

CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

Purpose of Vitality Program

TO CREATE AND SUPPORT COMMUNITIES OF JESUS THAT NURTURE
LIFE-GIVING RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD, ONE ANOTHER AND THE
COMMUNITY.



ELCA Priorities – Core Values/Guiding Principles

VISION 2020

We value a strongly connected, justice-seeking, and relational church, where there are life-changing relationships with God, one another, and the world. We value the formation, education, development and care of lay leaders and rostered ministers.

Priorities: 1) Leadership Development
2) Renewal/Vitality in congregations

Principles and Practices

Transformation by dwelling in the word

Re-rooting in the community

Community engagement, outreach, listening, and responding.
Accompaniment

Spiritual and Faith Practices

Teaching and promoting dwelling in the word, faith sharing, prayer

Evangelism

Evangelical Outreach, invitation, relationship building, taking church out

Faith Formation

Bible study, Sunday School, multi-generational learning, digital learning

Stewardship

Cultivating generosity, legacy giving, multi-income streams

Contextual Worship

Music reflecting the diversity of ages and styles in the congregation

Leadership Development

Helping lay leaders to grow and sharing leadership with all the baptized

In all of these paying attention to:

- Youth
- Young Adults
- Multicultural Ministries and cross cultural conversations
- Ministry among those in poverty

North/West Lower Michigan Synod Vitality Initiative REVIVE

REVIVE

North/West Lower Michigan Synod—ELCA

Vitality Initiative 2019 and beyond

EVENTS

2
Evangelizing Outreach
Invitational Evangelism
Talking about Jesus
Faith Journeys
Faith Stories
Evangelism to Generations
Intro to Leading Change

4
Faith Formation
Preaching and Listening for
The Gospel
Relational Faith Practices
Spiritual Formation
Contextual Worship
Three Great Listenings

6
Generosity
Stewardship Planning
Telling the Story
Mentoring Missional
Leadership
Saying "Yes"
Keeping it Going - Risk

EVENTS

1
Theme Bible Study
Why Renewal and
Vitality
Building Relationships
One on Ones
Dwelling in the Word
Faith Building
Practices
Prayer Practices

3
Community
Engagement
Reading The
Context
One on Ones -
community
Cross Cultural
Awareness
Poverty and Justice

5
Mission/Vision
Planning
Vitality Survey
Asset Mapping
Assessment Tools
90 Day Plans

Each Event - worship variety; transformation update; dwelling in the Word; holy innovations; coaching, sharing hopes and fears

North/West Lower Michigan Synod - New and Renewing Mission Table—Vitality Team
Rev. David E. Sprang, Assistant to the Bishop, Director of Evangelical Mission
N/W Lower Michigan Synod ELCA
2900 N. Waverly Rd., Lansing, MI 48906
Cell 517-331-8497 revdsprang@gmail.com or davidsprang@mittensynod.org



Congregational Vitality working description:
Communities of Jesus that nurture life changing relationships with God, one another, and the world.
(ELCA—Domestic Mission 2018)

REVIVE

SYNOD MISSION STATEMENT: We are prayerfully participating in Christ's own work of reconciling the world to God's very self by: renewing congregations, empowering leaders, and strengthening connections.

NORTH/WEST Lower Michigan Synod - Vitality Initiative

A two year intensive renewal/vitality learning community to enhance the 6 vital systems of congregational vitality: Community Engagement, Evangelism, Worship, Faith Formation, Generosity, and Leadership.

Elements:

- congregations will send a team of 3 lay persons and the pastor to 6 one day events over 2 years (if at all possible - one lay person should be a youth or young adult)
- events will be held in central location around the synod
- course work will consist of 2 reading assignments between retreats
- each cohort of congregations will be limited to 6
- vitality team will provide congregational coaches
- congregations must:
 - + have a contracted or called pastor
 - + be current with parochial reports to ELCA
 - + be working toward 10% mission support
 - + have a congregational or council vote to commit to the process
 - + submit 2 payments of \$400, one per year to enroll

The remaining costs will be funded by the synod and a generous grant from The Evangelical Lutheran Church - Campaign—Always Being Made New.

First cohort of 7 congregations began in November of 2019. The second group will begin in late Spring of 2020. New trainings will be enrolled each year until every congregation that wants to be trained has completed the course.

ELCA Future Directions 2020



Congregational Vitality

As the ELCA looks into the future, we aspire to have congregations whose faith shines in their relationship with God, each other and their community.

As the ELCA looks ahead to the future, we aspire to have congregations whose faith shines in their relationships with God, each other and their community. Vital congregations experience heightened worship, prayer, study of scripture, and sharing of testimony as they discern the presence and will of God in their midst.

Vital congregations do these three things:

1 STRENGTHEN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- Leadership articulates how God shows up in and through the congregation and its people*
- The congregation has a clear understanding of God's larger mission and members know their purpose in this time and place*
- The congregation can articulate that purpose and create a plan for implementation*

2 NURTURES RELATIONSHIPS

- Relationships among leadership, pastor(s) and staff, and members create a loving community with good communication*
- People work together respectfully through successes and challenges*
- There is a sense of ownership and belonging that drives the commitment and engagement in the mission of the church*

3 A STRONG PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

- The congregation opens its doors to welcome the stranger and goes beyond its doors to share the love of Jesus Christ*
- Creates and nurtures partnerships within the community to make a positive impact on the strength of the community*