*The survey was open for seven weeks, running from Jan. 28 until Mar. 15. Below is a detailed summary of the responses. This was not a scientific survey, and the responses are not necessarily reflective of the synod at-large. We can only say with certainty that these responses reflect the views of the respondents at the time the survey was administered. Because many of the questions were open-ended a degree of subjective judgement was required to interpret meaning behind words and categorize responses based on likeness. Still, the Transition Task Force believes the information obtained can be helpful to synod assembly delegates and potential nominees for bishop as they discern the future of the synod’s leadership before the 2019 Synod Assembly.*

**Q1: Are you responding to this survey as a rostered minister, as a congregation, or as a youth group?**

**We received 76 total responses**.  Of those, **53 (69.7%) are from rostered ministers of word & sacrament**, nine are from congregations, seven are from rostered ministers of word & service, four are from youth groups, and three responses came from individuals (one youth who does not belong to a youth group, one congregation council member, and one who identified as “parishioner.”).

**Q2. Among the following areas of Synod life, please identify which the Synod staff, including the Bishop, should prioritize in the coming years. (Choose no more than three).**

**"Congregational vitality and growth"** is, by far, the area of synod life survey respondents believe should be prioritized.  It received 62 votes.  Coming in second place was "continuing education and professional development of rostered ministers" (27 votes). There was a three-way tie for third place. "Social justice advocacy and participation in movements,” "identifying and supporting candidates for rostered ministry," and "discipleship and spiritual formation/deepening" each got 26 votes. We asked respondents to pick their top three.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Area of Synod Life*** | ***Number of Responses (select three)*** |
| **Congregational vitality and growth** | 62 |
| **Continuing education and professional development of rostered ministers** | 27 |
| **Identifying and supporting candidates for rostered ministry** | 26 |
| **Social justice advocacy and participation in movements** | 26 |
| **Discipleship and spiritual formation/deepening** | 26 |
| Interfaith dialogue | 15 |
| Activities and opportunities for youth and family ministry | 13 |
| Other | 13 |
| Supporting ministries of the ELCA | 6 |
| Supporting local charitable causes | 5 |

Respondents that chose “other” wrote-in the following:

* Lay leader development (*2 responses*)
* Racial equity
* Reconciled in Christ
* Reframing conversations about growth to be more hopeful about what God is doing.
* Creating new ministries
* Social justice advocacy that is not part of movements
* Support for rostered persons in the call process
* Climate change/global warming
* Pastoral support of pastors
* Training for outreach/evangelism
* Work with other ELCA bishops to strengthen our life in the gospel in word and sacrament
* Supporting rostered ministers in the changing environment
* Encouraging and supporting congregations in seeking new ways to bear God’s creative and redeeming Word in the world – newness that grows out of spiritual deepening, that makes congregations more vital, and that engages us in doing justice.

**Q3. Which synod endeavors have been particularly effective? Are there synod activities or initiatives that you especially believe should continue? If so, which one(s)?**

Of the 76 responses, 69 answered our question regarding which synod endeavors they found most effective. **The New Connections campaign** receives by far the most mentions as an activity respondents find effective.  Other mentions include youth activities (such as the triennial gathering), campus ministry, and continuing education/workshops for pastors and lay leaders.

Below is a list of common responses – those that were mentioned at least twice – we received to these questions.

Synod endeavors that have been effective:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Synod Endeavor** | **Number of Mentions** |
| New Connections Campaign | 30 |
| Intentional Impact/Stewardship Workshops | 10 |
| Youth Events (Gathering, Chrysalis, Shekinah) | 9 |
| The Journey | 5 |
| Coaching | 5 |
| Evangelism Events/Workshops | 4 |
| Building Puentes | 4 |
| Public joint worships services (i.e. Reformation Service) | 4 |
| Continuing education opportunities | 3 |
| Social Justice Advocacy | 3 |

**Q4. Are there synod activities or initiatives that you especially believe should change or end? If end, which one(s)? If change, how?**

Forty-six respondents answered this question, and a **plurality wrote "none" or "no."**  There were several non-specific responses that encouraged synod leaders to focus on activities that have a meaningful impact, rather than managing activities that do not. These responses did not cite a particular initiative that should change or end.

Other items listed included:  letting go of the annual Reformation Sunday service at the National Cathedral, changing the way youth ministry is structured (to be less focused on suburban churches), and some respondents suggested specific improvements to the New Connections Campaign. There were a couple responses that said Building Puentes should end, and two respondents suggested broadening the scope of the racial equity team to include other types of discrimination (gender, sexual orientation, class, other religions, etc.). One person – perhaps ironically – said that “outreach to rostered ministers” should end.

Below is a list of common responses – those that were mentioned at least twice – that specifically named a synod activity or endeavor that should change or end.

Synod activities/initiatives that should change or end:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Synod Activity/Initiative** | **Number of Mentions** |
| None – nothing should change/end | 17 |
| Building Puentes/Activities in Puerto Rico | 3 |
| Broaden scope of racial equity team | 2 |
| Reformation Service | 2 |
| Synod Youth Ministry Model | 2 |

**Q5. Please describe the kind of leadership you would like to see out of the synod office in the coming years.**

We have received a wide range of feedback to this question.  Seventy-four respondents answered the question, and most respondents listed three to five qualities. M**any answers mentioned engagement with congregations, "bold" social justice leadership, and forward-looking visionary leadership**. Some respondents said more communication would be helpful and one person said that they would like to know what the synod office is and how it’s organized.

Below are categories of leadership attributes and areas of emphasis that received at least three mentions:

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| --- | --- |
| **Leadership Attribute/Emphasis** | **Number of Mentions** |
| Visible / Engaged with Congregations | 19 |
| Social Justice / Advocacy / Public Voice | 15 |
| Transformational / Visionary / Forward | 13 |
| Discipleship and Congregational Growth | 12 |
| Compassionate / Conflict Mgt. | 8 |
| Honest & Trustworthy | 6 |
| Self Spiritual Care | 5 |
| Pastoral Care & Support (inc. mobility) | 5 |
| Identifying Candidates for Rost. Min. | 3 |
| Solid Preacher & Presider | 3 |
| Paid Synod Youth Ministry Staff | 3 |
| Prof. Devel of Rostered Leaders | 3 |
| Encouraging | 3 |

**Q6. What leadership skills are most necessary for the synod staff, including the Bishop, at this time?**

Seventy-four respondents also answered the question regarding **the leadership skills they believe are most necessary at this time**. The most common traits mentioned related to **visioning, listening, organizational, and communications skills.** Additionally, severalrespondents mentioned **pastoral qualities** such as prayerfulness, preaching skills, and theological competence**.**

Below are categories of responses that were most popular (fiver or more mentions):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leadership Skills Most Important** | **Number of Mentions** |
| Openness to Change / Discernment and Visioning Skills | 18 |
| Listening Skills | 17 |
| Organizational / Administrative / Management Skills | 15 |
| Communications Skills | 15 |
| Spiritual Depth and Pastoral Competence | 15 |
| Emotional Intelligence / Cultural Awareness | 11 |
| Charismatic / Interpersonal Skills | 11 |
| Ethical / Professional / Trustworthy | 11 |
| Compassion / Love | 8 |
| Courage / Risk Taking | 8 |
| Responsive / Decisive | 7 |
| Creativity | 5 |

**Q7. What spiritual and/or personal qualities are particularly important for the synod staff to possess and embody in the years ahead?**

We received 72 responses to our question regarding **the spiritual and personal qualities** that are particularly important for the synod staff in this time.  **The most common responses related to prayerful discernment and love for Christ/the Church.** Other common responses related to compassion, honesty, humility, acceptance of self and others, and possessing a prophetic and inclusive voice.

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| --- | --- |
| **Spiritual/Personal Quality** | **Number of Mentions** |
| Prayer/Discernment/Wisdom | 30 |
| Love/Joy for Church & Sharing Gospel | 18 |
| Compassion & Kindness | 15 |
| Genuine/Honest/Professional | 11 |
| Humble/Servant | 9 |
| Open & Accepting of Self and Others | 9 |
| Prophetic & Inclusive | 9 |
| Passionate/Outgoing | 8 |
| Communication | 8 |
| Listen | 7 |
| Intelligent & Knowledgeable about Church history and theology | 7 |
| Cultural, Context, and Self-Awareness | 7 |
| Empower/Delegate to Others | 4 |
| Hope | 4 |
| Curiosity / Lifelong Learner | 4 |
| Courageous | 3 |
| Challenges the church / Serves as a role model | 3 |
| Visionary | 3 |
| Sense of Humor | 2 |
| Generous | 2 |