NEW JERSEY DISTRICT

Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025

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The New Jersey District will motivate, educate, equip, and care for pastors and congregations so that they may be healthy, connecting people to Jesus.

STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC TARGETS AND GOALS TO DEVELOP NEW MINISTRIES, RESOURCES, AND PROGRAMS.

HEALTHY WORKERS

Developing, equipping, and caring for our church workers.

"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." - Luke 10:2

"We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves." - 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

The New Jersey District will expand the support of current workers while curating a culture of respect and implementing programs that encourage and engage new workers. Workers will be valued and cared for as the gifts of God they are. In turn, healthy workers will be a blessing to their congregations.

PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE PROGRAM LAUNCH

We are inviting every NJD congregation to form a Pastoral Care committee to support their pastors' spiritual and physical health. The district will provide a process for creating the committee and resources for the committee and pastor. We hope this program will help congregations support their pastors and keep them well in body and soul.

ESTABLISH PASTORAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Healthy workers and healthy pastors require continual support, development, education, and prayer. The NJ District Pastoral Leadership Program will equip and retain pastors for the specific ministries needed in the diverse landscape of the New Jersey mission field.

NJD SET APART TO SERVE

Set Apart to Serve is an LCMS initiative to recruit church workers. The New Jersey District will participate in this national project and encourage our district's members to enter church work as pastors, deaconesses, teachers, DCEs, DCOs, music directors, and missionaries.

HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS

Supporting and encouraging faithful, active congregations.

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." - Hebrews 10:24-25

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."
- Acts 2:42

The New Jersey District will expand its direct congregational support, helping one another sustain healthy congregations that engage in the Word and live out varied Gospel-centered ministries according to God's will. Congregations will develop and expand ministry plans, adopt the healthy characteristics of congregational life, and love one another in Christ.

LAUNCH NJDU GRADUATE CLASSES - SEMINARS

New Jersey District University (NJDU) provides a platform for education, collaboration, and encouragement for the congregations of the New Jersey District in organizing and implementing their various ministries. It assists congregations in better planning their ministries with support from sister congregations and the district in carrying out their mission and ministries among their people and communities.

PUBLISH MASTER GUIDE TO CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH

The New Jersey District helps congregations become and remain healthy. To assist, we will develop a master guide to congregational health, drawing on the ideas, ministries, and programs from around the church. This guide will provide resources for New Jersey congregations to help them fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18) in their community.

VACANCY - CALL PROCESS PROGRAM

The district will launch a new vacancy-call process program. This will assist congregations with documenting their present ministry plan, exploring future ministry opportunities, and understanding their financial situation related to calling a pastor. It will also provide options for shared ministries with sister congregations during the vacancy and beyond. Finally, it will assist the congregation in securing pastoral care and leadership during the vacancy.

LAY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The New Jersey District will expand its education programs to include more lay leadership positions. Through the New Jersey District University Graduate Classes, an expanded Lay Deacon program, and the Specific Ministry Pastor program, opportunities will be offered to help lay people grow in the knowledge of the Lord and to serve Him and His people. Congregations will be encouraged to connect current, newly elected, and potential future leaders to the various education tracks and position-specific cohorts.

MULTI-ETHNIC MINISTRY

Developing and supporting diverse ministries to engage our communities.

""Therefore go and make disciples of all nations" - Matthew 28:19

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest.." - Isaiah 9:2-3

The New Jersey District, located amidst one of the world's most diverse populations, will work to reach neighbors across linguistic and cultural boundaries for the sake of the Gospel. We will launch new ethnic congregations, support current and new ethnic ministries in congregations, work to integrate ethnic ministries into established congregations, and develop pastoral and lay multi-ethnic leaders.

TWO IN EVERY ONE

To multiply ethnic ministries in NJ, each of the six NJ District Circuits will begin or re-start at least two new ethnic ministries within the three-year convention cycle. Congregations may work independently or together with other congregations to establish these ministries. The district will create a resource guide for circuits, giving examples and implementation protocols gleaned from different districts of the Synod.

TWO CONGREGATIONS EXPAND TO MULTI-ETHNIC MINISTRY

Building upon the "Two in Every One" resources and experiences, two congregations will expand to include worship services and related ministries in a language other than English. This multi-ethnic and multi-lingual congregation will continue to operate as one parish gathered by God to serve their New Jersey community.

PLANT TWO CONGREGATIONS

In response to New Jersey's ethnic diversity, the District, in partnership with congregations, will start two new ethnic congregations within the convention cycle. Following the Holy Spirit's lead and utilizing synod partnerships, these two new congregations will expand our Gospel outreach to our New Jersey neighbors.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

Participate

The ministries, programs, and resources presented in the booklet are for you, the people and congregations of the New Jersey District. We invite you to participate, use district services, attend events, and encourage others to join. If you have needs that are not addressed by the district today, please let us know, and we will work to support you.

We are a stronger district when we all participate, work, and support one another. Your involvement can make a difference in your sister congregations and open up new ministry expansion and collaboration opportunities.

Give

Congregation and individual financial contributions make district services available to all and allow for new and expanding ministries. If your congregation does not currently contribute to district operations, please add it to your budget. Even a small commitment, together with all congregations, will allow us to continue our work.

We will rely on individual support as our district mission work expands, especially multi-ethnic ministries. Please consider becoming a regular mission fund donor, sharing our strategic goals with others, and hosting mission Sundays at your congregation.

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