



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Northern Great Lakes Synod

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Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Rev. Dale R. Skogman

Bishop Emeritus

1991-1999

Rev. Harry S. Andersen

Bishop Emeritus

1987-1991



BISHOP'S REPORT TO YOUR 2015 ANNUAL MEETING

Greetings in the Name of Jesus:

Your synod has a vision! We are to be a Church of “Worship, Witness, and Welcome.” As we remind ourselves of this truth, the synod is focused like a “laser beam” on these powerful themes in the years 2014-2016. Let’s see how much we know about our synod and our church as you answer the following. Are the following ten “Worship, Witness, Welcome” statements true or false?

1. Worship attendance has risen in most of our congregations since 1988.
True or False
2. About 350 people were baptized by our congregations in 2013.
True or False
3. At least 100 of our youth and adults will attend the 2015 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Detroit next summer.
True or False
4. About thirty congregations in this synod are working on Mission Planning.
True or False
5. Bible Study is out of style in our synod.
True or False
6. Our synod has no American Indian members.
True or False
7. There has been good interest here in our synod in “God’s Work Our Hands” Sunday.
True or False
8. Over half of our congregations have been welcoming people to worship for more than 100 years.
True or False
9. A majority of our congregations have given up on Sunday School.
True or False
10. First Lutheran in Gladstone has sent more of its sons and daughters into ordained ministry than any other congregation in this synod.
True or False

How did you do? Here are the answers: 1. False. Only 6 of our congregations report increases in attendance—76 have decreased! 2. True. 356 baptisms to be exact. 3. True. Easily 100 will go from a dozen congregations. 4. True. 32 congregations say they are working on a plan. 5. False. Sixty nine congregations have regular Bible Study. 6. False. We have almost 100 members who consider themselves to be American Indians. 7. True. Twenty congregations worked on this ELCA project last year and forty more want to this year. 8. True. 9. False. Sixty one of our congregations have Sunday School. 10. True. Eight pastors in the last dozen years have been raised as sons and daughters of First Lutheran in Gladstone!

We are in a time of considerable change in our communities and our churches. In the next decade it will be determined whether our congregations will be positioned to grow again or whether we will decline. Is there a leadership group in your parish that is thinking and planning for the future? How will we face the changes that are confronting us? Are we working to make our churches more attractive to people who have had little connection with the word of God?

We are on quite an adventure! The synod continues to strive to equip your congregation for mission and ministry. You are encouraged to take advantage of the many events, workshops, training and resources available for your congregational renewal. See our website (nglsynod.org) for more details. I would greatly appreciate hearing of your congregation's efforts to embrace the future. Email me at tskrenes@nglsynod.org

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Skrenes

Thomas A. Skrenes, Bishop

