

## **A Mission Strategy Process in Southeast Michigan Synod Bible Study & Congregational Survey**

*“Why are you talking about having no bread?...Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?” They said to him, “Twelve.” – Mark 8:17-19*

As the people of the Southeast Michigan Synod, we are being called to be who we are and see what we have for the sake of doing what matters in God’s mission. In order to give a sharper and more missional focus to our work together as a synod, we have begun the process of listening to God together. In the context of prayer and bible study, we are asking the question: *What exactly is God’s purpose for us, as the people of the Southeast Michigan Synod, and how does God want us to focus our resources for the sake of fulfilling that purpose?* And we need your help. You are invited and encouraged to do three important things:

1. Plan to attend SEMI Awards in your cluster, along with your pastor(s) and as many friends and members from your congregation as you can convince to come with you! Join us for fun, food, fellowship, and holy conversation about what God is calling us to do together as a synod. We hope to have as many people participating in this process as possible. ***As a bonus, you’ll learn some things that you can “take home” and use in your own congregation!***
2. Take time during worship today (maybe even during the sermon time!) to read Mark 8:14-21 and talk with each other about the following questions:
  - a. When is a time you experienced Jesus “filling up your basket” to overflowing?
  - b. What is the most important gift (in addition to salvation) Jesus has given you in your life?
  - c. Do you ever “fail to see” and “fail to hear” what God is doing in your life? If yes, why do you think that is?
3. Please **WRITE** your answers to the questions below before you leave worship today. Your answers will be read and prayed over by the leaders of our synod at their next retreat. What you say will help shape the missional directions of our synod over the next several years. (Use the back of this page too!)
  - a. What do you see happening **in your town or community** that is breaking God’s heart? What are the **BIG ISSUES** facing people in your community that we should be tackling together?
  - b. What do you see happening **in your town or community** that is making God smile? In other words, what are the **GOOD THINGS** happening where you live and who is doing them?
  - c. What do you see happening **in your congregation** that is making God smile? In other words, what are the **GOOD THINGS** happening in your congregation and who is doing them?
  - d. Make a list of the greatest gifts God has given **to your congregation**. In other words, what assets, passions, and resources does your congregation have that could be put to work in order to make a difference in your community and/or in the synod?
  - e. What could the Southeast Michigan Synod do to help strengthen, encourage, and/or equip **your congregation** to be a part of God’s mission and make a positive difference in your community?

**Name of congregation:** \_\_\_\_\_