms of leadership. There aren't enough ordained ministers.

Indigenous Peoples (Native American) ministry becoming a priority for the NWIM Synod, and a missional focus on the homelessness crisis within the Synod.

If we are church together, let's please start working together.

I would like us to focus on developing discipleship skills among lay and rostered leaders couched in solid theology... In-person workshops/retreats for children's ministry, youth ministry, adult education, evangelism, stewardship, worship, etc.

For congregations who discern a need to dissolve, that they would see it as an opportunity to infuse the life of Christ in other areas in their community and beyond. For others, that they will be bold in stepping into new directions.

Children's ministry

To continue the work being done and to help others find the Lord.

To serve our communities in the ways that are desperately needed. We are not equipped and we do not know the needs for this service. We are tired. We are frustrated. We need basic help in using our gifts. We need pastoral help! Support!

I would hope that the Bishop of the NWIM Synod actually connects more directly congregations and makes us feel like we are, in fact, walking together. Still very much feels like we're on our own out here.

Focus on The Gospel. Figure out what God is calling us to do and not worry about what we can no longer do

More cohesiveness

Stronger sense of connection to other congregations and the synod

Focus on the oneness of the Body of Christ as we face political challenges/divisions in our country and our daily lives. Focus on bringing the reality of our faith, our relationship with God into our daily lives as we love God and love our neighbor.

We are declining in numbers as a synod and as the ELCA, which is a very long-term trend. I hope we can connect better with the 20 and 30 something population, because we are an aging church as well. Numbers aren't everything, but they are something.

Being a voice for the marginalized

Church must be relevant. I like Dialogue series from Augsburg; I appreciate that our church is exploring them.

For church to grow, we MUST reach the children! And young people.

Always preach the Gospel: justification by grace thru faith!

Making our voices heard because Lutherans have a distinct, original voice

That they will have a clear vision of where the church will be in 20 years and that that vision is shared at the local level.

Ongoing work on supporting small and rural congregations with tools to continue service.

The importance of rural ministry. I understand the idea of wanting to be inclusive with minorities and those who identify differently in regard to human sexuality. Inclusive means including everyone, even the white majority.

That we will see an increase in new people who want to continue in the worship of God in new and old ways alike.

-joy restored to congregations and rostered leaders,

-lay people recognize which ministries are theirs and which belong to rostered leaders,

-the high vacancy rate addressed perhaps through training of local lay people for worship leadership, etc.

Membership growth and sustainability.

continue to help small congregations with new ideas and reaching out into the community. Encouragement and hope in this new world of church.

Greater Bishop involvement and support of clergy and congregation.

I think the synod and the ELCA needs to put more emphasis on helping all ages learn about the Word of God. If we don't know the Word of God, we have a difficult time being disciples.

To be bold like Jesus with the real message of Law and Gospel. Quit hiding behind organizational identity and stand up for what is right and beneficial for all people. Quit protecting your turf and retirement accounts.

Communication, equipping lay leaders, ecumenical partnerships, collaboration among ELCA synods in the Pacific Northwest & Great Basin, listening to younger people in congregations and communities, an alternative voice to Christian Nationalism

We are continuing to experiment and try new things emerging from the pandemic

We need to continue to nurture and support relationships

We need to pay attention to racial justice and diversity

I hope that as synod we can find more times to gather together in person regularly again!

I also hope that our congregations can grow in meeting the needs of their communities and draw people into relationship with Jesus through these efforts.

enriching relationships among congregation members, building of healthy communities

To remain relevant in society - we are a minority in the Christian world, a denomination that welcomes all and strives to better ourselves with our interactions with minority populations. I hope we can continue to grow in those areas.

Gain in strength and membership by being attractive to the younger generation.

Helping congregations fill their Pastor calls. We have several churches in just our Cluster who are currently in the call process and we could use help and guidance.

“The churches we serve struggle to form Christian identity, practice and community with their own members, their children and their neighbors.” That’s Luther Seminary’s Core Challenge that the community is asked to face together. We need to too.

Rightly distinguish law and gospel

Unsure

I hope for renewed connection

I would hope for more connection between the NWIM Synod/ELCA and local clusters and congregations using all of the tools available to us--digital/electronic/online and interpersonal connections--large group, small group and one-on-one relationships.

Increase giving to ELCA World Hunger, Continue to work toward service to all people

Further explore outreach and advocacy; deeper commitment to raising a new generation of leaders in the synod and in congregations; find a way to express the relevancy of the church in relationship to conflict in our society and politics

Better balance between fully human Jesus and resurrected Christ.

Continue to show true Christian leadership in our region, the US and around the world.

Action and faith formation. Fewer pastoral vacancies.

THAT WE EMBRACE GOD'S COMMANDMENT TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR

THAT WE SEEK JUSTICE AND PEACE

move from Christendom chaplaincy to faith-building missional focus

I hope that the NWIM synod creates spaces for brave conversations around confronting Christian Nationalism, Racism and a thing that hampers the freedoms of minoritized people. I hope the synod supports and upholds communities that are experimenting.

I hope that our synod and the ELCA will be faithful to our mission of preaching the gospel, teaching the faith and watching and listening for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we live lives of generous service in our communities and the world.

NWIM - to have a Bishop that brings all people together, is relational and cares
ELCA - that we feel like we are one again and that the ELCA is a resource for congregations

7. Q7: In your local setting, what aspects of missions are most exciting or compelling to you?

Being a place where those who have had negative experiences in churches from Catholic to Evangelical feel safe and engaged.

Some days, very little. On other days, how we stay connected to our community and are looking for more ways to partner with others to meet growing community needs. Being a witness to a Gospel that so few want to preach, hear, or follow. Outreach.

Working in the community through partners.

Connections with Lutheran Community Services

blank

Group opportunities for youth trips and missions. Support for outdoor ministry.

Stephen Ministry Education programs

Outreach to disadvantaged communities and populations. Rod's house, Nuestra Casa, the local services coordinator non-profits have all pointed toward looking for sustainable solutions to local manifestations of national problems.

Finding a way to mate proclamation with an already robust community outreach in service.

Providing for gaps (food, yard work, quilts, social justice) in state and funded services.

More social justice and tutoring.

Food Fellowship - provides a meal to the community once a week

Participating in the Ecumenical Thanksgiving service

Working with other churches and nonprofits to addressing housing needs so prevalent in many areas

Clarification of definition of terms would be helpful. What is meant by missions? Community service projects? Outreach for evangelism? Inreach for discipleship growth?

Seems like a lot of young people who grew up in the evangelical spaces are leaving them but some find refuge in liturgical traditions (think Rachel Held Evans). I think there is opportunity to give people who are fed up with the "American evangelical

Those that address poverty (with a focus on housing), especially poverty's effects on children/youth (via its impact on parents).

Serving area people in need

Our congregation hosted Methodist congregation as Sunday partners. The Methodists have since disbanded the congregation.

Assisting those with low incomes that are willing to accept a hand up

Collaboration with other people of faith and with secular groups - working on issues where we can agree. This is highly motivating during a time of division. Any mission that centers on love and respect gets my attention

More community involvement. Sharing the word.

Luther's notion of vocation. Solid, persistent bible study. Deepening spirituality.

Gathering around word and sacrament. Family Promise. Engaging with the preschool.

....

Our ramp team's efforts have changed people's lives by helping individuals maintain independence and mobility around their homes.

Outreach to youth who are craving the love of Christ. Change worship style but keeping our Lutheran doctrines to make our services less intimidating to newcomers.

Studying/learning about racism, immigration and sexuality and making plans to follow up on what we've been learning.

1. Building of ramps on Yakama Nation.
2. Sharing gifts of 'administration' with other congregations.
3. Mission trips to Spokane and other areas/agencies in need.

I am very excited about creating community meals in new ways. I led a soup drive through meal during Lent last year that brought families together in a safe way while helping those that need it most. I would like to try to expand on this.

Community Food pantry and our relationship with preschools in our area.

This church is an outpost of LGBTQIA+ welcome and we are known for it in the community. We have also prioritized housing justice and currently provide affordable housing for around 150 people.

community relations

living out the Gospel by serving those in need

Don't understand the question. Aspects of Missions? Mission development - doing mission work in our neighborhood?

What is exciting doing ministry in our setting is that we are reaching neighbors through food distribution in 3 different ways.

The local congregation members who are living out their faith beyond the church walls and into their daily lives at work, in volunteer opportunities, in their neighborhoods, and in their families.

Working to meet our neighbors to be in real conversation and relationship with them.

There are many opportunities for service to the community here. Tapping into those may be the best way to demonstrate our Gospel mission. Idaho Falls is not a very diverse community, so some other avenues of service are not useful.

Right now nothing

Community engagement has reemerged after the pandemic. People are excited to get together again and enjoy each other's company. Community outreach is a natural consequence of this engagement.

New ways of doing/being church together.

Reaching out to community needs--basics like housing, food, just being able to provide for youth, middle age, and elderly. And, being willing to "adapt" from we've always done it this way, to--what can we do to update our outreach to meet needs.

To see people inspired by the good news of Jesus Christ, to see how it inspires them to live/work and letting it inspire me. (Locally and globally) Our work together and with non-profits. Seeing how we can make a difference together.

Our church reaches out to the community with several programs, feeding the poor, welcoming the immigrants, clothing the poor, etc.

Outreach to the homeless.

Developing and implementing congregational mission realities beyond the walls of the church building, especially in the areas of those who have recently immigrated to this country and to Indigenous Peoples.

partnership with our neighboring congregations of different denominations

Creating a welcoming and solid children's ministry, expanding our community garden, retaining solid and innovative worship experiences, celebrating gifts of Latinx community.

Deepening of spirituality in individuals. Also, openness to radical diversity such as intentional work with young people who define themselves as queer.

Children's ministry

Homeless teen

Homeless young adults

Support job hunt

Serving the homeless through meals given. LWR projects.

Education: all ages, feeding hungry people, caring for children and families with children, nurturing or own members.

Mission to the people typically excluded from mainline churches and to those unchurched people in our community. Also finding a mission expression in those wandering away from fundamentalist expressions of faith

LWR

Feeding and housing ministries

Outreach to those around us who are hurting in our communities. Sharing our living faith in word and action.

High school/college youth group led by our youth & family director.

Worship with really good music. Food bank

Housing, food insecurity, LGBTQ rights, abortion issues

I love the Quilting mission of LWR, BECAUSE our group of 12-15 is SO much more. We care about and support each other and the socialization is SO important to many of the older, and widowed women.

Rural ministry

#1. Our church's Tuesday evening Food Fellowship serves 80-100 people every week.

#2. The growth in our Mission and Youth Endowment Funds.

#3. The long, overdue upgrades to our facilities and equipment.

Faithful innovations

Community ministry, adult education

I mostly like working behind the scenes for most mission projects.

members are taking the initiative to begin and carry out new ministries with council permission.

It is difficult to see beyond the current congregational struggle and seemingly little synod support. Again disaster missions seem the most supported and this is compelling to me. Locally more of this needs to happen.

We are doing new and exciting things in the community that our congregation has not done before. A lot of rebuilding is happening.

I work as a chaplain and I hope the synod could help support and gather chaplains together for rest and continued education as well as collaboration.

Children's Christian education ministry.

Not much, since mice not much seems to create excitement of any meaningful level.

Shared ministry within the cluster and with ecumenical partners, connecting with young adults through online study groups

Being attentive to the community around us

Building Inter generational relationships

I am passionate about reaching out to people in our community with the gospel message of love and acceptance. I also am excited about rebuilding communities of faith and the relationships within them that were damaged from the Pandemic.

worship

Learning more and more about white privilege with people willing to have the hard conversation

Being back in person with many opportunities for learning and fellowship

Outreach to those with physical needs (food, meds, compassion)

Local food pantry and WWW work to help the poor and underserved.

We're trying to tie our congregation with the 55+ community growing four minutes away. There are cautiously hopeful signs.

See above

I have a heart for preaching and pastoral care. Reaching and extending the good news of the grace of Christ Jesus into the community near and far around the church is what most excites or compels me to do ministry.

Youth ministry

We are currently in an interim and without pastoral leadership and the lay leadership and the membership has provided courageous and grace-filled continuity in congregational leadership, worship, outreach, and ministry in very exciting ways.

Hunger issues and Global mission

Youth and young family ministry; equipping people with theological and biblical understanding that is relevant to their day-to-day experiences

Being a welcoming, caring, non-judgmental neighbor.

We are in the middle of a growing neighborhood, reaching out to new neighbors to show that we care about them and are ready to be a welcoming and safe place. Our food pantry has been a real help to folks going through some tough times.

Possibilities of service to migrants, refugees and poor folk. Hospitality to all kinds of minorities and shunned groups.

WEEKLY FOOD FELLOWSHIP - A DIRECT WAY OF LOVING NEIGHBOR

Discipleship as primary identity and motivator

LGBTQ+ youth work, sustainable agriculture, antiracism work, creative conversations

We have the CdA School District developmental pre-school meeting in a large building on our campus 5 days a week and 3 nights a week we have CDA ACT meeting in both of our buildings. A group that puts on plays with actors who are differently abled.

Local outreach where we interact with the people - relationships

8. Q8: What are the biggest challenges facing your congregation today?

An aging congregation with little participation from younger families. Especially after the pandemic.

Aging population of congregants. The few new people don't want to enter this space but want to change it to become what they left, which isn't helpful or life-giving. Energy and passion to do the work set before us. Re-imagining church in this place.

Membership is dwindling, as we are not a easy place to begin at. Training and changes to make us an option amongst the many in the community.

being more visable in the larger community

Our dwindling size.

Getting members back to church after Covid. Reaching out and being a safe place for those who have had poor past experiences with organized religions.

We have lost our kids and it is hard to get a pro

Aging facilities keeping pace with aging population.

Youth education, organizing for consistent volunteer programs, and effectively mobilizing persons for service from music to community service on a consistent basis.

Volunteers. The same people serve multiple groups.

Re-energizing members after the long pandemic to be involved with their church again.

Using new skills and abilities learned during the pandemic, and thinking further outside the box- people and the church have been changed by this experience.

Addressing the homeless population around the church and city. Acclimating all of the new people into the congregation & ministry.

income, aging, needing something to be excited about

Maintaining facilities.

Spending time with and listening to our community.

Being too comfortable. Christianity is not often seen as consequential to our world.

Attracting young people & keeping the working age active.

Low attendance / participation

Members who are stuck in a narrow vision of what they think church is supposed to look like. They don't look to scripture and are impossible to satisfy. How to honor their sadness without allowing their negativity to infect the rest of us?

Attendance, lack of musicians, money of course, only having a part-time pastor.

"Social Classism."

Fewer resources by just about every measurable standard -- people, energy, money, etc. And how do we creatively live into being church? How do we honor who we have been without being tethered to that identity?

Fear. Church is stuck in survival mode. Too focused serving needs of current member has lead to a failure to thrive and grow.

Monetary gifts from active members are not enough to balance the budget.

Bringing in young families so we will continue in the future to serve our neighbors.

I'm guessing political strife, although our pastor has been good about avoiding politics in his sermons. We are aware of some who have left our church because they are more conservative. I wish we had a way to dialog honestly with each other.

1. Help the congregation understand its responsibilities relating to stewardship.
2. Acknowledging our need to respond to God's love and grace in a way that positively impacts others.

We are facing an interim time which can be difficult at times but also very energizing to consider who might be called by God to serve at our congregation. Also how do we do church with the changing times outside the walls of our church?

Lower attendance and offering. No help from synod on what the directions are for small congregations.

We are a growing congregation in a time when many are shrinking or dying, so the dominant narrative doesn't often fit us. We are in need of coaching to create structures that enliven ministry, not stymie it.

membership

lay leadership

Knowing that there there is a large group of "nones" and how to engage with them in the public square.

Grieving the losses from Covid...deaths, broken relationships due to protocols and their political connections, and our ability to reconnect with one another after developing muscle memory for isolation.

See above

We are taking advantage of sharing space with St. Luke's Episcopal Church. It saves us considerable funds over owning our own building, BUT it makes it difficult to be identified in the community.

Financial. As treasurer it is terrifying to see how our offering is decreasing and we are quickly depleting our savings. After Covid we have lost many of our congregation which has greatly affected our church family and it's finances.

We occasionally have trouble providing a satisfying livestream experience. Resolving our technical issues would be gratifying.

No Pastor for 18 months and no prospects that the call team is aware of ... how long does a community keep going before saying ... time to do something different.

Aging and frail demographics. Lack of young families being involved. Dis-interest, or lack of time with youth to be involved. "Tired" leaders!

Finances or lack thereof. Lack of volunteers. People want ministry to look a certain way but aren't always willing to step up to make it so. The church is the people.

Recovery from the pandemic and /or figuring out what it's effects will be in the short and long term in the congregations' viability. A recent article in Christianity Today stated the congregations that continued their outreach ministries are well.

Aging membership. For young people, things such as team sports occupy their Sundays.

Lack of youth and young adults in worship and congregational life (aging membership). Also, a church that is "too focused" on the past - a limited forward vision.

Getting to know each other again. It doesn't feel like community when we are not together in the pews.

Retaining vital and consistent ministry in a mobile society.

An attitude that the "new" might feel too strange and unfamiliar.

Finances

Children's ministry

Volunteers

Encouraging people to bring children. Keeping people in attendance.

We have a part time pastor. Many of our members don't care for her and she doesn't care about getting to know them or their needs. We are losing hope. Many already have and stay away. Online is not making it better, rather spreading the problem.

Money, of course, but I'm not looking for the Synod to solve this. The bigger issue is reaching out to our community in ways that make them know they are welcome here

Very small, figuring out ways to do what we can where we are with a very old and small congregation

Loss of members and reduced attendance since COVID.

All the congregations where we preach are challenged in living our faith out in our daily life within the culture we live in.

Connecting with young adults. Getting people excited about studying the Bible.

Getting people back in the church building

Getting and retaining young people.

As a Liberal, I often hear of some families that are really stuck in old ways of doing things...of things always needing to be done the same way.

But, as a Lesbian couple we hope to see our congregation become RIC!

Declining and aging membership

#1. Hiring a new pastor.

#2. Attracting new members, especially those with children.

Messages when we don't have a pastor. Musicians for worship. Finances to support what we do offer. Attendance and membership

becoming more missionary. creating ministry outside our walls.

Getting people to come back to church in-person. Without time together the community can't help but become apathetic.

Broadening our base of financial support and participation within congregation.

Some tension between social justice activists and others.

Still finding our way out of pandemic precautions.

Lack of identity and membership.

We are a community church but not supported financially by the community. So figuring out how we can stay alive financially while supporting the whole community which will never step into our building or give financially.

Size and support.

Only about 5 or 6 older adults to participate and keep the ministry operational. Only one or two men that can assist with building operations, and a declining income as several of our older members are passing on.

To figure out why they are cost based upon what they're accomplishing or avoiding.

Integrating new members, remembering to do a few things well instead of trying to do everything

Building community because of two services and wide gap between ages

Calling a new pastor and trusting the process

Due to COVID our numbers in attendance are down. We've lost people through death and also some topped attending in person worship. We've all experienced a traumatic time since 2020 and we need to find ways to heal and grow in faith.

healthy relationships, good preaching at the pulpit

finances

members who leave to the bigger, glitzier non-denominational churches

members who leave for a more conservative church

Finding way to be important to the younger generation. Church finances are always in jeopardy.

Calling a new pastor and keeping our small congregation engaged given that we have not had a pastor for over a year, during the pandemic and times of a lot of transition.

Sustainability

See above

What are we next being called to? It feels like we are at an intersection culturally and congregational. I wonder what/where/to whom the congregation is being called next.

There are so many needs. Evaluating a few ministries of what we can do well is challenging

COVID and our current interim situation seems to have changed everything! We need to dream new dreams and find

ways to live into the future as a very small, but vibrant and active congregation, which it appears that we are!

Funding to support ministries

Youth engagement, and general participation across the entire congregation, building momentum; normal financial challenges in the face of uncertain economic times

Being true to the gospel, even if it offends some people. REfocusing on mission not finances.

Calling a pastor, getting members and friends involved again in the ministry of the church after COVID.

Finding consistent leadership, including pastoral leadership.

WAITING FOR A CALLED PASTOR

Small numbers, discerning God's energy


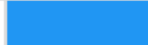
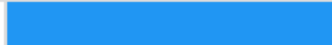


Lots of the congregations are sitting scared on their money acting like dragons rather than following of Jesus. They are so attached to security that anything new (besides improving the building: aka reinforcing their own assets) is terrifying.

Like every other congregation we lack a "deep bench" of members who are able to cover all the ministry needs that we have.

Some people are out of the habit of worshipping at all

NUMERIC SCALE

Q9: How satisfied are you with how things are going in the NWIM Synod? (1-unsatisfied 5-very satisfied)

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
1 (Lower Range)			4	4%
2			16	17%
3			35	39%
4			29	32%
5 (Upper Range)			5	5%
Mean	3.17			
Median	3.00			
Total Responses			89	100%

10. Q10: What would make you more satisfied with the synod?

With the pandemic behind us, more engagement with congregations.
Making sure congregations know of all the resources available to them.

Deeper connection. More interaction from synod staff and those serving the synod. A welcome environment as the present synod office is non-accessible and it's hard to get in touch with anyone except through email and waiting. Talk to us about things.

More activity, electronic or otherwise, to be more visible to the people in the pews.

More frequent video or personal visits from the bishop.

Na

More sharing of what each church is doing

More eagerness for hands-on service to community and neighbor, less arms-reach "gift" ministries

1. A more effective pastoral transition program that doesn't appear too robust now.

2. A more consistent, crisp, meaningful attention to liturgical celebration. We seem to have more than our share of low church Scandinavian pietists!

Regular communication from the synod which can be shared through each church's communication pathways.

Better coordination of synod staff schedules so office is covered by Bishop or assistant to the Bishop.

A bishop that checks in (call/visit) and takes an interest in the congregation & ministry.

Greater pastoral presence from synodical leadership.

Taking stands on moral issues

I'm not sure.

I wish it were more visible but the pandemic has been a challenge.

See Q6

Leadership.

I would like more organization and consistency to how "the synod" functions. "The synod" being synod staff and synod council. That said, a 4 is pretty good :)

Meeting people where they are at.

To be more publicly assertive in stating what our Christian values are and how they enrich our lives.

More contact with the bishop

Better tools for advocacy along with recommendations and/or guidelines

1. More frequent communications among Synod Office and congregations.
2. Creating additional opportunities for congregations to respond as an integrated community of faith.

More face to face or zoom communication with congregations. More of a sense that the synod has our support just as each congregation gives our support. More opportunities to connect with the Bishop like a monthly blog.

Much better relationships between clusters and the synod office.

Communication. Presence. Depth of preparation and concrete showing of care (phone calls, check ins).

Casting and sharing a vision of the church.

Better connection

What is happening at the local churches and in clusters? What are the celebrations as we emerge from the isolation of Covid? What are they wrestling with as they try to live out the Gospel? We have churches closing...we should be grieving with them

It would help if synod personnel could get around to visit the congregations a little more often. It is a struggle just to get together as a cluster. Opportunities to identify as part of the ELCA and NWIM Synod are few and far between.

Oh, things seem to be going well enough.

Reach out on a personal basis with not only clergy but lay leadership. I, as council president, feel like I have to be a cheerleader for the Synod. I don't see that there is a cohesive team approach to working with congregations.

I'd like to see connections fostered and a sense that we're all in this together. I'd like to hear what other congregations are up to. I'd like to know what our bishop is up to and what she/he sees happening across the church.

Encourage congregations to find ways to reach out to their communities through social, economic and cultural means.

I am referring to the synod office. Although covid made things difficult, I have never seen the bishop. Where is she? Also, the day to day operation of the synod is slow with little sense of the need for expediency.

More concerted efforts for cluster churches to work collaboratively to address missional and worship needs within their respective regions (i.e., youth education and development, regional ministry prioritization, etc).

Having connection with the synod. Come and get to know us, PLEASE

Providing more in-person training events for congregations via Synod committees, teams, individuals, etc.

Attracting volunteers

Not sure.

We could work together with other cluster churches. Use common resources. Share confirmation, Sunday school and other educational curriculum. have gatherings between secretaries, treasurers, and committees to share what's working. We need help!

A sense that we matter in all our small churches in the Synod.

Stronger sense of connection.

Can't think of anything right now.

Our pastors need more support. These people give their all to support their parishioners and yet when they need direction, focus, job opportunities they get little help from the synod bishop

I am newer to this NWIM synod, so I'm unable to be more specific, BUT, right now, they have an AWESOME BISHOP!!!

More things for youth

The synod needs to completely overhaul the pastoral call process by taking a leadership role to move the process forward much quicker than is currently done. Work on the Mission and Life statement should begin as soon as the vacancy is announced.

To know what services are available

I have no idea

Our congregation has had almost zero one-on-one contact with the synod in the last three years. It feels as if we have even less connection to the larger church than we did before.

Being more active and present to all congregations. Feel there is not support here.

I don't know.

More Bishop involvement.

I am not sure, maybe more support and training for rural congregations.

Effective voice and witness to Christ. Like where was this synod in the local homelessness conflict? Missing in action it seems.

More communication from the synod office about what synod staff are doing and what's going on around the synod, more shared resourcing with other Region 1 synods--trainings, idea sharing, grants....

I am concerned with the lack of available pastors for our congregations. I would like to see a more robust and active Lay Preacher program to meet the needs of our people.

more encouragement of cluster cohesiveness, cluster communication

Hard question which I think stems from not being able to be together in person for so many years. There has been great turn over in the rostered ministers of our synod (not unusual in my opinion) but we don't know one another anymore.

Synod work will always be an uphill battle. I would be nice if the future wee brighter with more enthusiasm visible among the young. Our church grows grayer and becomes smaller as the loyal active membership dies off. More Young people active.

To me it feels there is a disconnect between what is happening at the synodical level versus what is happening in the synods congregations.

More connection. We have a good pastor. I hope the pastor feels connected. I love Synod Assembly each year. It seems like we are missing out connecting with people across the synod.

We need more in-person connection from our Bishop! We have received support from Pastor Misner, but it seems that he is being stretched very thin!

I think teh Synod is doing well. We need to continue to seek new ways to walk shoulder to shoulder with each other

Better seminary and churchwide support

More involvement of Synod staff in our congregation.

Better communication with individual members via internet, personal contact with congregations.

MORE MEMBERS OF CONGREGATIONS EMBRACING OUR ONE-NESS AS A CLUSTER

I would be more satisfied with the synod if it held frequent antiracism and/or community organizing trainings for lay folks and rostered leaders. We need new skills!

My long standing complaint (old guy) is that they Bishop's office and the synod council and committees take gifted people out of the congregations.

Having any positive connection with the bishop. The assistant to the Bishop is relational and skilled.

11. Q11: What challenges lie ahead of the NWIM Synod in the next 6 years?

Congregations shutting down, financial resources, and a stronger feeling of congregations not needing "the synod".

Dwindling resources. Aging population in the pews. How to remain true to our Lutheran heritage and how we read, preach, teach the Gospel while being surrounded by so many who are adamantly against pretty much everything we say and do. Being relevant.

Lack of growth, support for small congregations

Declining congregations

Connecting with younger generations

Finding effective approaches to treating drug dependence and mental health issues amongst the homeless.

Recovering from Covid. Assisting with what should or should not continue with on line call in person.

Congregations closing

Shrinking populations, lack of relevance to the community as "meaning-makers," loss of individual historic ministries that once gave purpose and energy. The effects of climate change

Demographics, of course. Consolidating and revitalizing dwindling ministries. Developing messaging that separates us from the caricature of Christianity proffered by our religious right.

Membership.

Adequately supporting local churches.

Closing congregations & being financially solvent, & being relevant

Increasingly polarized society. Needing tools/vision for how we can be committed to one another even when our opinions differ.

The dwindling number of congregations and congregational support for the synodical ministry.

Complacency

The same as the rest of the ELCA and Christians generally. How do we keep our identity as

Evangelicals with those who see church as a political arm who call themselves evangelicals as well.

The best use of our buildings w/o identifying "church" as not sure

Assisting congregations to navigate all the change that is most certainly coming.

Again see Q6

Aging of membership.

Same as above -- Fewer resources, especially financial on the synod side of things. And how do we creatively live into being church? How do we honor who we have been without being tethered to that identity?

Keeping churches open and growing

Continued disbelief in God and distrust in church among most people 50 and younger.

Not fading away do to our lack of members who are rapidly aging.

People drawing away from the church

Christian nationalism becoming stronger (ouch!)

1. Reduced Mission Support.
2. Finding qualified volunteers.
3. Sustaining synod/congregational lay leadership.

I believe that will be lack of young and old being called to serve God and attend Seminary School. How do we continue to serve God and one another when we are so fatigued with the current atmospheres and temperaments of our neighbors.

How can the Synod support all the congregations so that we all grow in Christ.

Major changes are coming for most human structures due to climate change. We need a highly relational, adaptive vision for how to be the church in this time.

The future is ecumenical.

the decline of formal churches their place in the world as an institution

Creating community when we have become used to isolating. How do you build community when there is little opportunity offered?

Being open to changing.

Relevance in daily lives as individuals and as worshipping communities.

Continuing to be relevant to local congregations

The distances covered by the synod are substantial, probably equaled only by the Alaska Synod. Could the synod consider two or three Assistants to the Bishop to provide broader coverage?

Surviving younger generations are not church goers. They don't see a relevance to church.

What happens if we are spending a lot of time getting used to a new bishop? This feels more like a good question for God. Why not let the Holy Spirit answer it.

Dwindling numbers attending traditional church options, stewardship decreasing as many supporters of congregations pass way, and lack of Pastoral leadership as Pastor's "burn out" or retire and not as many answer the call to serve full-time.

Engaging leadership in the local congregations and clusters. Our cluster is very, very active thanks to our Dean. But I'm very concerned with the high number of vacancies in the churches. We have a crisis that is getting worse.

We need vision to help lead us into the future. We need to inspire our leaders (rostered and lay) to get there. We need to do the work of imagining what the church could look like in the future (it cannot stay the same) and leading us there.

Generally I think we are aging congregations whose historical means of growth are not working. We need to think, plan and strategize around new means of growth and spreading the gospel. We were forced to do so by COVID – what shall we do in the future

Declining membership. The synod is unattractive to clergy. Very little sense of vitality.

The "closing down" of congregations either through lack of membership and/or theological differences complicated by political ideologies.

Rebuilding relationships

How to consolidate ministries of congregations within Clusters/regions.

Partisan divisions inside congregations and families. Challenging economic conditions which create anxiety and reluctance to embrace change.

Children's Ministry

Attracting more people. Helping them see the need of God in their lives.

We need to reach those people who are looking to join an active movement that ministers to others. We can be the group that feeds, clothes, shelters, but invite others to help us. We can add our money and hands to other ministries. Build trust.

If a connection can't be better developed between the Synod leadership and congregations, I don't see how our Synod survives as a viable entity that matters at a local level.

Not dying, enough pastors, changing to fit current context

Financial stability

Loss of congregations due to closures/mergers

Reduced membership

Financial realities and continuing the work of spreading God's love in word and action.

Keeping small churches going, perhaps by pairing them with a neighboring ELCA congregation(s) or Episc/Presby/Meth congregation(s)

Civil unrest, abortion rights, making the church relevant to future generations

I understand it will elect a new Bishop...Can Kristen serve again?

If not, it will be a challenge to find someone who is so real, and down to earth and who preaches such amazing Gospel

Declining membership. Retaining ministers and placements in rural locations. It is getting too expensive for small congregations to keep or call pastors, and there are not many wanting to work part time.

#1 Increasing membership.

#2 Engaging youth of all ages.

I'm sure it will be staffing with less financial support from churches with less. Ongoing leadership stressors.

fewer clergy

smaller congregations

finances (using resources wisely)

Keeping our churches strong in the face of a changing reality.

Attracting and retaining quality clergy and/or raising up lay leadership within congregations. Developing a shared vision.

Addressing the weariness/discouragement of rostered leaders

Growth, change, and membership. The pandemic changed the world and the synod needs to work locally on how to change as well. Also how to love and appreciate differences as the world continues to be divided. Membership to grow.

Decreasing growth.

Finding pastors to fill vacancies, and supporting vacant ministries.

We need strong visionaries and leaders.

The Synod has become more ecumenical but I fear we are losing Lutheran beliefs and a better knowledge of cross theology. The lack of education about Lutheranism and our unique belief system has led us away from the Bible.

To find leaders who want to be courageous and risk-taking Christians. Find out who is a Christian and who is simply a member of a social organization.

North Idaho continue to attract gatherings of people professing a Christianity that is unrecognizable to me.

What's the case for financially supporting the synod? Where is the vision? Every congregation and ELCA affiliate has to make its case.

Equipping lay leaders

Supporting congregations in very different areas

Decline in church attendance, availability of clergy, our divisive national culture.

being Lutheran, keeping our churches from dwindling, securing solid pastors for their calls, empowering church leaders

Are we efficient as a synod or is there are need for reconfiguration of synods?

Appeal to the young. Try to maintain facilities and salary clergy. Keeping our membership growing.

Religious organizations that have declining participation have a strong tendency to fight. It offers the chance to have a "win-win" even if it's at the expense of one's siblings in faith.

Distinguishing law gospel

Finding and equipping future Christian Public Leaders; specifically pastors that are excellent. In the midst of a declining church with what seems like less and less candidates for rostered ministry. I wonder who and how God is calling future leaders

Probably keeping up stewardship

How do we provide a vibrant Christian witness and mission as a Synod in our region, state, and local communities while at the same time supporting our local churches--many of whom it appears are getting smaller?

Smaller congregations. Do we merge with another synod?

Reevaluating our giving to churchwide; equipping leaders in the church during uncertain times

Being relevant to the gospel.

Being seen as more involved in the life of our churches.

Keeping good pastors in our congregations. We need strong pastoral leadership and direction.

NEED FOR SMALLER CONGREGATIONS TO CLOSE OR CONSOLIDATE

NEED FOR WORKING MORE CLOSELY WITH OUR ECUMENICAL PARTNERS

Church decline seems to have accelerated, making new vision for growth even more urgent.

Oh goshâ€¦ too many to count. Best to have faith that new things are emerging and not try to hold on too tight to communities that have no desire to do justice or care for the neighbor.

Helping declining congregations die gracefully and helping healthy congregations and their leaders stay healthy.

For there to be a sense of care for each other as congregations and leaders. Not just a functional connection.

13. Q13: What should be the top priorities of the new bishop?

Relationship building with congregations and financial strategies for the next 5 years. Making sure that every rostered minister knows that you are there for them.

Be someone we can look up to, trust, rely on, and turn to for guidance in today's troubling seas. Help us envision the next emendation of church, whatever that is. Be open to possibilities and ready to listen. Welcome new people into synod leadership

Make it clear - things must change. With God's help, we can change and be the 21st century church.

Support of rostered leaders

Visioning

Support struggling congregations - which might mean urging them to merge with other congregations.

Filling empty positions. If that requires conflict resolutions and or healing within a congregation I feel that it critical.

building up the unity of synod

transforming a moribund church, stuck in an older model of ministry that was characteristic of the prosperous post-war boom

Helping to develop a message that encapsulates our strategic vision, and effective management of the many congregations in pastoral transition.

Ranked above.

See previous question

Getting into parishes and pastorâ€™s offices.

Setting a strategic vision then training and equipping clergy and congregations to meet it. Get the congregations what they need to be the body of Christ. Clear communication is necessary.

Creativity is key.

Strategic leadership, vision, and communicating the vision in a practical and convincing manner.

Being proudly Lutheran with a willingness to proclaim it outside the synod office.

Pastoral support of synod and parish leaders.

The changing dynamics of church in the American culture

To be the "œpastor to each cluster"â, which may entail assisting some clusters to actually form.

Bringing our congregations together

Also guiding congregations in the pastoral call process, be actively involved.

Partnership with congregation presidents and rostered leaders.
Joy in the gospel. Excellent communication skills.

We seem to be at an inflection point in the history of the institutional church. How do we faithfully tend to this as a church and a synod? How does the synod accompany other leaders (lay and rostered) in this time?

Youth outreach.

Ensuring all pastors are well trained in the soft skills of conflict resolution and crucial conversations.

All congregations forging ecumenical relationships.

Counseling solutions for pastors to deal with work stress and managing their personal life

See answer 10.

Support of pastors in stressful situations

To create the sense of a "team" among the synod's rostered leaders with a common sense of mission/purpose to advance the priorities of the synod. One that looks out for one another, helps/prays for one another, and works together effectively.

Guidance and leadership, vision for new ideas, pastoral care for leaders, support congregations with conflicts and troubles, stewardship, a calm in the storm.

Relationships with this synod and Lesâ€™s relationships with church-wide!

Rebuilding meaningful connections between leaders and within communities. Nurturing relationships.

leadership

Connecting with people

Getting out to every congregation

Creating an online resource site where congregations and know where to go for resources on ministry, bible study, kids education, lay preachers, etc.

COMMUNICATE the work of the Spirit in our synod and the ELCA with your flock via letters, social media, and/or personal visits.

Communication, listening, understanding

Strategic leadership/vision in the area of mission & outreach

Proclaiming the Gospel on behalf of the synod (vision & encouragement)

Look for more ways to enhance our relationships with our ecumenical partners

How can we as a church bring back people who have lost interest, and how to reach new people

Congregational relationships.

Support of leaders across the Synod.

Share wonderment and vision with leaders across the Synod about what God is calling us all to in the next 6 years.

Engaging and encouraging leadership in the individual congregations, lay as well as clergy. More hands-on, personal connectivity with congregations, especially using electronic means such as Zoom. Meet at least once a year with every council.

Vision and inspiration to lead us into the future. Delegate training/coaching and admin. Visit every congregation! Build relationships/trust with congregations. Building relationships with other church partners and communicate those opportunities.

Gaining a futuristic vision with the church's of this region. We will not do it alone

Get to know the synod. Realize that there are significant issues facing this synod. Be flexible in how ministry gets done. Be present.

Leading the Church into "uncharted" realities while developing learning/coaching methods for congregational leaders - leading the Church off the known map (so to speak).

Come out and visit and get to know us. We want to know we matter, and we want to work together.

A top priority is to be a spiritual leader who can inspire through teaching, preaching, and casting visions.

Have a strategic plan for how congregations who are ready to close can be part of the birth of something new for the region (related to justice, the social good, food security, other).

Leadership modeling and vision

Encouragement of pastors and congregations. Good communication.

Caring for and supporting every congregation in the synod.

Pastors need help. Congregations need support/training as they are doing most of the ministry of the church. Encouragement is appreciated. Our pastor-congregation relationship is faltering.

being available and connected to pastors and congregations.

Develop a meaningful relationship with local leaders. This is the same priority that was mentioned 6 years ago

Pastor yo pastor and administrator

Stronger connections between congregations and the synod

More "face time" with congregations and congregational leadership

1) Being a Christian Lutheran leader in word and action locally and globally.

2) Care of the congregations and leaders within the Synod - pastoral care and conflict resolution.

Helping to reinvigorate pastors and congregations.

Loving and supporting the pastors in this synod, dreaming with them,

To pastor and council the pastors in their synod; they need to have a pastor also.

Ensure that the Gospel and pure message of love, understanding, and certainly acceptance of ALL is preached consistently in every congregation.

Spreading the Gospel

#1 Reinvent the call process.

#2 Provide a vision for the future of the synod...where will the synod be in 20 years?

Support congregations with their ministries. Train pastors to support the congregations. Creative ways to worship without pastors. Bring information from elca to congregations for practical application

Managing the balance between rural and suburban ministry site needs. Understanding there is significant difference between the needs of both.

Supporting the pastors and leaders in the churches. The last 2 years have been hard and I know that if I am weary, they must be weary 10 times over.

Address the high vacancy rate in congregations and the weariness of rostered leaders.

To have the synod and missions more present in all congregations. Be empathetic. Work on new ideas esp. For membership.

Working and developing pastoral leadership and the direction of the synod.

Greater involvement and vision for the synod and live in Spokane.

Encouraging intentional study of God's Word.

Training members in helping lead adult and children's study of God's Word.

To reclaim the church's purpose for existing and be brave, bold, and "out there" with it among the "members" and especially in the public square. Quit hiding behind the ecclesiastical structures that tend to silence such courage.

Administering staff and volunteers - administration is ministry.
Providing and communicating vision. Preaching/Teaching the good news through sermons, written messages, letters. Raising funds and helping congregations and ministries with new funding.

Equipping sites to do ministry in New ways
Support of lay and rostered leaders
Being present and listening

Cast a vision for the future that includes outreach, missions, and growth. Focus on Jesus's teachings and the gospel message seen through a strong Lutheran theological lens.

Relationships within the NWIM synod, be an example of what relationships look like with people who don't share the same beliefs and/or you may not like, ability to love others and engage in the world together.

Within the restructuring of the ELCA, voicing the concerns of an area where 'nones' are prevalent. Helping our synod see how we can be more efficient. Helping us work together as congregation to do ministry.

Communication!

The health of the church. Pastoral assistance and attraction of membership.

Engaging with churches in figuring out how to move forward in the post pandemic era of church. We likely need to think differently and find ways to engage the younger generations.

Preach the gospel in this strange time.

Help people face today's challenges with honesty (theology of the cross) and faith.

See above; cont Ed for pastors

I think top priority for a bishop is to be a pastor to the pastors. I would happily buy the Bishop (or bishop elect) a coffee once a year even just to reflect.

Getting out to congregations

A leader who can help us re-envision the attributes/abilities listed above. While proclamation of the gospel and embodying that as a leader is absolutely essential, we need a leader who can coach/mentor/walk alongside our leaders (pastors and lay).

Preaching and change

Drawing more rostered leaders to the synod and building dynamic meaningful relationships among them

Large ecumenical vision.

Be visible to the churches. Pastoral care of pastors. Have a compassion for service.

Filling our pastoral vacancies.

Inspiring congregations to find their own mission.

Preaching the gospel.

PROCLAIMING GOSPEL IN WORD AND IN DEED (LEADERSHIP)

Faithful consensus building with a missional-focus and adaptive leadership. The wisdom and gifts needed to follow God well already exist in our Synod, but they need to be nurtured and trusted.

Supporting the development of new and dynamic leadership and communities who are doing new, dynamic ministry, outreach and activism.

The health and well being of leadership within the congregations and ministries of the synod.

A person who is trustworthy, authentic, cares about others, wants what is best for congregations and leaders.

14. Q14: Is there anything else you would like to share with those discerning a potential call as bishop the NWIM Synod?

Be a prophet and a priest. There are many voices in this synod, get to know them. And then give them Jesus.

Trust the Holy Spirit and that this is a call from God for the one whom God is right now preparing. Leaders are tired, yet the world keeps changing at a frantic pace. May God give you a word to bring into this ministry.

It's an overwhelming job if you try to do everything. Pick your shots. Willie Mays never averaged .500 ball. He was still successful.

No

Share your messages with all rather than just those who sign up

Can you help the church recapture the energy of the early church, critical, transformative, and tilting against the windmills that injure and oppress.

I think it's easy to be distracted by the ceremonial and churchwide duties of bishops. It's a tough task of being pastor to pastors, administrator-in-chief, and prodder of the complacent.

Who provides care and counseling of the Bishop? This is not an easy job.

Being relational, building connections, congregational focus (vs ecumenically and/or denominationally).

The Christian church as well as Lutherans are doomed to being cast aside in society if we do not stand for more a political opinion or the present social flavor.

God bless and keep you!

Future of our church is dependent upon meeting people where they are at. We once had the opportunity to baptize a child and a council member had the nerve to say why would they even want to baptize there child at a church they don't attend.

No

Priority should be placed on developing qualified/enthusiastic synod lay leadership and a cohesive team among synod's rostered leaders. The rest will fall in place from there.

God surpasses all understanding. The NWIMS needs light and love to all people, not just those in the church but in our communities, those struggling and looking to find help and guidance whatever that may be and whatever that looks like.

Know you are in our prayers. The congregations want to bring the gospel to all but must have support for the area's growing and those losing members. All disciples need to know the synod office is supporting them to continue God's great works.

However we choose to meet and communicate, it should be with care and depth. Even if the bishop can only "visit" a site digitally or with a phone call, this should happen and connection should be nurtured.

When you do use social media, please make it about the people and the congregations living out the Gospel in their contexts and not just official gathering photos.

It's a hard job. Listen for God's call.

No

Run! Go back to your congregation and promise never to think about being a bishop again! (Just kidding) But seriously, are you sure?

How can we best "unite" the large geographical expanse of this synod? I've lived in both north Idaho, close to the "hub" in Spokane and in south Idaho, far away from the "hub" and seemingly forgotten.

Delegate and use the people in this synod as resources. You are not alone in this work. Tell people what you do, how they can be a part of it, and support you. Consider writing a monthly report just like many of us do for our congregations.

This is a great area to live in if you like wide open skies, beautiful surroundings and a sense of openness. Good people. But be aware that politics are challenging and can cause division within a congregation and the synod, but well worth tackling

Be a radical reformer.

There are many people who love this church and want to be a part of building up the body of Christ As Red Green says, "Keep your stick on the ice." Stay theologically grounded in our baptismal promises.

We need support from the bishop and the staff of synod as well as ELCA. Maybe bringing churchwide services to our area's needy churches would help? We need more support.

I don't think there is a great connection between pastors and congregations and the Synod. The Bishop just doesn't matter much at the local level because a relationship hasn't developed over the past 6 years. Develop relationships!

Treat all congregations and individuals equitably and respond to them. Don't play favorites Connecting personally with the people in the pews is important. They want to feel connected and valued. Feelings of disconnection are a huge problem.

Care for the entirety of the flock that is put within your trust - lay and clergy. Guide all of us through these difficult times politically in living out the oneness of the Body of Christ.

Be willing to travel. Visit congregations even when there is not a problem or a special event.

Come prepared to be the hands and feet of Christ!

It CONTINUES to be a time in society and ELCA where WOMEN are placed in leadership roles! For too long, women have been excluded! ALL churches need to be encouraged to preach a feminist/womanist theology! God is NOT a HE! Eliminate Our "Father"

Our current bishop is very skilled. It is helpful to have a female in this position, and someone who draws people in so we feel more connected

To restate: if we are going to be an inclusive church, it must continue to include those who do not identify in one of the many minorities. Support minorities and the LGBTQIA community but not at the expense of the white culture.

Share the wisdom that you have been given and rely on God to lead you!

I think the bishop should live in Spokane. I don't think managing remotely works very well.

Be prepared for action and follow through.

The new Bishop needs to live in Spokane.

No

Don't do it because you "want the job" or it's easier than being a full time pastor or visible evangelist for Christ in the world.

Be open to the spirit

Ask others to pray for you

Pray, listen to God's calling, and do the right thing not the easy thing.

Thank you for your leadership in listening and putting yourself through the discernment of a bishop call. God's peace to you.

The Global Mission Team wants to have our Bishop visit the UKD in the late fall of 2023. It goes a long way to grow the relationship with our companion synod. Please plan this in your very busy fall!

A bishop cannot be short sighted or reclusive. We have been blessed with good leadership for the existence of the time when we called the synod leader "Bishop". Continue the good work!

Have the ability to be gracious. Take time to spend with the people in the congregations. Listen to what is going on in each community.

What does it mean for you to be a servant leader in this time taking into consideration what was said above?

As we all know we are in a vulnerable time and the next 10 years will be defining moments

Minimize corporate identity.

Be of good cheer; go with God.

Technical competence, ability to listen well, trust building, and faithful leadership off the map will be essential.

Our Synod Bishop needs to be available to travel to congregations and be present for important events in the life of congregations as a symbol of our synod's support and be an administrator for the business of the institution. (synod and churchwide)

The current bishop was fine for the circumstances these past few years, but now we need a bishop who cares about the entire synod, is willing to meet with people and travel. Dedication to the work, and a genuine love for the people is key.