

# NARRATIVE BUDGET REPORT 2026



SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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# INTRODUCTION



“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To God be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.” — I Peter 4:8–11

The Synod of the Northeast enters 2026 with deep gratitude for the faithful stewardship and bold imagination of our congregations, presbyteries, and ministry partners. Together, we continue to live into God’s call to nurture vitality, confront poverty and injustice, and dismantle the structures of racism that divide us. Your role in this mission is crucial, and we value your partnership.

A narrative budget tells the story of how financial gifts become ministry. Beyond line items and spreadsheets, this document reflects the ways in which your generosity fuels gospel-centered work across our region. It illustrates how contributions entrusted to the Synod are transformed into presbytery and congregational support, leadership development, new expressions of ministry, care for those in transition, and witness to Christ’s reconciling love.

Upon the approval of the new vision, the Synod will embark on the bold mission of living into a new ministry structure and addressing the vital questions of what it means to be a faithful Christian organization today. This mission is crucial, and your support is vital as we navigate this season of transition, calling us not only to careful stewardship but also to courageous imagination—trusting that the Spirit is guiding us into renewed ways of serving Christ and neighbor.

In 2026, we are especially mindful of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. The Synod is aligning its ministries with this renewed vision for mission, ensuring that every resource—financial, human, and spiritual—is directed toward strengthening our shared witness. Your investment makes possible the cultivation of innovative leaders, the growth of resilient faith communities, and the creation of networks of care and collaboration.

As you read through this Narrative Budget, we invite you to see more than numbers. See the stories of congregations revitalized, leaders equipped, and communities transformed, all made possible by your generous contributions. Discover how, together, we embody Christ’s call to love, serve, and proclaim the gospel in the Northeast and beyond.

**Transitional Synod Leader**

*Rev. Dr. SanDawna Gaulman Ashley*



SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

## SYNOD PROCLAMATION

**SPIRIT-LED. TRANSFORMATIVE FAITH.  
BOUNDLESS WELCOME.**

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### Vision

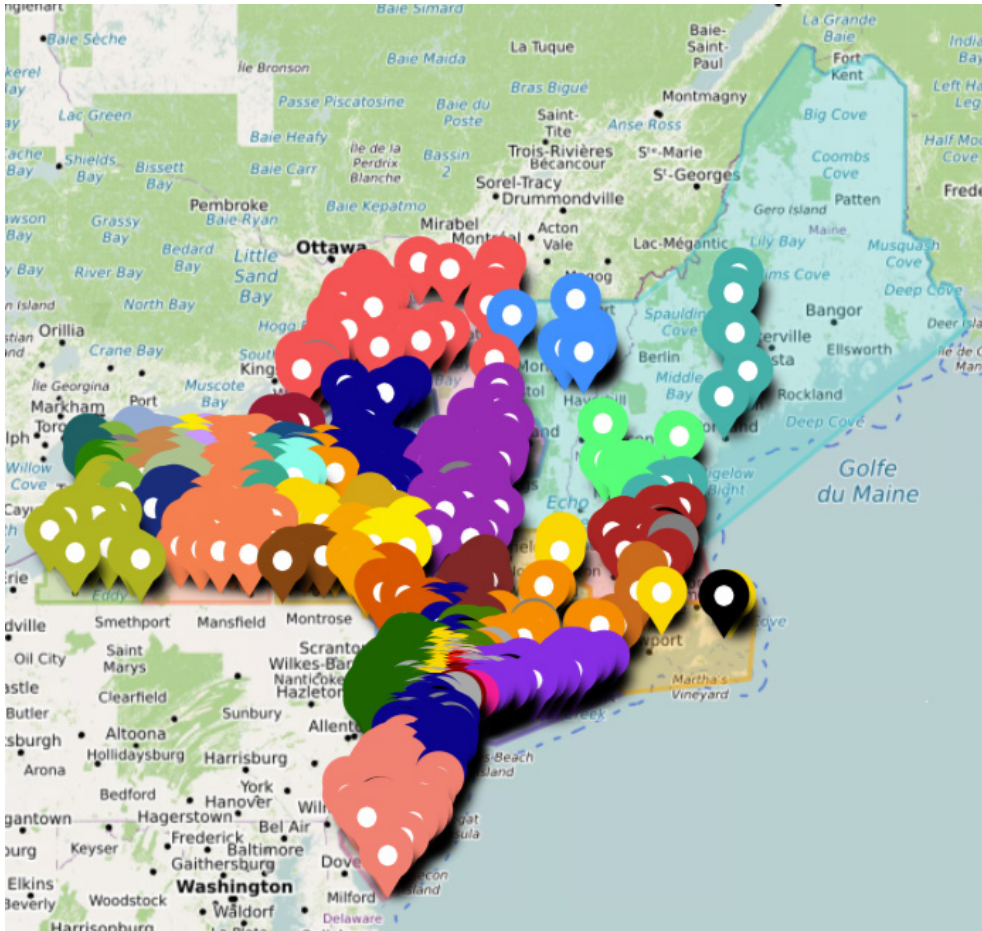
We are the Body of Christ, Spirit-led and faithful, sharing God's blessings through governance, innovation, and justice as we live out the Gospel in a changing world.

### Mission

A grace-filled, connected, and accessible Synod body where presbyteries, congregations, and leaders build trust, share resources, and boldly live Christ's call to justice, equity, and beloved community.

# Our Presbyteries

- Albany
- Boston
- Cayuga-Syracuse
- Coastlands
- Eastern Korean American
- Genesee Valley
- Geneva
- Highlands of New Jersey
- Hudson River
- Long Island
- New York City
- Northeast New Jersey
- Northern New England
- Northern New York
- Southern New England
- Southern New Jersey
- Susquehanna Valley
- Utica
- Western New York



8	19	962
US STATES	Presbyteries	Gospel Communities

# Staffing Structure

## Synod Leader

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The Synod Leader serves as the Chief Executive Officer and Head of Staff for the Synod of the Northeast, providing strategic leadership, spiritual guidance, and administrative oversight. This role is responsible for advancing the Synod's vision, resourcing mid councils, stewarding financial and human resources, maintaining ecumenical partnerships, and representing the Synod at all levels of the denomination. The Synod Leader plays a pivotal role in fostering sustainable ministry practices and deepening collaboration across the region.

## Ecclesiastical Officer/Stated Clerk

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The Stated Clerk serves as the Synod's ecclesiastical officer, parliamentarian, and a resource to the Governance Pillar to expedite the ecclesiastical business of the Synod in a manner that enhances the overall ministry and mission. The Clerk performs the duties of the Stated Clerk in adherence to the responsibilities prescribed in the most recent editions of the Book of Order, Robert's Rules of Order, and the By-laws and Standing Rules of the Synod.

## Manager of Finance

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The Finance Manager provides leadership and coordination for the Synod's financial operations. This position ensures that the Synod's fiscal practices reflect integrity, transparency, and faithful stewardship. Responsibilities include oversight of budgeting, cash flow, investments, loans, employee benefits, fiscal policies, and accounting processes, as well as supervision of the Finance Clerk and management of building operations.

## Mid Council Resident for Programs, Leadership Development and Administration

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The Mid Council Resident for Programs, Leadership Development, and Administration is a two-year, full-time residency that provides an immersive introduction to mid council ministry. This formative experience engages the Resident in a wide range of responsibilities, including governance, administration, program coordination, and relational systems within the life of the Synod. The residency offers meaningful involvement in the Synod's signature initiatives, such as the Robert L. Washington Scholars Program, the Early Ministry Institute, and the Community Organizing Cohort, along with opportunities to assist in developing new programs and partnerships.

## Contract Communication Specialist

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The Communication Specialist is a storyteller who develops and implements communication strategies including media outreach and social media content creation. The role manages external and internal communications, research, and writes content for the website, blogs, reports, and newsletters. Promotes a positive public image and controls the dissemination of information on the Synod's behalf.

# Staffing Structure

## Contract Grants Coordinator

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The Grants Coordinator serves as the Synod's primary connection point for a diverse range of funding initiatives—including Innovation, Campus Ministry, Emerging Gospel Communities, Interfaith and Ecumenical Support, PresbyLangdon, Mary Wallingford, Presbytery Collaboration, and Youth and Young Adult Leadership Grants. Through personalized guidance on eligibility, application development, and budgeting, this ministry ensures that creative and faithful projects across the region receive the support they need to thrive. The role also maintains the Foundant grants management system, ensuring accessibility, transparency, and accountability in how the Synod stewards its shared resources.

## Synod Treasurer

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The Treasurer holds fiduciary responsibility for all funds and securities of the Synod, ensuring the integrity and accountability of its financial life. Working through the Synod's finance office, the Treasurer oversees the maintenance of full and accurate records of all accounts for review by the Synod Assembly, Officers, Synod Leader, and external auditors.

## Funds Development Intern

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This internship provides hands-on experience in nonprofit fundraising, donor engagement, and financial stewardship within a faith-based organization. The intern will collaborate with Synod staff and leadership to research and strengthen resource development strategies that advance the Synod's mission. Responsibilities include researching sustainable funding models and best practices, assisting with donor engagement through communications, appeals, stewardship materials, supporting grant-seeking efforts by identifying funding sources, and preparing background research. The intern will help design systems for tracking and reporting development activities, prepare presentations and reports, and contribute to special projects related to long-term stewardship and mission funding.

## Finance Clerk/Administrative Support

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The Finance Clerk supports the Synod's ministry of stewardship by assisting the Manager of Finance and Synod Leader with accurate recordkeeping, payments, and correspondence for the Wurffel/Sills Scholarship and Interest-Free Student Loan Program. The role also prepares financial documents, provides reception support, and assists with mail, projects, and administrative tasks as needed—ensuring smooth and reliable financial operations that reflect the Synod's commitment to faithful stewardship.

## Office Administrative Clerk

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The Office Administrative Clerk ensures the smooth and efficient daily operations of the Synod. Serving as a welcoming first point of contact, this role responds to inquiries about Synod programs, services, policies, and events, providing timely and accurate information to leaders and partners across the region. The Office Administrative Clerk organizes and schedules meetings, supports communications and document preparation, maintains both digital and physical records, and manages the Synod's mailing database. This ministry of support strengthens the Synod's capacity to serve presbyteries and congregations with clarity, hospitality, and excellence.



SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

# MISSION GRANTING

# Innovation Grants

## 2026 Budget for Innovation Grants | \$140,000

Innovation Grants give ministries permission to dream and take bold risks, from art-based worship to new forms of outreach, embodying holy imagination in action.

**Drumming for the Soul** is an intergenerational ministry that engages hearts and minds through rhythm, healing, and connection. In a world that often pulls us toward division, this program beats to a different drum—one that fosters unity, celebrates diversity, and lifts up inclusion. Participants build authentic relationships grounded in humility and encouragement, discovering together what it means to live more fully as God’s beloved creation. The impact reaches far beyond the circle: strengthening communities, blessing society, and echoing hope into the wider world.

*“The Innovation Grant from the Synod of the Northeast has been a blessing for the First Presbyterian Church of Ossining. Our Drumming for the Soul program continues actively and then awe engaging the Ossining community through rhythms that unite all people despite their origins, traditions or backgrounds. Through these rhythms we are able to glorify God and give thanks to our ancestors for their legacy and love” ~*

**Rev. Jeniffer Rodríguez**

**First Presbyterian Church of Ossining**



# Emerging Gospel Community Grants

## 2026 Budget for Emerging Gospel Community Grants | \$100,000

Emerging Gospel Community Grants support fresh, grassroots expressions of church that gather in homes, gardens, coffee shops, and justice movements, showing that Christ’s love is alive wherever people come together in faith.

**A current grantee, Connect Faith (Transformations)**, is an online Emerging Gospel alternative innovative community where all are welcome to discover comfort, healing, peace, and inspiration. Rooted in music, meditation, and reflection, this community creates sacred space for connection in a world that often feels fragmented. Participants are invited on an inner journey through live therapeutic music sessions woven together with reflective writing, guided meditation, and honest conversation. For those facing the end of life, grieving the loss of a loved one, or carrying the heavy weight of secondary trauma from caregiving, Transformations offers a safe and compassionate place to breathe deeply and be renewed. In this digital sanctuary, the Spirit’s presence is palpable, reminding us that healing and hope can be found wherever people gather—even across the miles.

*“The most profound effect of the emerging gospel community grants from the Synod of the Northeast was to help us fund our online creativity labs in their initial stages. Through these bags gatherings, we were able to engage people in a way that gave them confidence to grow in their faith, explore their spiritual journeys, and in some cases, discover their own call to lead ministries that value and include everybody.”* **Rev. Dr. Debra J.K. Bronkema Director of New Worshiping Initiatives Hudson River Presbytery**

# Youth & Young Adult Leadership Development Grants

## 2026 Budget for Youth & Young Adult Leadership Development Grants | \$40,000

Youth & Young Adult Leadership Development Grants amplify young voices, equipping them with the skills and confidence to guide the church today—not just tomorrow.

**The Leadership Training Program at Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center** is a two-week flagship experience designed to form young leaders who are ready to meet today's challenges with creativity and faith. The program reduces summer learning loss while stretching imagination and encouraging problem-solving through hands-on training. By intentionally setting aside technological devices, participants are free to fully engage in the gift of authentic Christian community. In this environment, friendships deepen, faith takes root, and leadership skills grow strong. The result is lasting impact: generations of young people who return home equipped, inspired, and ready to live as confident disciples and leaders in church and society.

*"This program is critical for leadership development. Through the support of the Synod of the Northeast we enabled young leaders to encounter the living God in the woods and waters of Johnsonburg this summer, as well as impact the broader camp community and their home communities".* **Elise Bates Russel, Executive Director Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center**



# Campus Ministry Grants

## 2026 Budget for Campus Ministry Grants | \$30,000

Campus Ministry Grants meet students in the pivotal college years, offering spaces where faith and life intersect, friendships are formed, and leaders are born.

**The Protestant Chapel Community at the University of Rochester** offers a unique form of campus ministry shaped by compassion, authenticity, and healing. Many students who arrive there carry wounds from spiritual or religious trauma, while others are encountering Christianity for the very first time. This community provides a safe space for faith formation that is Protestant in worship, contemplative in practice, and grounded in integrity. Students are invited to engage with an inherited tradition while also exploring the possibilities of the emergent church, discovering Christ's love in ways that speak to their lived experience. Through worship, reflection, and ethical leadership, the Protestant Chapel Community walks alongside students as they rebuild trust, find belonging, and grow in faith—reminding them that God's grace meets us even in places of doubt and pain.

*"Without the steady support of the Synod, we would not have the means to serve our interfaith neighbors on campus and beyond. For our young scholars, our vulnerable neighbors, for those feeling left out, for the students unsure if they are called beloved — thank you for helping sustain the church yet to come. (And the church right here in our midst!) What a blessing to be held in love by the Synod, and by your prayers."* **Rev. Sam Kinsman Chaplain and Director, University of Rochester's Protestant Chapel Community and Chaplain, RIT's Progressive Chapel Community**



# Coaching Network

## 2026 Budget for Coaching Network Grants | \$10,000

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The Coaching Network is an intentional ministry of the Synod of the Northeast designed to nurture, equip, and sustain leaders across our churches, presbyteries, and communities. Rooted in the belief that healthy leaders build thriving congregations, the Coaching Network provides individualized support and guidance, helping pastors, elders, and ministry leaders grow in resilience, discernment, and effectiveness in their call.

### Purpose

Our Coaching Network is not just a program—it is an investment in leadership and the future of the church. Through one-on-one coaching, group sessions, and continuing education opportunities, we ensure that leaders are not left to navigate ministry challenges alone. By cultivating safe spaces for reflection, accountability, and growth, we strengthen leaders who, in turn, strengthen the body of Christ.

### Narrative Budget Categories

#### 1. Coaching and Training

This covers the costs of training new coaches, providing continuing education for current coaches, and ensuring that our network remains rooted in best practices for ministry coaching.

Impact: Every trained coach represents dozens of ministry leaders who will benefit from sustainable, Christ-centered guidance.

“Through the Coaching Network, I discovered new tools to approach conflict in my congregation with courage and compassion. It’s been transformational—not just for me, but for my church family.”

#### 2. Subsidies for Participants

We are committed to making coaching accessible to all leaders, regardless of financial resources. Many pastors, chaplains, and Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) serve in under-resourced contexts. This scholarship ensures they are able to receive ministerial coaching without financial strain.

Impact: Equitable access ensures that even the most vulnerable congregations have leaders who are supported and encouraged.

“I serve a small congregation with limited means. The subsidy allowed me to participate in coaching when I otherwise couldn’t. My coach helped me navigate burnout and rediscover joy in ministry.”

#### 3. Administration and Coordination

Effective coaching requires careful coordination. The Coaching Network Leadership works closely with the Synod’s Administrative Coordinator to ensure applications are received, reviewed, and resources executed in a timely manner.

Impact: Leaders are matched with the right coaches at the right time, and the network continues to grow in scope and quality.

“I was paired with a coach who understood my context perfectly. The process was seamless and the support I’ve received has been invaluable.”

#### 4. Community Building and Gatherings

Coaching is most powerful when paired with community. This category funds retreats, gatherings, and virtual check-ins that allow coaches and participants to share stories, build mutual support, and deepen connection across the Synod.

Impact: Leaders experience not only personal growth but also a collective spirit of encouragement and collaboration.

“At the Coaching Network retreat, I realized I wasn’t alone in the challenges I face. The community of leaders gave me hope and practical wisdom I could take home.”

The Coaching Network is a ministry of hope and sustainability. The Coaching Network fosters healthier, more resilient leaders who, in turn, strengthen the communities they are called to serve.

# Mediation Network/ Peacemaking

**2026 Budget for Peacemaking | \$5,000**

**2026 Budget for the Mediation Network | \$2,000**

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Across the Synod there exists a cadre of people who were trained in the Mediation process by the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center. They are available to serve as mediators when people in a church or presbytery have a conflict that could benefit from mediation before the issue escalates into something larger and may become a PJC remediation or disciplinary case. The Synod uses Peacemaking funds to support refresher workshops for Mediators as well as for synod events such as racism training or meetings around immigration.

# Racial Ethnic Caucuses

**2026 Budget for the Racial Ethnic Caucuses | \$10,000**

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The Synod of the Northeast's Racial Ethnic Caucuses are vital expressions of our shared commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the body of Christ. These caucuses serve as essential networks of spiritual support, leadership development, and cultural empowerment for clergy and lay leaders across the region.

Funding for the caucuses ensures that historically marginalized voices are not only heard but also empowered to shape the mission and ministry of the Synod. Through gatherings, educational forums, and collaborative initiatives, the caucuses create spaces for healing, advocacy, and mutual learning. They foster community among congregations that share cultural and linguistic identities, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and nurture leaders who bring fresh perspectives to the Church's witness in the world.

The Latino and African American Caucuses have been among the most active in advancing racial justice, equipping emerging leaders, and responding to the unique needs of their communities. The budgeted support for Racial Ethnic Caucuses is a faithful investment in belonging, representation, and the ongoing work of reconciliation within the Synod and beyond.



SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST  
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# STORYTELLING & COMMUNICATION

# Storytelling & Communication

## 2026 Budget for Storytelling & Communication | \$18,500

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In 2026, Storytelling & Communications will equip the Synod of the Northeast to share our renewed vision with clarity, consistency, and care. This budget funds a cohesive brand refresh in our core channels, print and digital campaign materials for the vision process, short-form and long-form video storytelling for social media and congregational use, and a digitized Annual & Narrative Report that captures impact across our region. Every dollar supports faithful communication—accessible, multilingual where needed, and measurable—so that congregations, presbyteries, partners, and donors can see themselves in the Synod’s story and take part in it.

### What These Funds Will Do

#### 1) Newsletter Redesign & New Template System

**Purpose:** Align our email communications with the Synod’s new logo, color palette, and thematic pillars so our core updates feel modern, unified, and accessible.

**Outcomes & metrics:** Clearer visual identity across all emails; reduced production time per send. Improved engagement targets (e.g., higher open and click rates), fewer unsubscribes, growth in subscribers through embedded signups and QR codes at events.

#### 2) Vision Process Brochures & Mailers (Print + Digital)

**Purpose:** Put the new vision process in people’s hands—literally—so congregations and leaders can explore goals, timelines, and ways to participate.

**Outcomes & metrics:** Measurable reach (mail counts) and response (QR scans, page visits, form fills). Consistent message across print, pulpit announcements, and social channels. Increased participation in gatherings and feedback loops tied to the vision process.

#### 3) Recording & Producing Videos for Social Media and Campaign Use

**Purpose:** Tell compelling, shareable stories from across the Synod to invite engagement with the new vision—short enough for social, substantive enough for congregational settings.

**Outcomes & metrics:** Expanded reach and watch time across platforms; increased click-throughs to events, surveys, and resources. Congregations equipped with evergreen clips to show during worship, classes, and meetings. A reusable asset library that reduces future production costs.

#### 4) 2026 Annual Report & Narrative Report (Designed & Digitized)

**Purpose:** Offer a beautiful, data-informed account of the Synod’s ministry and finances that people will actually read, share, and use—grounded in stories and outcomes.

**Outcomes & metrics:** A widely shareable, transparent accounting of impact that supports trust and giving. Clear tie-backs to vision goals and 2027 priorities; easy reuse of visuals in presentations.



SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

# EQUIPPING GOSPEL COMMUNITIES

# Matthew 25 Webinars

**2026 Budget for Matthew 25 Regional Webinar Learning Events | \$4,000**

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## **Matthew 25 Webinars: Equipping the Church for Faithful Witness**

The Synod of the Northeast is committed to resourcing its members through the call of Matthew 25—building congregational vitality, eradicating systemic poverty, and dismantling structural racism. To support this work, the Synod hosts a series of quarterly 75-minute webinars, each focused on one of these pressing areas of discipleship and justice.

These gatherings feature speakers from across the country—authors, practitioners, justice advocates, and faith leaders—who bring deep expertise and diverse perspectives. Each webinar creates space for cross-cultural learning and training, inviting participants to explore how the church can faithfully respond to the urgent needs of our communities. Together, participants discern where the Spirit is leading and identify mission opportunities that address the most critical challenges of our time.

Through these webinars, the Synod provides not just information, but formation—strengthening leaders, equipping congregations, and deepening the church’s witness in the world.

# Inter-Faith/Ecumenical Relationships

**2026 Budget for Inter-Faith/Ecumenical Relationships | \$10,000**

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The Synod of the Northeast continues to invest in building and nurturing Inter-Faith and Ecumenical Relationships as a vital expression of our mission and ministry. These partnerships embody our commitment to Christ’s call to unity, peace, and justice, extending our reach beyond denominational lines and into the broader spiritual and social fabric of our region.

Our budgeted support in this area enables collaboration with diverse faith traditions and ecumenical partners through grants, shared programming, and dialogue initiatives. Recent efforts have included supporting the New Jersey Coalition of Religious Leaders through an Ecumenical and Interfaith Partners Grant, fostering spaces where clergy and lay leaders from various traditions can gather to address pressing social issues such as poverty, racism, and the climate crisis. These investments not only strengthen relationships across denominations and faiths but also amplify our collective witness in the public square.

By cultivating interfaith and ecumenical relationships, the Synod of the Northeast is sowing seeds of reconciliation, understanding, and shared mission. Every dollar invested in this area is a testimony to our belief that the Spirit is at work across boundaries, and that our collective strength as people of faith brings transformation to our communities and our world.

# Early Ministry Institute (EMI)

## 2026 Budget for EMI | \$51,200

The Early Ministry Institute (EMI) is a vital Synod initiative dedicated to the holistic development of early-career clergy, Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs), and Chaplains. The early years of ministry are filled with unique challenges and opportunities. EMI walks alongside these leaders, equipping them with the skills, support, and spiritual grounding they need for a lifetime of faithful and effective service.

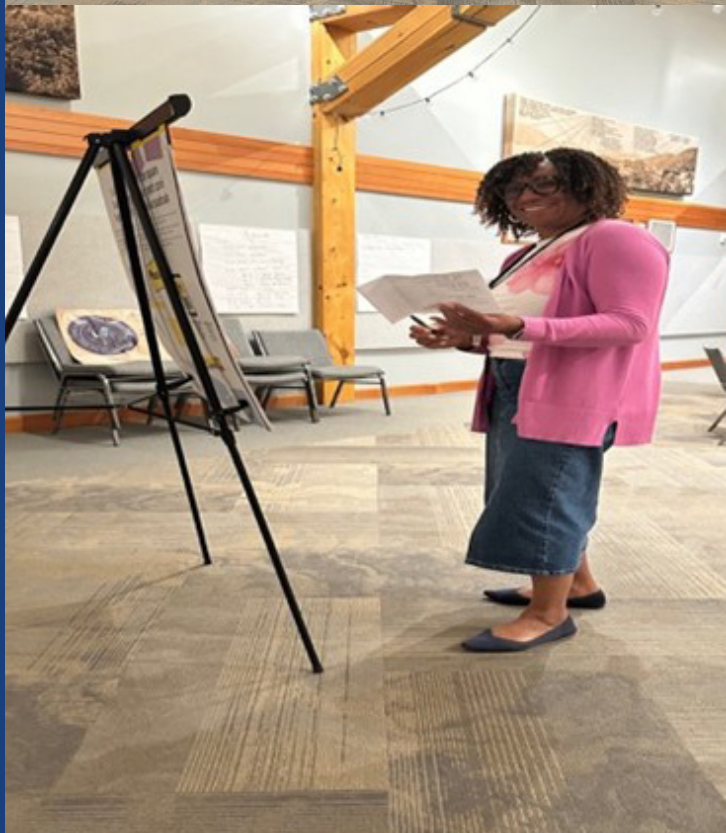
EMI offers a dynamic blend of workshops, seminars, and interactive learning sessions designed to meet the diverse needs of new ministers. Topics range from pastoral care and theological reflection to church administration, leadership development, and adaptive ministry practices. Each element of the curriculum is both practical and reflective, ensuring participants gain tools for their day-to-day work as well as the ability to sustain long-term, faithful ministry.

Beyond professional training, EMI is deeply committed to nurturing participants' spiritual lives. Opportunities for prayer, worship, and spiritual practices are woven throughout the program, grounding leaders in God's presence and strengthening their sense of call. This emphasis ensures that new ministers are not only effective leaders, but also spiritually sustained servants of Christ.

The financial model of EMI reflects the shared responsibility of nurturing the next generation of leaders. The Synod provides substantial support, while Presbyteries and participants also contribute, underscoring the collective commitment to strengthening the future of the church.

The impact of EMI extends far beyond the individual participants. As early-career leaders grow in wisdom, resilience, and spiritual depth, their congregations and communities are strengthened in turn. This ripple effect brings vitality and sustainability to the wider church, ensuring that God's mission continues to flourish for generations to come.

In every way, the Early Ministry Institute stands as a beacon of empowerment, renewal, and hope—building a strong foundation for those just beginning their lifelong journey in ministry.





# EARLY MINISTRY INSTITUTE SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST

## Testimonials

*"EMI is an opportunity for pastors to connect and reflect in a space that allows you to dream bigger than your congregation. Looking at the arc of ministry and the future of the church."*

*"The living embodiment of what PCUSA is, bringing connection within the denomination."*

*"EMI is a great source of learning, networking, for newer pastors tha will have a huge inpack on their individual ministry and churches they serve."*



# Youth Triennium

## 2026 Budget for Youth Triennium | \$0

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Normally, the Synod includes \$20,000 a year in this line item to make sure that in the Triennium year there is at least \$60,000 available for scholarships to presbyteries for participants, adults accompanying participants, and college aged students who work behind the scenes to support the event. Because Triennium did not meet in 2022 due to Covid, there are \$79,000 in remaining funds. Therefore, we will keep the line item in the budget for the next three years without adding further funds.

# Synod Mission and Ministries Commission/Leadership Retreat

## 2026 Budget for Synod Mission and Ministries Commission/Retreat | \$50,000

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In 2026 the Synod Mission and Ministries Commission composed of an elected representative from each presbytery and elected representatives from the Racial/ethnic Caucuses as well as Presbyterian Women will meet three times to make missional granting decisions, connectional ministry decisions, ecumenical engagement decisions and governance decisions that will assist the Synod in moving towards its new vision. While the Commission and Synod Assembly are the governance bodies, we design the meetings in a way that we always remember for whom we do this work -- to the glory of God. In 2026 we will make sure that we always meet in a church rather than a hotel to underscore this point. We will always end in worship to nurture and fortify ourselves as we are sent out from the meeting. The annual Leadership Retreat in the first part of the calendar year allows us to plan for the year while we spend devotional and worship time together. This annual practice helps to center us in our work and prepare us for all that is to come.

# Synod Assembly

## 2026 Budget for Synod Assembly | \$40,000

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If the way be clear at the Special Synod Assembly meeting in November 2025, in October 2026 the first Synod Assembly meeting under the new vision will take place. The entire meeting will be dedicated to a full-on orientation with large group presentations and small group discussions. People who are not currently familiar with the Synod will have the opportunity to learn about our missional Synod, our foundational values and priorities, and our foci as we move into implementing the new vision.. For those who have been active with the Synod, it will be a chance to see how the thinking, focus and language have changed so they can begin to reframe their understanding of the Synod.

# Racial Awareness

## 2026 Budget for Racial Awareness | \$10,000

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As a Matthew 25 Synod, one of our priorities is to make sure that racial awareness remains at the forefront of our consciousness. These funds helped to support our pre-assembly events in past years but now will be folded into at least one if not more Synod wide meetings we hold during the year.

# Equity, Inclusion & Justice

## 2026 Budget for Equity, Inclusion & Justice | \$10,000

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This line item is currently used by the Synod Immigration Task Force in its efforts to work with Presbyteries and congregations that are actively engaged in providing a variety of support to those who are likely to be the target of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) unfair practices.



# Wurffel-Sills Scholarships & Interest Free Loans

**2026 Budget for Wurffel Education Fund | \$48,000**

**2026 Budget for Wurffel-Sills Trust Loans | \$223,000**

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## **The Karl, John and Elizabeth Wurffel Memorial Fund and Allie L. Sills Memorial Fund for Scholarships and Interest-Free Student Loans**

The Wurffel-Sills Scholarship and Interest-Free Student Loan Program at the Synod of the Northeast offers a private funding source for those seeking higher education goals. The program is open to any members of churches within the bounds of the Synod of the Northeast. Funding is offered to full-time undergraduates and both full and at least half-time seminary students seeking a Master of Divinity (MDiv), Master of Religious Education (MRE), or Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) certification.

In addition to helping applicants financially, this funding also helps to keep folks connected to the church and their faith as they grow into adulthood or begin new careers in ministry. Our funding is often a determining factor in a student's ability to attend college or seminary. We are happy to support our Synod Community as they achieve their higher education goals.

*"This scholarship and loan have taken a big weight off my shoulders, and I can't express how much that means to me and my mother. I'm going to do my very best to make the most of this funding and work hard to succeed.*

*Thank you for believing in me and helping make my future a little brighter."*

**Olivia Walker - Class of 2029**

**Presbytery of the Coastlands**



# Robert L. Washington Scholars

## 2026 Budget for Robert L. Washington Scholars | \$15,000

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As Elder Robert L. Washington journeyed with young people who faced marginalization in society, he recognized in them the promise of God’s work unfolding in the world. He believed that every emerging leader should be surrounded by encouragement, equipped with resources, and embraced by a community where they can flourish.

The Robert L. Washington Scholars Program carries forward this legacy. With just \$15,000, the Synod of the Northeast is investing in students and young leaders whose gifts will bless both the church and the communities they serve.

### What Your Investment Makes Possible

- **Scholarships (\$9,000 / 60%)**  
Scholarships open doors. A \$2,000 award can cover a semester of tuition, books, or ministry tools—helping a student prepare for seminary, college, or community leadership.
- **Mentorship & Formation (\$3,000 / 20%)**  
Each scholar is paired with a mentor—an experienced minister, educator, or community leader—who offers encouragement, wisdom, and guidance. Cohort gatherings and formation resources deepen this journey.
- **Leadership Development (\$2,000 / 13%)**  
Leadership retreats, Synod events, and workshops give scholars the chance to practice their gifts, learn in community, and step into real ministry opportunities.
- **Administration & Legacy (\$1,000 / 7%)**  
Behind the scenes, coordination, communication, and storytelling lift Elder Washington’s enduring vision of equity and justice.

### The Impact

A lean budget makes a lasting difference:

- Several emerging leaders receive direct financial support.
- Every scholar builds a trusted relationship with a mentor.
- Scholars participate fully in Synod leadership gatherings.
- Elder Washington’s legacy continues to inspire a church committed to justice and inclusion.

### A Living Legacy

“Receiving the Washington Scholarship reminded me that the church believes in me. It gave me courage to keep going.”

— Imagined voice of a future scholar

This is more than a program. It is a promise—that the Synod of the Northeast will continue raising up leaders who embody faith, justice, and service. Every dollar given tells tomorrow’s leaders: You belong. We believe in you. We’re walking with you.

# Mary Wallingford/ Presby Langdon Grant

2026 Budget for Mary Wallingford/Presby Langdon | \$4,400

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Helping our youth grow in their relationship with God and Jesus Christ, while inspiring them to become active participants in the life and mission of the church, takes energy, creativity, and skilled leadership. Across the Synod of the Northeast, we recognize that strong, Spirit-led youth leaders are essential to nurturing the faith of young people and equipping them to become tomorrow's leaders in the church and the world.

To support this vital work, we are thrilled to expand our commitment to developing young leadership by utilizing the legacy gifts of the Mary Wallingford and Presby Langdon Scholarship Funds. These funds will help supplement costs for youth leaders to attend conferences, training events, and educational opportunities that deepen their faith, strengthen their leadership, and connect them with peers who share their passion for ministry.

Through this initiative, we hope to create a ripple effect of spiritual growth and leadership development—where inspired leaders return home equipped with new tools, renewed energy, and a greater sense of God's call. When we invest in our youth leaders, we invest in the future of the Church—cultivating communities of faith that are vibrant, inclusive, and ready to meet the challenges of a changing world with hope, courage, and compassion.

## In-Person Pastor Gatherings

2026 Budget for In-Person Pastor Gathering | \$18,000

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### **Regional Learning: Investing in Pastors, Strengthening Congregations**

*"Now you, brothers and sisters, siblings, like Isaac, are children of promise." — Galatians 4:28*

Pastoral ministry is sacred and demanding—requiring wisdom, resilience, and renewal. In 2026 through our proposed In-Person **Regional Learning Gatherings**, the Synod is making an investment in Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders, creating space for rest, reflection, and growth.

These in-person gatherings provide:

- Opportunities for self-care and spiritual renewal
- Peer learning and shared wisdom for preaching, teaching, and leading
- Practical tools for navigating conflict, sustaining congregations in times of challenge, and proclaiming the Gospel with vitality

By strengthening pastors, the Synod strengthens congregations. Regional Learning ensures that those called to shepherd God's people are refreshed, equipped, and inspired to lead with courage and hope.



SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

# PRESBYTERY SUPPORT

# Mid Council Support

## 2026 Budget for Mid Council Support | \$100,000

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The Synod of the Northeast is deeply committed to resourcing and equipping the leaders who guide our presbyteries. Mid council leaders general, resource, executive, and transitional presbyters, along with stated clerks carry the vital responsibility of nurturing congregations, shaping governance, and sustaining our shared witness in Christ. Through direct ecclesial support, the Synod ensures these leaders are both well-prepared for their roles and sustained throughout their service.

Each year, the Synod invests in the development of new presbytery leaders through the Presbytery Leader Formation Program (PLF), a national initiative that equips participants to navigate the complexities of mid council ministry. Offering training in governance, administration, and pastoral care, PLF prepares leaders to serve with both competence and compassion. The Synod covers the \$1,500 annual coaching cost for each participant, ensuring that every new leader has access to this vital preparation.

For those not currently enrolled in PLF, the Synod provides professional coaching opportunities, offering individualized guidance and encouragement rooted in the realities of ministry. Recognizing that equity in compensation and benefits is essential to healthy leadership, the Synod also allocates funds to assist presbyteries when financial gaps or inequities arise. In moments of crisis, Emergency Assistance Grants offer timely relief to leaders facing unexpected challenges that impact their life or ministry.

In 2026, the Synod will continue expanding leadership development opportunities through programs such as Pathways to Mid Council Leadership (\$3,500), a formation experience for emerging leaders, and the Community Organizing Cohort (\$12,000), which helps ministry leaders engage their communities with justice-oriented, faith-driven action. Additional funds are designated to address emerging needs, special grants, and administrative support that strengthen these efforts.

Twice each year, the Synod convenes up to 36 mid council leaders and stated clerks for Leadership Forum gatherings. These biannual events alternate between business-focused planning and retreat-style renewal, combining strategy, resources, and spiritual grounding. The Leadership Forum not only strengthens leaders individually but also deepens collaboration across presbyteries, cultivating a connected, resilient, and Spirit-led Synod community.

By investing in leadership formation, equity, care, and connection, the Synod strengthens the heart of our shared ministry. Strong leaders build strong presbyteries—and strong presbyteries sustain vibrant congregations. Through these commitments, the Synod ensures that together we remain faithful, resilient, and ready for the work God is calling us to in 2026 and beyond.

### 2026 Mid Council Support Budget totals:

- **Mid Council Support – \$30,000**
- **Presbytery Leader Formation (PLF) – \$10,000**
- **Leadership Forum – \$60,000**

**Total Investment: \$100,000**

# Presbytery Support/ Collaboration

## 2026 Budget for Presbytery Support | \$150,000

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Across the Synod of the Northeast, presbyteries are discovering that collaboration is a transformative force, one of the most faithful and effective ways to meet the challenges of ministry today. By working together, presbyteries can share resources, combine leadership, and find creative solutions that sustain congregations and strengthen witness in their communities. Collaboration enables presbyteries to adapt to changing realities while maintaining the integrity of their mission and the vitality of their ministries.

The Synod's vision for presbytery collaboration grows from the conviction that ministry should not be done in isolation. Through shared staffing models, cooperative training, and joint initiatives, presbyteries that partner with one another are finding renewed energy and greater impact. These efforts build resilience, deepen trust, and allow mid councils to focus more fully on equipping congregations and leaders for faithful service.

Beginning in 2026, the Synod will invest directly in presbytery collaboration through targeted funding and strategic support, demonstrating our unwavering commitment to your mission. This initiative will strengthen leadership, expand opportunities for shared ministry, and provide resources for presbyteries to experiment with new structures and approaches to governance. Collaboration is not simply an organizational strategy—it is a spiritual practice rooted in connection and mutual care. Through these partnerships, presbyteries embody the unity of the Body of Christ and model a way of being church that is relational and adaptive.

### 2026 Investments:

#### **Merger and Shared Leadership Grants – \$125,000**

To encourage bold collaboration and creative realignment, the Synod will offer grants of up to \$45,000 per year. Funds may support strategic planning, consultation, staffing, or pilot projects that test new governance and ministry models. Presbyteries engaged in formal merger processes are eligible for an additional \$5,000 to assist with legal and administrative costs.

#### **Council Gatherings – \$10,000**

Grants of up to \$3,500 will support gatherings that bring councils together for shared discernment, deeper connection, and coordinated planning.

#### **Synod Training Gatherings – \$15,000**

These gatherings will provide intentional spaces for mid council leaders and ruling elders to strengthen leadership, build relationships, and cultivate shared ministry through workshops, symposia, or retreats.

Together, these investments reflect the Synod's commitment to fostering a community of presbyteries that are stronger together, sustaining mission, and deepening partnerships.

# Small Church Residency

## 2026 Budget for Small Church Residency Pilot Program | \$10,000

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Approved by the Synod in 2023, the Small Church Residency Program is a bold investment in the vitality of smaller congregations and the development of emerging pastoral leaders. This three-year Designated Pastor initiative is designed for “hard-to-call” congregations—communities ready for transformation but challenged in securing long-term pastoral leadership.

Through this program, congregations receive consistent pastoral leadership while pastors in residency participate in a structured formation experience. Together, residents and congregations engage in intentional training that includes change management, discipleship, stewardship, evangelism, and community relations. Rooted in the conviction that congregational vitality is possible, the program helps churches explore new ways of embodying faithful and outward-looking ministry in today’s context.

For pastoral residents, the experience provides a rich environment to step into the role of public theologian. They will lead congregations through adaptive change, cultivate ministry teams, foster community development, and navigate the challenges and opportunities of 21st-century church dynamics. The residency is both formative and practical, equipping leaders with essential skills while helping them discern vocational clarity in small-church ministry.

The program requires intentional collaboration: congregations commit to creating space for experimentation and learning, while residents commit to exploring innovative, sustainable models of ministry. Together they form a partnership that not only strengthens the vitality of local churches but also enhances the Synod’s collective witness.

The Small Church Residency Program stands as both an investment in pastoral leadership and an experiment in reimagining ministry. Its immediate goal is to ensure pastoral presence for underserved congregations, but its broader vision is to cultivate leaders who can serve faithfully and effectively in contexts where creativity, resilience, and deep pastoral presence are essential.

To resource this work, participating congregations will receive a \$20,000 annual grant for a three-year period.



SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

# ECCLESIASTICAL SUPPORT

# Commission on Representation (COR)

## 2026 Budget for Commission on Representation | \$6,250

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The purpose of COR is to advise the Synod Mission and Ministries and Synod Assembly regarding the implementation of the PC U.S.A.'s principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult these bodies on the employment of personnel in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity. (G-3.0103) This work requires at least one in person meeting a year.

# SARC/AC/IC

## 2026 Budget for SARC/AC/IC | \$6,250

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A SARC – Special Administrative Review Committee, AC – Administrative Commission or IC – Investigative Committee are all tools that the Synod can use to help provide particular attention and support to a presbytery when their challenges are too great for a variety of reasons to face alone. Requests from a presbytery for this type of assistance are infrequent, but the Synod must provide funds to the line item to make sure we are able to respond when called upon.

# Permanent Judicial Commission

## 2026 Budget for Permanent Judicial Commission | \$15,000

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The Synod PJC is an active body that uses Section D – Church Discipline of the Book of Order to respond to Remedial Complaints against Presbyteries, appeals related to Presbytery PJC Determinations and Orders, or to Disciplinary Complaints and appeals. One third of the PJC turns over every two years assuring that there is experience and continuity within the body. The budget line item covers travel, lodging and food during a trial or appeal. Members are truly dedicated as they agree to spend one term of six years on the PJC.

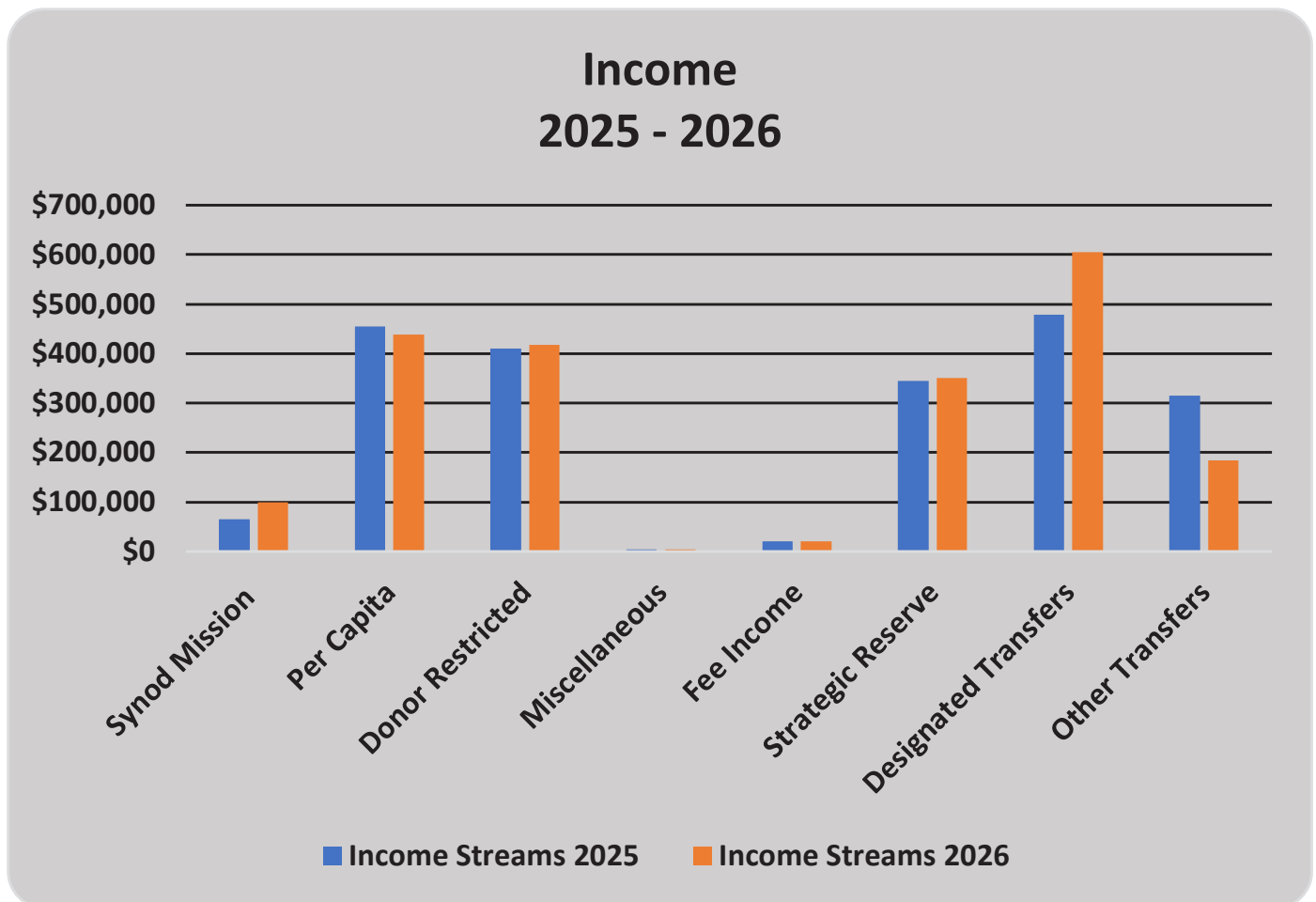


SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

# 2026 BUDGET

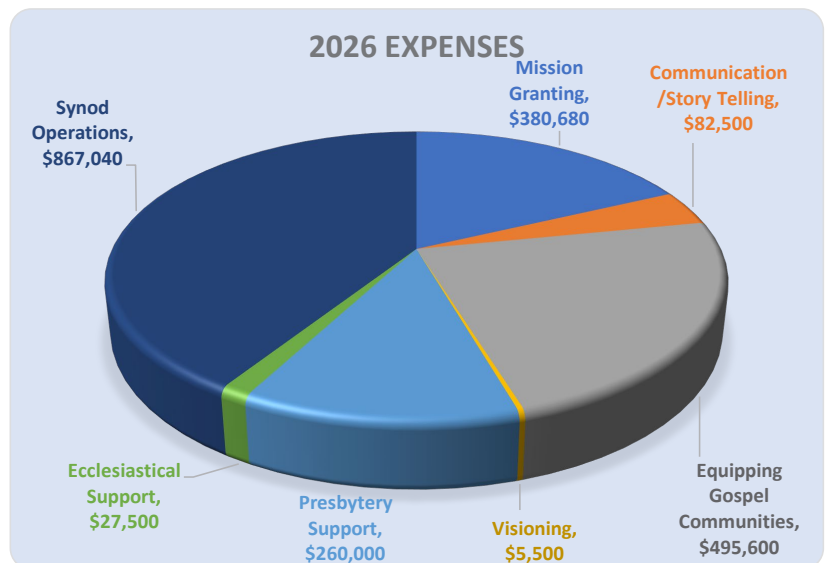
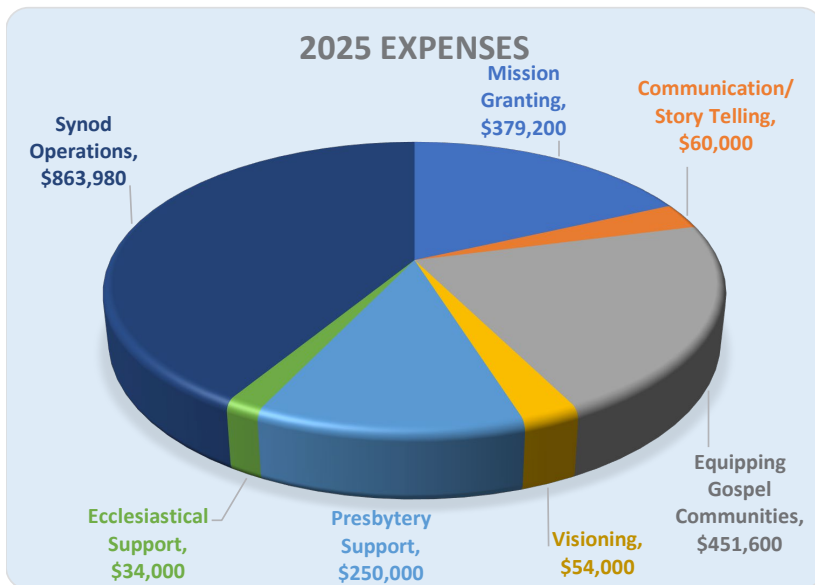
## Income Streams

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Synod Mission</b>	65,000	100,000
<b>Per Capita</b>	455,220	438,643
<b>Donor Restricted</b>	410,480	417,020
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	4,700	4,700
<b>Fee Income</b>	20,400	20,400
<b>Strategic Reserve</b>	344,186	350,123
<b>Designated Transfers</b>	478,340	604,480
<b>Other Transfers</b>	314,454	183,454
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,092,780</b>	<b>\$ 2,118,820</b>

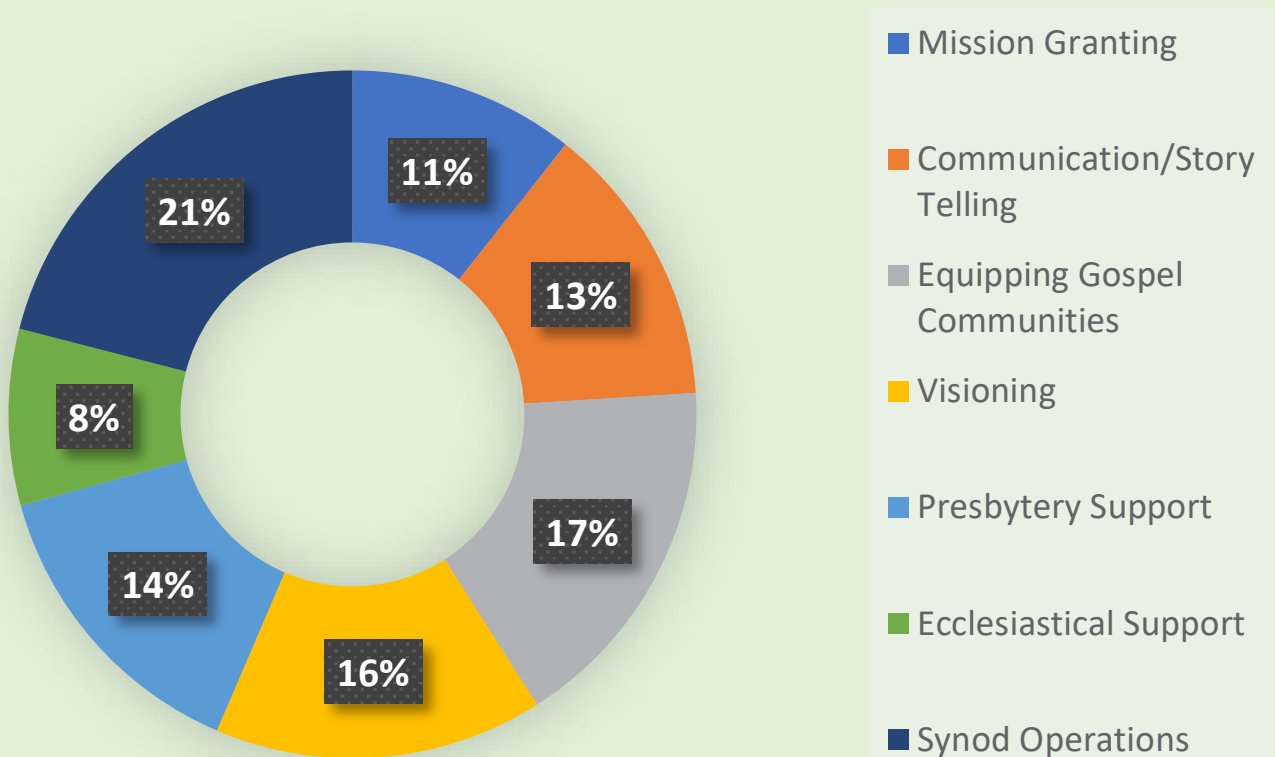


# Synod Expenditures

	2025	2026
Mission Granting	379,200	380,680
Communication/Story Telling	60,000	82,500
Equipping Gospel Communities	451,600	495,600
Visioning	54,000	5,500
Presbytery Support	250,000	260,000
Ecclesiastical Support	34,000	27,500
Synod Operations	863,980	867,040
<b>Total Budgeted Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2,092,780</b>	<b>\$ 2,118,820</b>



## Percentage Staff Time by Category



# Budget Planning Team 2026

## OFFICERS



**ELDER LISA  
BAKER**

Moderator  
*Synod Assembly*



**SUE  
SMITH**

Moderator-Elect  
*Synod Assembly*



**REV. STEPHEN  
PARK CHOI**

Moderator  
*Mission and  
Ministries  
Commission*



**GREGORY  
SIMPSON**

Treasurer  
*Synod of the  
Northeast*

## WORKING GROUP CONVENERS



**REV. BRANDI  
WOOTEN**  
Connectional  
Ministries



**AARON  
FRANK**  
Mission



**ELDER LISA  
GRAY**  
Administrative

## SYNOD STAFF



**REV. DR.  
SANDAWNA  
ASHLEY**



**REV. NANCY  
TALBOT**



**FRANCES  
KLAIBER**



**REV. DR. NICHOL  
BURRIS**



**MIKE  
YEOMAN**



**MARK Q.  
BENNETT**



**STACY  
GALLOWAY**

**SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST**  
**2026 NARRATIVE BUDGET REPORT**

[www.synodne.org](http://www.synodne.org)

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