

Bishop's Invitation to Generosity

Hope Reimagined: Campaign for Mental Health & Wellness

The past few years have jumbled our sense of purpose, of belonging, of accomplishing all that we feel like we ought to be doing, and even caring in the same way that we used to. The pandemic has affected the way we are able to focus and maintain relationships. We lamented as events and milestones were put off amid isolation in an already lonely culture. It's been a long slog back to the "before times." And to be totally honest, it's been difficult for many of us to envision hope for the future.



This is **why** the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, in its 2022 strategic plan, made it a priority to expand mental health and wellness resources. We listened to numerous people across the 130 congregations in our geography who noted that they wanted support in education, curriculum development, articles, and resources to foster a climate of healthy behavior and remove the stigma of mental illness. In response, our synod staff has been enhanced by the phenomenal addition of Joy Hensel, Synod Minister for Mental Health and Wellness.

Joy serves part-time and is already a critical component to how the synod has increased our capacity to support ministry leaders and congregations. Her role provides such vital ministry because well-being isn't just a Covid or post-Covid thing – it's an on-going caring, compassionate, community thing.

This is **why**, as your bishop, I invite you to support the **Hope Reimagined: Campaign for Mental Health & Wellness**, for the Northeastern Minnesota Synod's **2023 Give to the Max Day**. Every donation made to this year's GiveMN efforts on our synod site, will go directly to support the Mental Health and Wellbeing efforts that Joy Hensel has already, and continues, to develop. I've heard such positive feedback from congregations, youth groups, and leaders who have invited Joy to facilitate conversations, provide presentations, and host community-wide discussions regarding mental health and wellness concerns. Her gentle, yet direct leadership and her enthusiasm for healthy dialogue inspires others to see how naming feelings and emotions, while gaining insight on utilizing tools to move forward, can assist in putting pieces together to see **hope reimagined**.



Join us and Give to the Max for: **Hope Reimagined**

In Christ's peace,

Bishop Amy Odgren

