



## “Juntos en Misión/Together in Mission”

**Report to the Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana  
Synod Assembly April 19-20, 2024**

**Director for Evangelical Mission Rev. Irma Bañales**

**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.

### **NTNL Mission**

To raise up leaders who can model Christian discipleship, preach the Law and the Gospel, develop and grow communities of faith, work for justice, and welcome all to the table of grace.

### **Leadership**

Leaders are essential to the mission of the Gospel. NT-NL is committed to developing leaders of all ages to serve, proclaim good news, and work for justice. This includes leaders in local congregations, as well as rostered leaders in the ELCA.

**Grateful:** DEM Sabbatical June-August 2023

Visited three amazing places: Osage Forest of Peace Center, Sand Springs, OK,  
Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale AZ and The Camino pilgrimage, Spain. (115 km=71 miles)

- A) Self-Renew through worship, prayer, rest, and fellowship.
- B) Learn ways to interpret ministry context and adapt to changing ministry environment.
- C) Gain wisdom to better serve and accompany colleagues around a variety of ways of practicing spirituality.
- D) Practicing the spiritual disciplines takes time and effort but the result is that we open ourselves up to the work of the Holy Spirit and tend to the spiritual dimension of our lives.

### **Congregational Vitality Accompany:**

- + Central Lutheran Church, Dallas TX.
- + Community of Hope Lutheran Church, Ft Worth.
- + Immanuel Lutheran Church, Killeen TX
- + Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Granbury TX.
- + First Sagrada Familia Lutheran Church, Garland TX
- + First United Lutheran Church, Dallas TX
- + Santa Maria de Guadalupe Lutheran Church, Irving TX
- + Saint Stephen Lutheran Church, Shreveport LA.

### **New Starts:**

- + New Ministry Adviento, Arlington TX. SAWL: Connie Ortega
- + The Table Gathering, Frisco TX. Rev Adam Stockton
- + New Ministry Latinx Young Adult Ministry: PLM Angela Alarcon & Lupita Escamilla

### **Transitional New Starts:**

- + Ecumenical New Start: kin-dom community, McKinney TX Rev. Pepa Paniagua Grace Presbyterian (PUSA), ELCA and United Methodist Church.  
The ELCA and NTNL ended their partnership on Feb 1, 2024.
- + Church of the Damascus Road, Weather Fort TX.
- + Umoja International Chapel joined Community of Hope Lutheran church, Ft Worth.  
Becoming one church with two expressions.

### **Leadership Formation: Trainings & Events**

- + Sep 21-23: DEM attended Women of the ELCA Gathering, Phoenix Arizona.
- + Sep 23-24: Latina Conference:  
Annual Couples Retreat. Thanks to the grant received from MEF! Jelly Stone, Burleson TX
- + October 11-14 Mission Developers & Redevelopers training Chicago IL.  
Rev Tom Schwolert & Rev Mallory Morris
- + October 26-Nov 3, 2023. Emerging Group Chiapas Mexico  
Experience sustainability with rural communities.
- + November 15, Mission Developers and Redevelopers Lunch Gathering. Synod Office
- + February 23-24, 2024 Spanish Parish Lay Ministers and Students Formation Retreat 26 participants  
Saint Raphael Retreat Center, Dallas. Thanks to MEF and Latina Conference!

### **ELCA Partnership:**

- + ELCA Directors for Evangelical Mission in person Gathering & Monthly meetings.
- + SOLI Board: Stewardship of Life Institute.  
Provides grants to synods or institutions with new strategies specially to first call pastors.
- + ELCA Evangelism Working Group
- + ELCA Mission Developers Training Planning Team:  
equipping and training leaders for new ministries. English and Spanish.
- + ELCA Candidacy Working Group: 2022-2025  
*Recognizing that candidacy is a process of accompaniment and ongoing discernment that forms and prepares rostered ministers for public leadership:*  
  
The candidacy leadership development working group will adapt the candidacy process of the ELCA, to serve the needs of the current and future church.

## **NTNL Vitality & Innovation:**

+ NTNL Cohort ELCA Congregations Lead Initiative 2024 partner Synod. (February-August)

The Congregations Lead Initiative seeks to unleash and harness the collective genius of congregations to discover new and useful ministry innovations for the sake of this world that God so loves. It's a six-month program virtual learning, networking doing innovation work.

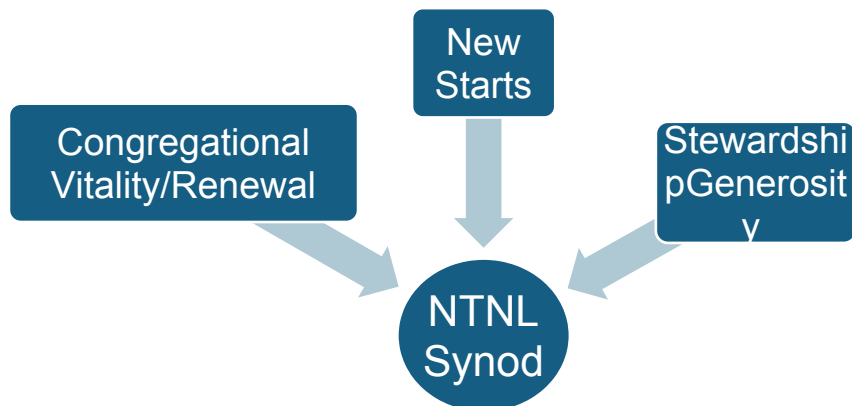
1. Central, Dallas=====Rev. Veronika Czutor
  2. Community of Hope, Fort Worth TX===== Rev. Nicholas Chove
  3. Emmanuel, Granbury TX===== Rev. Dan Weichart
  4. Hope, Springtown TX=====Rev. Gaylene Chrystie (Disciples of Christ)
  5. St Matthew's, Fort Worth TX===== Rev. Lesley Radius & Trenton Ormsbee-Hale
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## **+ Introducing the new DEM ADVISORY TEAM:**

Purpose: To journey with God's Spirit, and congregations, seeking God's guidance for mission in the world. (Mark 4:26-34; Romans 12:1-2)

**Co-chairs: Lesley Radius & Austin Nickels.**

**Alicia Thompson-Summers, Camille McCullough, Jeff Borgwardt, and Moises Carrasquillo**



## **+ Coming up Events:**

- Spiritual Feast Retreat
- Building a Culture of Generosity
- Evangelism workshops/trainings.