

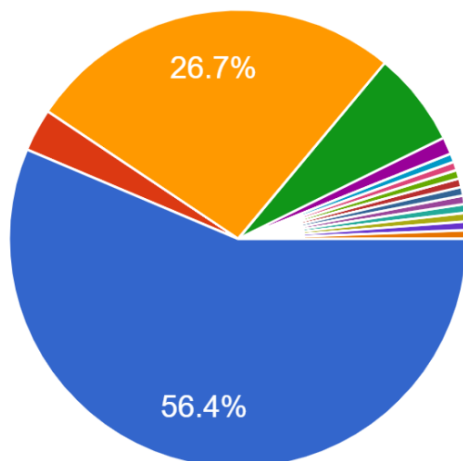
2025 Bishop Transition/Election Survey Results

Demographics

Total Responses: 165

(Based on some of these being group responses more than 165 units responded)

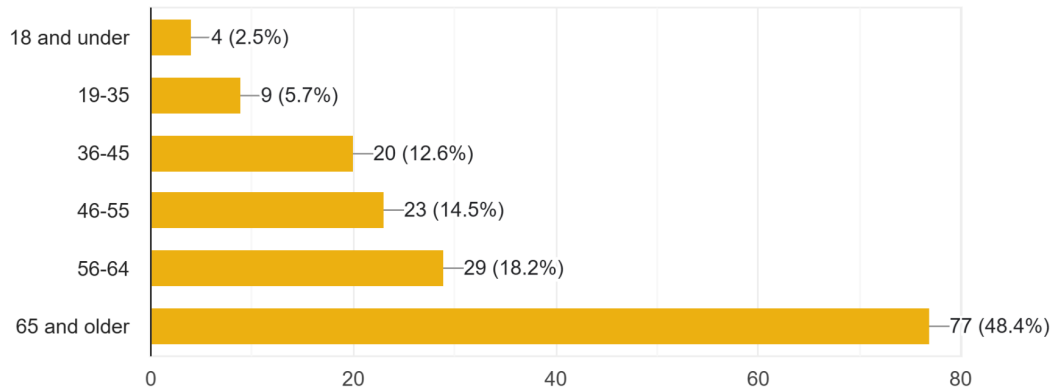
- Individual Lay: 93 (56.4%)
- Rostered Minister - Word and Sacrament 44 (26.7%)
- Rostered Minister - Word and Service: 5 (3%)
- Congregational Council: 11 (6.7%)
- Youth Group: 2 (1.2%)
- Outside Organization: 1 (.6%)
- Candidate for Ministry: 1 (.6%)
- Adult Forum/Sunday School: 1 (.6%)
- Individual Member of a Congregational Council: 1 (.6%)
- LSSNCA: 1 (.6%)
- Metro DC Racial Equity Team: 1 (.6%)
- Church Member: 1 (.6%)
- Church Office Member: 1 (.6%)
- Synod Council Member: 1 (.6%)



- Individual Lay Person
- Individual Rostered Minister of Word a...
- Individual Rostered Minister of Word a...
- Congregational Council
- Youth Group
- Outside Organization
- candidate for ministry
- Adult Forum/Sunday School members
- Individual Member of a Congregation Council
- Lutheran Social Services of the Nation...
- Metro DC Synod Racial Equity Team
- Church member
- Church Office Manager
- Synod Council Member

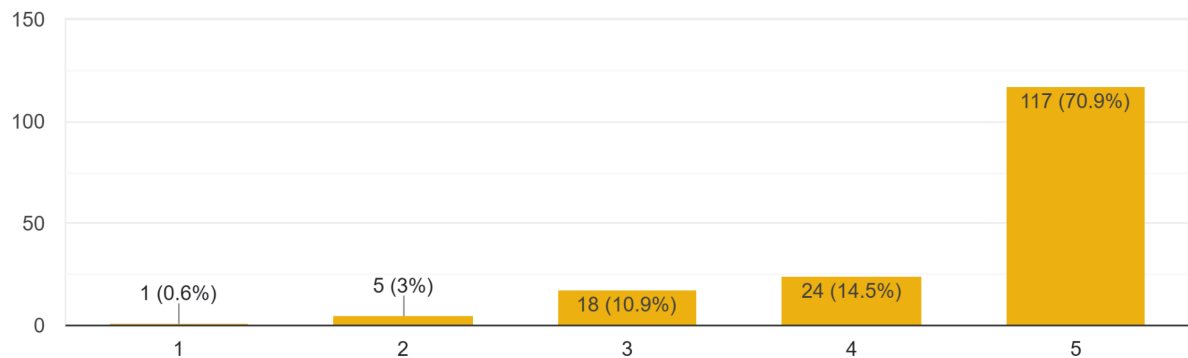
My (Our) Age Range(s):

159 responses



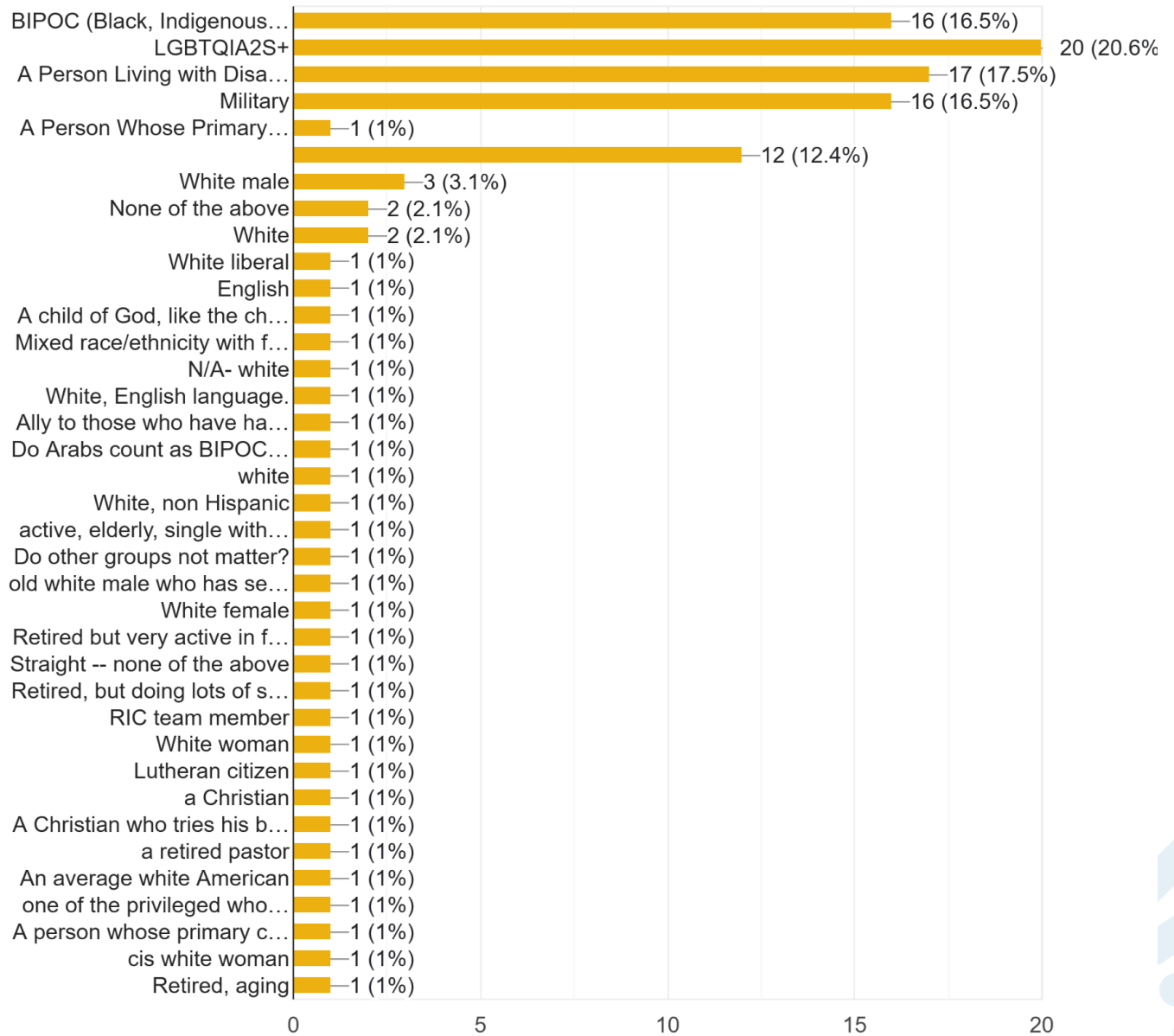
How active are you in your faith community?

165 responses



I consider myself (Choose as many as apply)

97 responses



Survey Questions

Survey Question 1: Which of these do you feel is most important for the Metro D.C. Synod staff, including the Bishop, to prioritize in the coming years?

(Top 4 indicated in bold. Graph broken into two parts)

(Top Graph)

2. Activities and Opportunities for Youth and Family Ministries

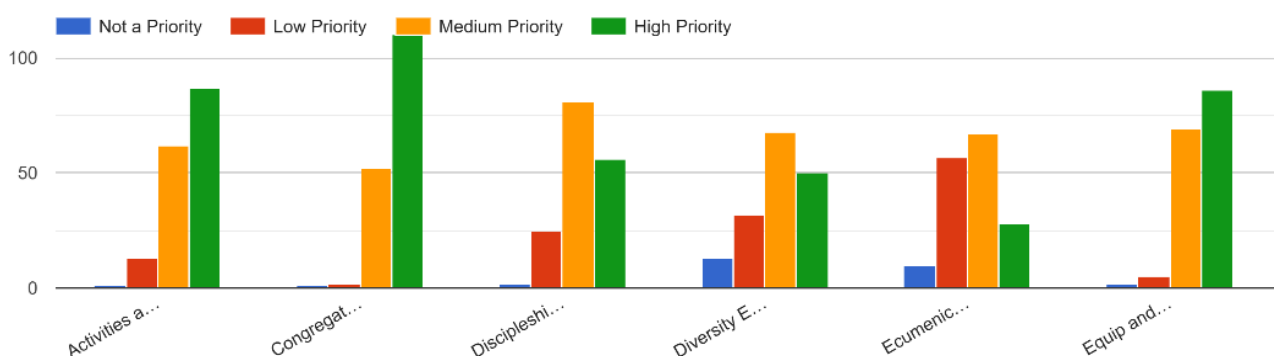
1. Congregational Vitality and Growth

Discipleship and Spiritual Formation/Deepening

Diversity Equity Inclusion and Accessibility (Internal/Inclusive)

Ecumenical and Interfaith Dialogue

3. Equip and develop healthy rostered leaders



(Bottom graph)

4. Empower and nurture vibrant congregational ministries

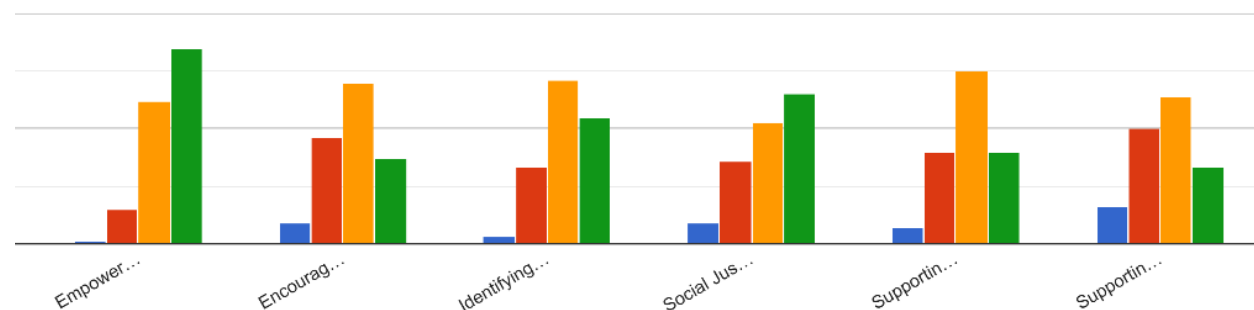
Encourage and model faithful accompaniment

Identifying and Supporting Candidates for Rostered Ministry

Social Justice Advocacy

Supporting Ministries of the ELCA

Supporting Local Charitable Causes

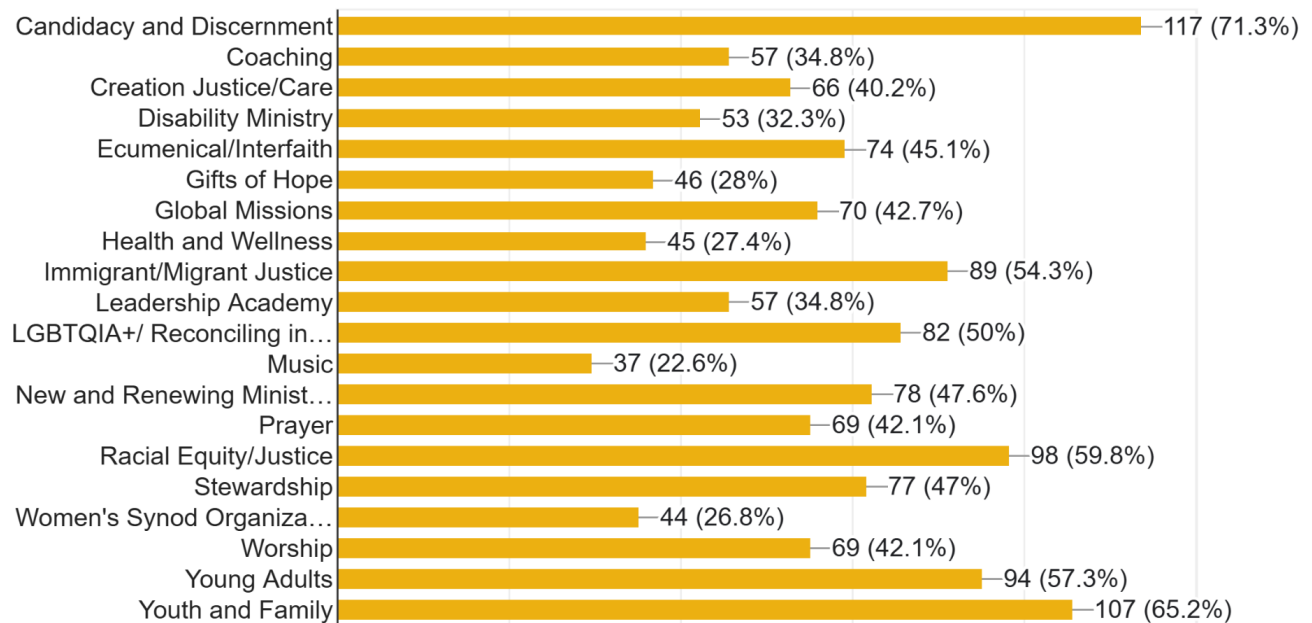


Survey Question 2: Which of the synod ministries listed below do you believe the Office of the Bishop should continue to invest in?

Top 4

1. Candidacy and Discernment 71.3%
2. Youth+Family 65.2%
3. Racial Equity/Justice 59.8%
4. Young Adults 57.3%

164 responses

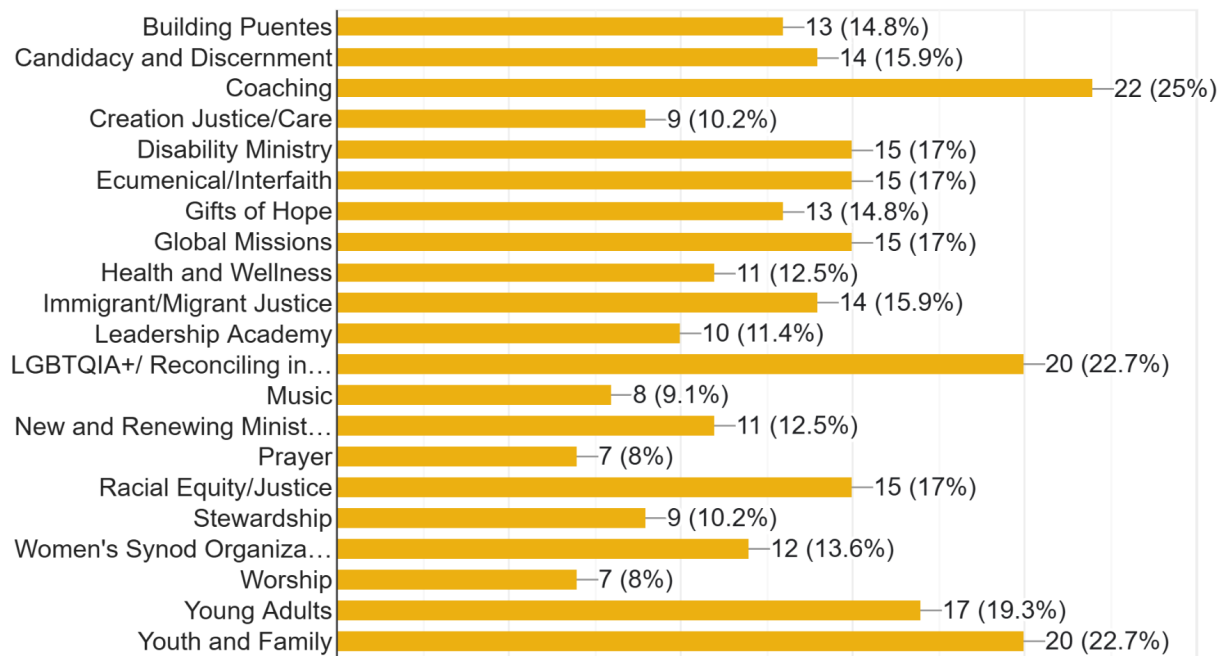


Survey Question 3: Which of the synod ministries listed below do you believe should change?

Top 4

1. Coaching 25%
2. LGBTQIA+/Reconciling in Christ 22.7%
3. Youth and Family 20%
4. Young Adults 19.3%

88 responses



Survey Question 4: How should this (these) change?

Key Themes

- Prioritization: Many respondents emphasized the need to prioritize ministries due to limited resources.
- Communication: Better communication between the synod, congregations, and leaders is essential for promoting ministries and encouraging involvement.
- Youth and Family Ministries: These ministries need more attention, resources, and investment to attract and retain young people.
- Inclusivity and Diversity: Respondents stressed the importance of welcoming and inclusive environments for all people, regardless of background, race, or gender.
- Leadership and Support: Rostered ministers need support, encouragement, and resources to effectively lead their congregations.

Ministry-Specific Suggestions

- Candidacy Process: Simplify and make the process less stressful.
- Ecumenical/Interfaith Relationships: Strengthen partnerships and collaborations.
- Disability Ministry: Increase education, involvement, and accessibility.
- Racial Equity/Justice: Foster inclusive conversations and environments.
- Youth Ministry: Create a youth position in the synod and provide more resources.

Organizational Structure

- Synod's Role: Treat congregations as "franchise operations" and provide support for growth.
- Bishop's Role: Focus on being a minister to ministers and shepherd.

Additional Comments

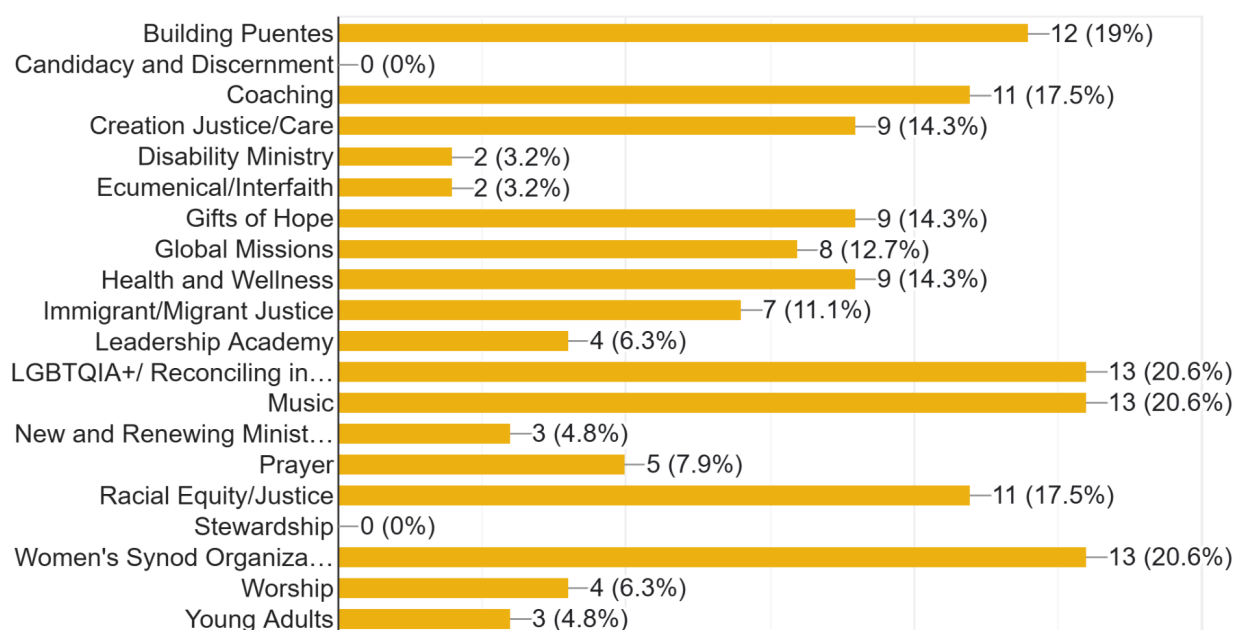
- Evaluate Effectiveness: Assess ministries' impact using data.
- Focus on Congregational Growth: Prioritize growth and presence in the community.
- Survey Congregations: Gather feedback to inform ministry decisions.

Survey Question 5: Which of the synod ministries listed below do you believe should end?

Top 4

1. LGBTQIA+/Reconciling in Christ 20.6%
2. Music 20.6%
3. Women's Synod Organization 20.6%
4. Building Puentes 19%

63 responses



Survey Question 6: Why should this(these) end?

- Redundancy: Duplication of efforts by other organizations or the ELCA.
- Lack of effectiveness: Ministries not producing expected results or having low engagement.
- Limited resources: The synod's limited resources and staff capacity.
- Prioritization: Need to focus on high-impact ministries and prioritize efforts.
- Political divisiveness: Concerns that certain ministries have become too politicized and divisive.
- Unclear outcomes: Uncertainty about the outcomes or effectiveness of certain ministries.
- Shifting focus: Need to focus on current and emerging needs rather than maintaining existing ministries.

Survey Question 7: Are there synod activities or initiatives that you especially believe should start?

Support for Congregations

- Nurturing/supporting seniors, single/widowed, adults without children in household in the Metro DC synod which is not an easy place to live.
- Continued dialogue with the East that was started with the LBW. A return to scripture and scriptural understanding through the Saints that Luther looked to.
- Networking initiatives to create strong ties between congregations/communal ministry incubator
- Helping small parishes figure out whether survival is useful for the ministry of Christ's Church.
- Empowering ethnic congregations
- Changing worship services to acclimate to different cultures
- Training on why congregations fail
- Intercultural Competency
- Shared Resources across congregations

Support for Clergy

- Mentorship Programs for Newly Ordained Clergy
- Fully staffing clergy vacancies with adequate financial support.
- Consideration to retired clergy and their relationship to congregations.
- Incentives and encouragement for text study groups and welcome for new pastors.
- Expectation that they will attend Conference meetings and that Deans will provide integrating events.
- Required trainings that focus on being a non-anxious leader.
- Continue Seasonal Preaching Events
- Leadership/managerial training for all senior pastors - especially administrative

Programs

- Youth and Family
- Young Adults
- Disability ministry
- Advocacy
- PTSD
- Faithful stewardship
- Support of Outdoor ministry
- Coaching Relationships
- Creating Welcoming Churches
- Men's Ministry
- Training in Starting/Building Evangelism Teams
- Training on welcoming

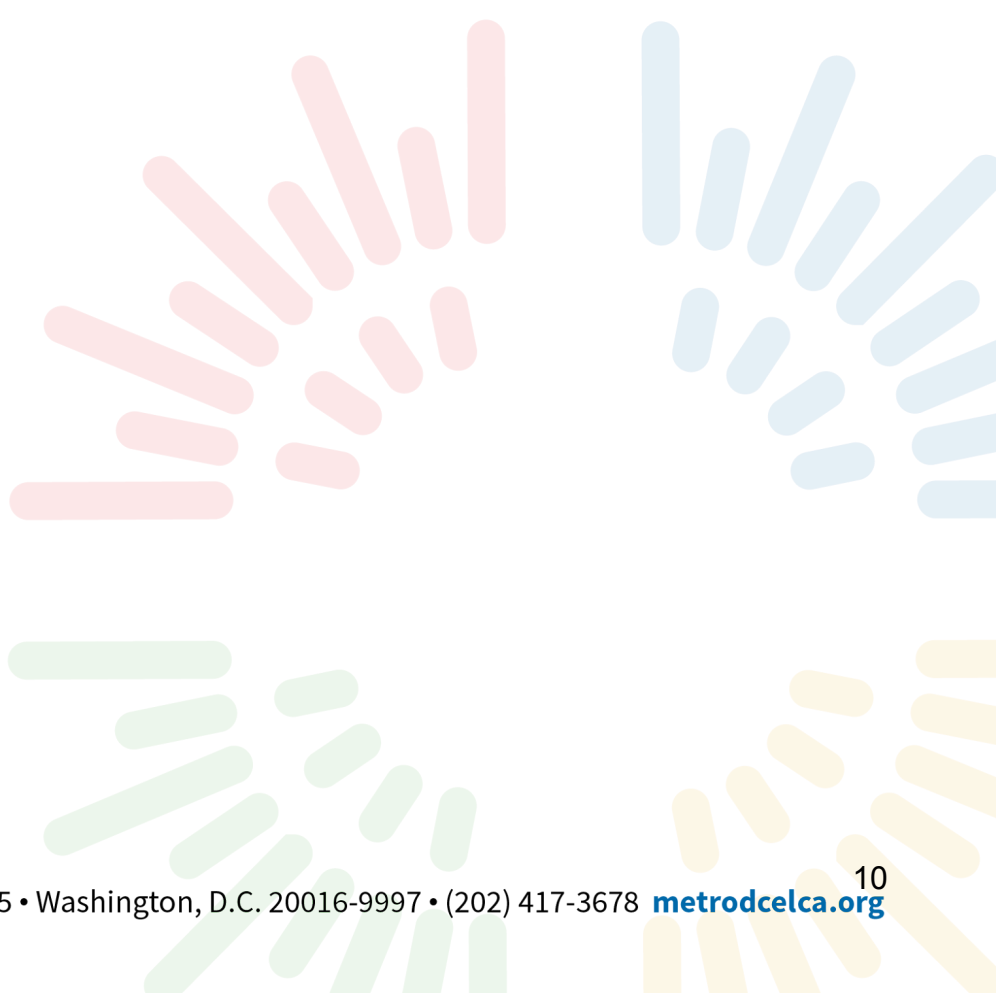
- Health and Wellness Worship
- Homiletics/Theological training for lay persons
- Singles Ministries
- Couples Ministries

Social Justice Engagement

- Homeless Advocacy
- Human/Child Trafficking Awareness and Prevention
- Articulate and live out loud a Christian faith that is not confused with Christian Nationalism.

Ways to Change

- More Virtual Offerings
- Better Communication
- Resistance to starting anything new
- Possibility of joining/merging with neighboring synods
- Bishop should attend conference meetings and dean meetings.
- Financial Conversations - Long Term Viability of the Synod
- Deacon for families with LGBTQIA+ child and Spiritual Help for Individuals



Survey Question 8: Please describe the kind of leadership you would like to see out of the synod office in the coming years. (Examples of Leadership, Theological, Ministry and Wellness competencies can be seen here:

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Workshop-Candidacy_Basics-Handouts12.pdf)

Leadership Qualities

- Adaptive leadership : Ability to adapt to changing circumstances and lead the church forward.
- Strong administration skills : Ability to manage the synod's administrative tasks, budget, and personnel.
- Pastoral care : Ability to care for pastors and rostered leaders.
- Visionary : Ability to have a clear vision for the synod and lead it towards that vision.
- Communication skills : Ability to communicate effectively with pastors, rostered leaders, and congregations.

Theological Qualities

- Theologically strong : Ability to provide theological guidance and leadership.
- Scripturally founded : Ability to interpret scripture and provide guidance based on it.
- Inclusive theology : Ability to provide a theology that is inclusive of all people.

Relational Qualities

- Relationship builder : Ability to build relationships with pastors, rostered leaders, and congregations.
- Visible leadership : Ability to be present and visible in congregations and communities.
- Empathy and compassion : Ability to show empathy and compassion to those in need.

Mission Qualities

- Mission-oriented : Ability to lead the synod in its mission to spread the gospel.
- Evangelism : Ability to lead the synod in evangelism efforts.
- Social justice : Ability to lead the synod in social justice efforts.

Personal Qualities

- Deep faith : Ability to demonstrate a deep faith in God.
- Integrity : Ability to demonstrate integrity in all aspects of life.
- Humility : Ability to demonstrate humility in leadership.

** Additional resource created and provided to accompany this survey*

[Qualities needed in the Bishop of the Metro D.C. Synod - Racial Equity Team](#)

Survey Question 9: In the continued effort of the racial equity work the Synod Council has been engaged in, the bishop will be involved in determining the course for Reparations for Healing and Reconciliation. To repair harm, we have to acknowledge harm. If you had to describe the one to three harms you would want reparations to acknowledge, what would they be?

Historical and systemic injustices, including:

- **Racial Injustice:**
 - Slavery
 - Native American land theft and cultural destruction
 - Discrimination against African Americans, Native Americans, and other people of color
 - Systemic racism within the church and society
- **LGBTQIA+ Injustice:**
 - Discrimination and exclusion
 - Lack of inclusivity and acceptance
- **Economic Injustice:**
 - Generational wealth gap
 - Historical pay inequities
 - Lack of equal financial investment in urban congregations
- **Cultural Injustice:**
 - Erasure of indigenous cultures
 - Whitewashing of church history and imagery
 - Lack of representation and inclusion of diverse cultures and languages
- **Disability Injustice:**
 - Diminishment and exclusion of people with disabilities
 - Lack of accessibility and accommodations

These injustices have resulted in ongoing harm and trauma for marginalized communities, and many respondents emphasize the need for:

- Acknowledgment of harm and apology
- Reparations and restitution
- Education and awareness
- Inclusive and equitable practices
- Support for marginalized communities and congregations

Survey Question 10: What else should the Transition Team know to help guide this process for the synod?

Support of the Team, the Current Administration, and the Leaders to Come

Need for Prayer

Election Based

- ***Need for Full Communication and Understanding of the Election Process***
- ***Preference for a different election identification process***
 - Pre-vetting process and chance for people to get to know some possible candidates ahead of time.
 - The vote should keep to an ecclesiastical ballot, with preparation ahead of time for people to really get at the heart of what the synod needs

Incoming Bishop

- ***Support***
 - Mutual Ministry Committee
 - Supportive Synod Council
- ***Needs Specific Understanding of Synod Context***
 - Geographic
 - Political
 - Racial Diversity
 - History
- ***Embodying Principles***
 - Commitment to Biblical Justice
 - Courage to Confront Racism
 - Empathy and Compassion
 - Humility and Willingness for Learning
 - Advocacy for Reconciliation
 - Commitment to Equality and Inclusion
 - Integrity and Accountability
 - Advocacy for Systemic Change
 - Commitment to Prayer and Spiritual Guidance
 - Ability to Inspire Action

Concerns for the Future of the Church

- Politically
- Financially
- Christian Nationalism
- Need for empowerment of others beyond synod staff to engage the work
- Develop and support racial, sexual, class diversity of leaders

Survey Question 11: What else do you want to see out of the next elected bishop that wasn't addressed?

Leadership Qualities

- Strong administrative skills: Effective management and organization.
- Deep theological insight: A strong understanding of Christian teachings and values.
- Courage, hope, and humility: Essential personal qualities for a bishop.

Congregational Focus

- Congregational needs: Prioritizing the needs of local churches.
- Community-based work: Engaging with communities and supporting local initiatives.
- Growing congregations: Fostering growth and development within churches.

Collaboration and Communication

- Collaboration between congregations: Encouraging cooperation and sharing of resources.
- Effective communication: Regularly updating congregations and being responsive to their needs.
- Transparency: Keeping congregations informed about the bishop's and staff's activities.

Social Justice and Inclusion

- Combating racism: Actively working against racism within the Synod and broader community.
- Inclusivity: Embracing diversity and promoting equal opportunities for all.
- Disability awareness: Supporting congregations in considering the needs of people with disabilities.

Personal Characteristics

- Strong sense of self: Confidence and self-awareness in leadership.
- Energy and enthusiasm: A passionate and motivated approach to ministry.
- Christ-centered: A commitment to living out Christian values in reality.