



ELCA Future Directions 2025

Small group discussion for congregations

The following questions are shared as a basis for discussion among your congregation's various leadership, ministry, education, youth and service groups. Feel free to use the discussion guide as is or modify it for the needs of a group. Depending on available time, you may want to discuss all parts in one session or break your discussion into separate meetings. Hopefully, the resulting discussion will help shape a collective understanding of how each of your members and congregational groups play an important role in our future directions.

Pre-meeting assignment

Prior to meeting as a group, ask everyone attending to familiarize themselves with the five goals of Future Directions 2025 detailed in this [document](#).

Overview of the five goals:

1. A thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all.
2. A church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and this church.
3. An inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings.
4. A visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace and reconciliation in communities and around the world.
5. A well-governed, connected and sustainable church.

Meeting – Part 1

Break into groups of two to four and go through each goal answering these questions:

1. In what ways does the work of my group touch the goal as expressed in this particular priority area for action?
2. How can we have a more positive impact on the goal within our group?
 - a. What does that look like within our congregation? Within our synod and churchwide organization?
 - b. What resources would we need?
3. Whom do you hope to collaborate with to make this work a success?
4. What partnerships are critical for long-term success?
5. If we dream big and think about the church in 2025, what could the church look and feel like if we all went above and beyond this goal?

Come back together as a larger group and share your answers with each other.

Meeting – Part 2

Talk as a group about the importance of **leadership** in the ELCA (congregations, synods and churchwide organization) and how your work nurtures and takes part in the growth of our leaders and future leaders.

1. What are we doing now as a team to help grow leadership?
2. Are there things we could be doing to play a bigger role in this important goal?
3. How will strong leadership affect our future work?

Congregational vitality has been raised up, with leadership, as a focus of the future directions. Discuss as a group what this means and how your team is or can be involved.

1. What does a vital congregation look like?
2. How can our team make an impact?
3. How will vital congregations affect our future work?

Next steps

What action(s) toward these goals and priorities can we/I take this week? This month? This year?