



Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Office of the Bishop

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At our 2025 NT-NL Assembly in Lubbock, TX the following resolution was passed...

“The Eastern Conference of the NTNL Synod, realizing the challenges and opportunities within our synod, puts forth the following resolution:

Whereas a number of NT-NL Synod congregations have closed since 2010;

Whereas these congregations have entrusted their financial dollars to the NT-NL Synod, with a promise new ministry in the future;

Whereas we believe that the NT-NL Synod territory is growing numerically, and the Holy Spirit fills NT-NL congregations with life and vitality to share the Gospel with our new neighbors;

Be it resolved that the NT-NL Synod will plant at least 4 new congregations and provide funding for a full-time Mission Developer to serve each of these congregations; Be it further resolved that the Synod Council create and present a proposal to the 2026 Synod Assembly with a timeline of when the congregations will be planted, how long the Synod will provide funding for a mission developer, and how the work of planting those congregations will be accomplished.”

Summary Response: The synod council and synod staff has engaged this work dutifully since last April’s assembly. This has included conversations about our history with mission starts, learning from other synods and Churchwide, and assessing the synod’s capacity. In this learning and conversation we have come to more fully recognize the challenges in planting congregations with funding for staff, property, and other expenses. Additionally we have learned that missions starts today will come in a variety of forms. This learning about the changing landscape of planting new mission and ministries has been essential work and from it we will move forward. At this assembly we will solicit feedback from the synod, at our fall council meeting we will look at concrete ways to identify what are our new start foci, and by assembly 2027 we will report on this work.

Who We Have Learned From: The NT-NL leadership has been in conversation with a multitude of communities across the ELCA and our ecumenical colleagues to learn and receive best practices. Some of these are...

- Various ELCA Synods, particularly Delaware-Maryland, St. Paul, New England, NW Wash, Rocky Mountain and others.
- Churchwide Innovation Lab and CCL home area.
- NT-NL leaders who have participate in mission planting.
- Ecumenical partners both on the judicatory and congregational level. Utilizing current NT-NL pastor relationships within our own context.
- Congregational leaders in NT-NL in areas of potential growth. Discussing how those congregations might support a new start(s). Prayer being the first step.
- Local officials and realty groups. Understanding the market for properties and the trends in congregational property sales and purchases.

– Together In Mission

– Juntos En Mision

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