



Thank you for taking the time to learn about the ministry of Region 5 as you prepare for and engage in the business of your synod assembly. This synod joins with eleven other synods in Wisconsin, Upper Michigan, Iowa, and Illinois to form Region 5: one of the 9 regions across the ELCA.

As a region, your synod bishop, staff, and other leaders gather with their colleagues throughout the year. These gatherings are a way for them to support and pray with one another; and to share their ideas, experience and expertise with one another to faithfully minister in your synod. The twelve bishops, along with the regional candidacy manager, make up a regional steering committee. Their collegiality is important in establishing great working partnerships for years to come.

The Region 5 steering committee affirmed in 2023 to work together to provide a 3 year cycle of professional ethics education-aka Boundaries Education. This 3 year cycle began in 2024 with a basic professional boundaries education event for rostered ministers and synod authorized lay leaders. Approximately 1,000 rostered ministers gathering at over 40 locations across the region engaged in this day of worship and learning. In 2025, we will focus on gender justice for our shared learning day, and the third focused topic in this rotation is racial justice, slated for 2026.

Region 5 continues to gather bishops and staff in the region on an annual basis for shared support, learning, worship and fellowship. In 2024, we gathered in Madison, WI for resource sharing and collaborations for mobility, holy closure conversations, leadership support of licensed lay leaders and synod authorized ministers, first call placement, and more. As candidacy and leadership manager for region 5, most of my time is spent working alongside synod candidacy committees. "Candidacy" is the term used to describe our process of forming and preparing people to serve as a pastor or deacon in the ELCA. Ministry also includes training for new candidacy staff and volunteer committee members in your synod.

As a region, we also share in the care of archival records. Region 5 archives are housed at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. Our archivist, Sue Dodd, collects records of and responds to inquiries concerning synods, deceased rostered personnel, and dissolved congregations within region 5. This work both preserves institutional records and documents the historical record of the institution within the context of the larger world. As congregations in the region make decisions to close, Sue is a resource to you in determining what records to save and how to transfer them to the archives. Thank you for your synod's participation in this shared ministry and for the privilege to serve among you.

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