



THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

# Minnesota South District

*Cultivating leaders intentionally engaged in the mission of God*

## Mission Formation Resources and Processes

*A menu of resources for leaders to more  
intentionally engage in the mission of God*

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# Mission Formation Resources

Tools, events, and processes to help leaders intentionally engage in the mission of God

## The Lutheran Church Extension Fund

Leader: The Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF)

### Demographic Study

Description: An in-depth, demographic analysis of community needs and opportunities in your neighborhood. The search can be tailored by providing the LCEF Vice President your locally unique geographical parameters. An on-site report can be given to your local leaders with direction on how to begin new ministries in your community.

Cost: A service provided free to LCMS congregations by LCEF

Length: One or two meetings depending on the depth of analysis

### VisionPath

Description: LCEF's *VisionPath* helps you discover your ministry's unique place in God's mission. The *VisionPath* experience provides clarity in ministry passion, alignment in ministry purpose and action in ministry processes that make known the love of Christ within church and community. Clarity, alignment and action are the three modules by which we measure the effectiveness of *VisionPath*.

Cost: There are three separate modules. The cost of each *VisionPath* module is \$1,900, which includes all expenses for one-on-one consultation sessions, the onsite impact event, and ministry support services.

Time Commitment: Each module is designed to take no longer than four months.

More info on demographic studies and *VisionPath*: Go to [www.LCEF.org](http://www.LCEF.org) or contact MNS LCEF Vice President Kai Larson at 952-223-2163 or [kai.Larson@lcef.org](mailto:kai.Larson@lcef.org)

## Re:Vitality

Leader: The LCMS Office of National Mission

Description: Re:Vitality guides congregations in identifying and implementing actions that increase vitality and sustainability by becoming more effective in inviting, welcoming, and receiving people from outside of the Church.

Cost: Financial support for meals, travel, and logistics of workshop facilitator typically serving in the MNS District; indirect costs include change in ministry focus and efforts going forward

Time Commitment: Some short term or one day workshops; multiple next steps workshops and ongoing coaching are available depending on the congregation's needs

More info: Go to [lcms.org/revitalization](http://lcms.org/revitalization) for a full menu of training options OR contact Phil Johnson

## Transforming Churches Network (TCN) *Seasons of Discovery*

Leader: TCN is a recognized service organization (RSO) of the LCMS and a supported partner of the MNS District.

Description: *Seasons of Discovery* is a step-wise church transformation process delivered in four seasons over two or more years that helps your church begin to engage your community with the Gospel of Jesus

Cost: The main cost is financial support for ministry coach who facilitates the learning process and walks alongside the congregation through each of the four seasons of development. A coaching covenant typically asks for \$1,200 per year, with partial scholarships available from the MNS District.

Time Commitment: One-year renewable covenant, up to two years total

More Information: Visit [transformingchurchesnetwork.org/seasonsofdiscovery](http://transformingchurchesnetwork.org/seasonsofdiscovery) or contact Phil Johnson

## Lutheran Hour Ministries

Leader: Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM)

Description: LHM provides short- and long-term resources such as Bible studies, witness training, free webinars, and much more. Resources may be video-based, web-based, self-directed, or include LHM-trained leaders.

Cost: Thanks to over 100,000 donors annually to LHM, their Bible studies, webinars, and material resources are free or available to the local congregation at a minimal cost.

### LHM Mission U Witness Training

Description: LHM also offers six different all-day witness skill-training workshops in their Mission U.

Cost of Mission U workshops: \$600 per workshop. Most churches charge a registration fee of \$10-\$20 per person to offset the cost. The MNS District will provide up to a \$200 grant for each of the workshops that were hosted if one church hosts at least four sessions within two years.

Time Commitment: Varies from a one time event to two years

More info: visit [lhm.org](http://lhm.org) and click on "News and Resources"

## Mission Primer Learning Community

Leader: MNS District

Description: This learning community is a gathering of 3-6 area pastors who are interested in meeting with other LCMS pastors to study and discuss their engagement with the mission of God. This group, led by a district-trained facilitator, processes various readings especially focused on outreach, facilitates discussions about how to carry out God's plan for their church, and encourages new activities and strategies in outreach.

Cost: \$300. \$150 is refunded if the participant fully participates in the activities and meetings of the group.

Time Commitment: 6-9 months

More info: Contact Phil Johnson to see if a group may be an option in your area.

## LINC Twin Cities (Lutheran Inner City Network Coalition)

Leader: LINC Twin Cities (an RSO of the LCMS)

Description: LINC TC is an organization that works to restore communities to Christ. They do this by training disciples of Jesus who make disciples, plant new churches and work to transform their own communities through the power of the Gospel lived out in service to their neighbors. LINC focuses on individual training and coaching of congregational leaders as well as cross-cultural ministry consulting services. Go to LINC's website to learn more about how you might partner with them in reaching your neighbors for Christ.

Cost: Varies, depending on initiatives

Time Commitment: One-time events up to several years

More info: Visit [lincwincities.org](http://lincwincities.org)

## Dwelling 1:14

Leader: Rev. Greg Finke, LCMS Pastor

Description: Based on John 1:14, Pastor Finke trains clusters of congregational leaders in creating a discipling culture in your church so that members take the hope of Christ into the community, workplace, and friendships. Greg offers four training options from short-term to two years.

Cost: Varies, depending on options. MNS provides a \$500 grant for churches that successfully complete the process.

Time Commitment: Up to two years

More info: Go to [dwelling114.org](http://dwelling114.org)

### **LCMS Rural Small Town Mission**

Leader: The LCMS Office of National Mission

Description: This arm of Synod's National Mission office organizes national and regional conferences in outreach training for churches in towns less than 15,000. They also provide resources in christian education, evangelism and outreach, stewardship, and other areas. They also provide webinars and other web-based resources for training to help churches accomplish their mission.

Cost: Webinars and other resources are generally free and the conferences vary depending on location and program.

Time Commitment: One time webinars, weekend conferences, and the national conference are intended to be springboards for rural/small town churches to network with others who have similar ministries.

More info: Visit [lcms.org/rural-and-small-town-mission](http://lcms.org/rural-and-small-town-mission)

### **Best Practices for Ministry Conference (BPM)**

Leader: Christ Church Lutheran, Phoenix, AZ (Spring) and St. Peter Lutheran, Columbus, IN (Fall)

Description: These conferences are open to pastors, church workers and lay people who love their church, the unchurched in their community, and the LCMS! Dozens of presenters and plenary speakers provide insights and help in multiple areas of congregational ministry.

Cost: Transportation to the event and housing during the event are the primary costs. There is no registration fee and all meals are provided to participants free of charge. Travel scholarships are available on a limited basis through the MNS District.

Time Commitment: Each conference begins on Thursday at noon and ends on Saturday at noon.

Contact: Visit [cclphoenix.org](http://cclphoenix.org) (February) or [bestpracticesheartland.com](http://bestpracticesheartland.com) (September), or contact Phil Johnson for scholarship information.

### **Natural Church Development (NCD)**

Leader: An NCD trained, LCMS pastor in partnership with the MNS District

Description: Based on a study of over 10,000 churches, German church research expert Christian Schwartz developed a survey that's administered to a church. The survey is followed by two years of focus on one of eight church climate "minimum factors." The eight factors include: Empowering Leadership, Gift-oriented ministry, Passionate spirituality, Functional structures, Inspiring worship, Holistic small groups, Need oriented evangelism and Loving relationships. The coach assists the congregation in striving towards improving the one identified "minimum factor" that seems to help all eight areas improve. At the end of the two years, the congregation is surveyed again and a new "minimum factor" becomes the new focus.

Cost: Survey \$255 (covered by the MNS district); \$400-\$800 coaching stipend (plus mileage) paid by the congregation

Time Commitment: 18-24 months

More info: Contact Phil Johnson

### **Mission Formation Consultation**

Leader: MNS District

Description: This resource is for pastors who have participated in the Mission Primer Learning Community and desire an outside group to provide a weekend consultation for their church. Prior to the visit, the congregation develops a self-study report to help the pastor and church leaders better understand the current institutional strengths and work areas in their church. This is followed by an on-site visit by a team of outreach specialists who conduct focus groups and interviews to validate the self-study, provide training for congregational leaders, and then develop a two-year prescription plan for the congregation to consider.

Cost: \$750 plus mileage for team members

Time Commitment: From the start of the self-study report to the actual on site visit, the process generally takes 4-5 months. The weekend consultation typically begins Friday at noon, and ends with a congregational report on Sunday.

More info: Contact Phil Johnson

## Mission Prescription Learning Community

Leader: MNS District

Description: This resource is available to churches whose voters have adopted the prescription report generated by a Mission Formation Consultation. A two-year Learning Community is formed from within the congregation and a leadership coach is identified to walk alongside of the pastor and congregational leaders through the implementation of the prescriptions adopted by the voters.

Cost: \$2,000 per year, with \$1,000 refunded if a good faith effort is attempted to implement the prescriptions

Time Commitment: Approximately two years

More info: Contact Phil Johnson

## The Mission Formation Process

### What is a mission formation process?

A long term plan that helps congregational leaders more intentionally engage the people of the congregation in the mission of God

### What are the keys to a mission formation process or plan?

A plan that includes:

- A clear focus on the mission of God that is rooted in the Word and the Sacraments
- A clear understanding of your community
- A clear understanding of the congregation's needs, interests, strengths and resources
- A written plan with realistic resources and support
- Someone (or a small group) who provides support, encouragement, accountability and communicates progress along the way