



**WELS**  
Christ's Love, Our Calling.

## ***The Definition, Mission, and Purpose of the Synod***

***What is the synod? What is its primary mission? Why do we have a synod at all? These are questions that every member of WELS should be able to answer.***

***In its report to the synod convention in July, the Ad Hoc Commission included a section that explains and identifies the mission and purpose of the synod. The convention received the entire report with thanks and passed a resolution that this section be forwarded to all congregations for discussion and study.***

***Bible passages are printed at the end of this study.***

## **The Mission and Purpose of the Synod**

***(From the Report and Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Commission—WELS Convention 2009)***

We believe and confess that the church is people who have saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit gathers people together around the gospel in Word and sacrament. These are the marks of the church because the Holy Spirit works through the gospel. So wherever the gospel is in use, we expect to find believers, that is, Christ's church. The work of any assembly of believers is to proclaim the gospel. Thereby they encourage and strengthen believers and gather new disciples of the Lord. As confessional Lutherans, we agree and believe that the assembly of these believers becomes evident in visible organizations in various places. The New Testament asserts this principle (Cf. Acts and the letters of Paul). Certainly, both believers and unbelievers belong to such visible organizations.

- 1. Define the "Invisible" or "Holy Christian" church that we confess in the Apostles' Creed? (1 Cor 3:16; Gal 3:26; Eph 2:19-22; Eph 1:22-23)***
- 2. Where does this church exist? (Matt 18:20)***

3. *Who is a part of this church?*
4. *What is the mission of this invisible Christian church? (Matt 28:19)*
5. *How long will this church exist? (Matt 16:18)*
6. *What comfort do we have in knowing that God's church—God's family of believers— exists whenever the gospel is proclaimed and the sacraments are correctly administered?*
  - *in terms of whether membership in this church is determined by membership in a particular denomination (Gal 3:26)*
  - *In terms of how the gospel message will be proclaimed throughout the world even though our own synod may not be able to reach all places given our size and resources. (Is 55:11)*
7. *If believers can also be found in "heterodox" churches (that is, churches in which there is false doctrine), why is it important to find and belong to a church that teaches God's Word in its truth and purity? (John 8:32; Ro 16:17)*

Every local assembly of believers becomes a visible organization, a "church." Those gathered together in a visible church have the responsibilities Christ gave to his church, such as, retaining the truth of God's revealed Word, teaching its members of all ages, preparing future leaders, and extending Christ's kingdom by proclaiming the gospel. These are the tasks of Christians individually and together jointly however they are organized into visible groups.

Other visible organizations can also correctly be called "church." We have no disagreement among us that the synod is "church" in a theological and biblical sense. Wherever two or three (or 400,000) are gathered together in Christ's name, he is there in their midst. They are his church, his people, and his disciples. And as such, collectively, they have been given all of the tasks that God has given to individual Christians and to Christian congregations as they proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We also believe that the local congregation is responsible for the administration of its own affairs as it carries out the responsibilities given to it by the Lord—sharing the gospel; teaching members; worshiping; owning its own property; calling pastors, teachers, and others; paying its bills; and in every other way taking care of its day to day responsibilities.

8. *What is a "visible" Christian church? (1 Cor 1:2; Acts 13:1; Rev 1:20)*
9. *How is it different from the invisible church?*
10. *What is the God-given mission of every visible church? (Matt 28:19; Heb 10:24-25)*
11. *What factors may make it difficult for a local congregation to carry out all aspects of its mission by itself?*

The local congregation even chooses to align itself with other congregations that share the same beliefs. Believers recognize one another by their confession and join others of the same confession. The decision of visible local believers in various congregations to seek some association with other congregations creates the larger visible church organization. The confession of the association of congregations mirrors that of the individual congregations aligned together. While some differences exist between a local congregation and an organization composed of a collection of local congregations, the larger group has the same task as the separate congregations: retain the truth, teach God's truth, prepare leaders, and extend the kingdom by proclaiming the gospel. Because the larger assembly is derived from the member congregations, it is not a hierarchy but a confederation. Nevertheless, the separate congregations of the association may depend on the larger association to do things that the separate congregations cannot do as efficiently without the assistance of the other congregations drawn together by their common confession. This larger assembly we call synod becomes important to member congregations when it carries out its mission for them and with them.

In our fellowship, the larger visible organization does not own the property of the local group, nor does it exercise authority to remove called workers or dissolve local congregations. On the other hand, it may own its own property, call workers, and in other ways operate as an independent entity. We believe that each local congregation is an independent assembly of believers and one group of believers does not presume to dictate to other brothers and sisters in Christ. Instead, believers treat one another as equal children of God. The same attitudes apply when groups of believers forming local congregations interact with other groups. The relationship between such equal bodies is marked by respect and love.

We agree with these principles. Those who seek to gather together with others with the same confession establish a structure for the operation of the confederation. Some, like federations supporting schools, limit the area of cooperation to the maintenance of elementary or high schools. Others limit their association to mutual encouragement and edification, as is the case with the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC). The congregations that are affiliated with the synod operate with a constitution that outlines the scope of the work carried out by the synod.

***12. Who or what is the "synod?" What is it NOT?***

***13. What is the symbolism in the term "synod"? In what ways does this show itself?***

***14. For what reasons do local congregations gather together into a larger group called a synod?***

- ***When it comes to maintaining doctrinal unity and purity? (1 Tim 4:6)***
- ***When it comes to expressing the blessing of a common faith and our fellowship? (1 Cor 1:2)***
- ***When it comes to the scope and reach of gospel proclamation?***

- ***When it comes to providing effective recruitment and training of future church workers?***
- ***When it comes to providing assistance in calling and caring for church workers?***

***15. With this understanding of the synod, what are the limits on the role of the synod when compared to the local congregation?***

***16. How will this understanding of the synod guide what the synod's priorities are and how it determines to use its financial resources?***

***17. If the mission of the synod is really a part of the extended mission of each congregation, how will congregations view the financial support that they provide for the synod's work?***

***18. What are some of the obstacles that prevent congregations from greater financial support of the mission and ministry of the synod? How can these obstacles best be overcome?***

In conducting our work we adhered to the definition of the purpose of the synod clearly articulated by the 2005 and 2007 synod conventions: *“Historically, the purpose of our synod has been to do together what we cannot do as individual congregations.”* We believe that this convention statement is fully in keeping with the spirit of the definition of the synod’s purpose as stated in the synod constitution. The constitution describes this work in the following way:

*The object and purpose of the synod shall be to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church:*

- By assisting and counseling in every appropriate way the pastors, teachers, and congregations affiliated with the synod;*
- By establishing and maintaining theological seminaries, colleges, academies, schools, and other institutions of learning;*
- By establishing and maintaining home and world missions and such charitable institutions as it may deem appropriate to its calling;*
- By printing, publishing, purchasing, selling, and disseminating literature that maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice;*
- By furnishing appropriate literature for parish schools, Sunday schools, missions, institutions, and churches.*

The larger group we call synod has “the object and purpose . . . to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.” It carries out that purpose *“by assisting and counseling in every appropriate way the pastors, teachers, and congregations affiliated with the synod.”* Its relationship with the member congregations is one of assisting, advising, and counseling. The focus of that counsel, in the context of the constitution, is conserving biblical Lutheran doctrine. The gospel

alone is the power of God among us. Without it, we neither walk together in Christ nor grow spiritually. It is understandable that the framers of our constitution focused first on conserving true doctrine and practice.

Responsibility to maintain the truth and avoid error belongs to every Christian. We are all called to mark and avoid false teachers. But congregations join together for mutual encouragement in the truth of God. Separately they can encourage other congregations nearby, but joined together they can assign the larger group the task of maintaining confessional integrity with the weight of their collective confession. Together we have carried out that responsibility by various organizational structures such as districts, conferences, and circuits among others. Those elected or called to roles of oversight, administration, or service, such as district presidents, circuit pastors, and others, encourage congregations to maintain the truth, confront the doctrinal distortions that develop, and offer assistance when congregations and their workers face challenging issues. Through the encouragement of others in Christ, we foster unity in doctrine and practice. We preserve our commitment to the gospel so that we can proclaim it with one voice.

Yet our synod does not dictate to local congregations. District presidents do not and cannot force a congregation to adopt the common confession of the larger group. They present the truth, encourage study, and promote unity. Yet a congregation may withdraw from the synod or the synod may suspend a congregation from membership if its confession is different from the other congregations gathered together to form the synod. The effort needed to maintain confessional integrity among the congregations of the synod is carried out with love that does not sacrifice the treasured truths of God's Word. Instead, in love we acknowledge fellowship with like-minded confessing Christians; we also acknowledge that others are not like-minded and therefore suspend fellowship. We need one another to carry out this difficult task. In addition, we need fierce commitment to the truth and deep love for others, which has the concern for their spiritual welfare firmly in focus.

***19. Why is “extending and preserving the true doctrine and practice” properly listed as the first and foremost purpose of the synod? (Matt 28:19)***

***20. Describe these two activities (preserving and extending) and how they drive the priorities of both congregations and the synod.***

***21. “Preserving and extending true doctrine and practice” could also be described as “holding on to the Word and sharing the Word.” How are these two activities totally dependent on each other? (In other words, why is it not appropriate to give the impression that either one is more important than the other?)***

***22. Review the various ways in which the synod is organized and the purpose for each entity:***

- ***Districts and district presidents***
  
- ***Conferences***
  
- ***Circuits and circuit pastors***
  
- ***The Conference of Presidents***

**23. After the local pastor, to whom have we given the responsibility of overseeing doctrine and practice in the synod?**

**24. How can the district president help if a congregation is experiencing difficulties or troubles?**

**25. Can the synod “dictate” the decisions that a congregation should make?**

**26. Can the synod “dictate” to a congregation what its doctrine is?**

As an association of believers we also work together to maintain the truth of the gospel among us. We take another step when we work to share the gospel with the next generation. The constitution expresses this second step when it says that we “extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church . . . by establishing and maintaining theological seminaries, colleges, academies, schools, and other institutions of learning.” Each congregation of the synod has that responsibility, and each congregation chooses to conduct its educational efforts in a way that it deems important. Some establish elementary schools; others choose not to establish elementary schools but to teach their children in other ways.

Some efforts to train the next generation in God’s truth are more difficult for local congregations to do on their own. A local congregation may desire to train its youth beyond elementary school, only to face the reality that it does not have enough students or financial resources to undertake the task alone. Establishing Lutheran high schools or any institutions of learning beyond the congregation’s elementary school is best done when the resources of the congregation are pooled with those of other congregations who share the same goal.

In another application of the same principle, the congregations that align themselves together and form a synod pool their resources to educate the next generation. But for us, such an effort has concentrated on training a new generation of called workers. The single purpose of the schools of the synod—whether on the high school level, the college level, or the seminary level—has been to supply congregations of the synod with called workers to carry out their own ministries. Congregations have long understood that a day will come when they will need to replace a teacher or add an additional teacher in order to expand their schools. Likewise, congregations anticipate the replacement of pastors or the expansion of their pastoral ministries. Congregations joined together assign to the synod the task of training future called workers grounded in the truth of the gospel. Clearly, what one congregation would find difficult to do alone can be carried out together with the other congregations.

**27. Briefly review the history of the synod and how ministerial education played a vital role in its early years.**

***28. Why is the work of educating called workers properly considered to be an integral part of the mission of the synod? (1 Tim 4:6)***

***29. How do congregations benefit today from a synodical program for ministerial education for today? What is the benefit for the future?***

***30. What are the challenges of maintaining our ministerial education system?***

***31. Why should recruitment of young people for ministry be a primary emphasis in each congregation? What practical steps can congregations and members take to do this?***

In addition, the congregations focus on sharing the gospel and extending the reach of each local congregation. Local congregations have the privilege of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the communities in which they are located. They are to make energetic and ongoing efforts to “make disciples.” They are simply organized in this way so that each can address the issues at hand, following the outline of its constitution. Outreach efforts are a primary part of each congregation’s ministry. But sharing the gospel stretches beyond the horizon of the local congregation. As believers, gathered first into local congregations and then bound together by a common faith into a larger association, we desire to extend the stakes of our “little tent.” The Lord directs us to “make disciples of all nations,” and together that is exactly what we try to do through pooling our resources for home and world missions.

In all three of these cases—unity of doctrine, education, and missions—it should be clear that the synod—the voluntary gathering of local congregations—is doing what is more difficult for individual congregations to do on their own. In order to carry out its role, the synod requires congregational resources. The synod acquires the responsibility of funding the gospel ministry given to it by local congregations and administering it. The administration of the work given to the synod also requires human resources in other areas in order to manage the resources wisely and efficiently.

***32. In what ways can the synod facilitate a proclamation of the gospel that is wider and broader than what a single congregation can do?***

***33. Why is the value of a synodically planned program of missions as opposed to many separate and uncoordinated efforts?***

**34. What about people who want to specify exactly how their mission dollars are used? Should there be flexibility to allow this? What are the possible drawbacks if individuals choose to fund specific mission programs? What are the possible benefits?**

Because the synod as an organization looks beyond the work of any local congregation, it has the opportunity to raise the vision of those in local congregations. While a congregation might see the fields “ripe for harvest” in its own backyard, the Lord places opportunities and opens doors far beyond that local field. The synod’s perception of the fields “ripe for harvest” is wider and broader. The larger church will have the task of communicating its wider and broader vision and encouraging God’s people to rise beyond their own horizons. In another example, the congregation may be content with its called workers and its ministry. It may not see or wish to see a time when its ministry or its called workers will change. But the vision of the synod extends beyond the years of any faithful servant’s ministry to the time when a new called worker will need to be called as a replacement. The vision of the synod then includes a commitment to training enough called servants to meet the needs of the future, and it will seek to prepare qualified and competent called servants for the fields it sees as “ripe for the harvest.” With the resources committed by the individual congregations, the synod will exercise faithful stewardship and wisdom in using those resources to walk through the doors the Lord opens for us while maintaining essential core ministries for the present and future.

**35. Give practical examples of how the synod can “raise the vision of those in local congregations.”**

**36. Mission work extends geographically to places far removed from the local congregation. It also extends over time, even generations. How does a synodical program of missions and ministry help to bridge the generational nature of mission work?**

In another area, the synod does what is more difficult for local congregations to do on their own. In order “to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church” we have assigned the synod the responsibility of “*printing, publishing, purchasing, selling, and disseminating literature that maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice*” and of “*furnishing appropriate literature for parish schools, Sunday schools, missions, institutions, and churches.*” The gathering of local congregations has assigned this task, for the most part, to a publishing house and established a review committee to make sure that the literature produced “maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice.” As this function of the synod has developed over the years, the materials produced have required no funds from the budget established by the synod to do its work. The funding has come from the sale of the materials. But no matter how it is funded, the charter of the publishing house is to extend and conserve the truth of the gospel for our congregations as well as to offer a published public witness to the truths we hold dear.

**37. What is the value of synodical efforts to produce synod-wide literature? (Think of such things as a hymnal, a catechism, a synodical periodical such as Forward in Christ)**



**38. Why are these things done as a synod rather than by individual congregations?**

As we look at the work we do together, we thank our Lord, who has purchased us with his blood. We praise him for the privilege of participating in the work of his kingdom. Under his care and by his power, we have grown from small confessional Lutheran groups in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota. Our confession remains true to the doctrine of the evangelical Lutheran church. God has blessed our efforts to establish new congregations so that we can share the gospel far beyond our Midwest base. Our missions extend into many nations of the world. And the schools we maintain continue to supply congregations with called workers who are committed to the truth of God's Word. The tasks have sometimes been difficult and challenging, but the Lord has permitted us to share his truth in this world so desperately in need of it.

Some of the challenges and difficulties have come when congregations have encountered their own difficulties and hardships. Local congregations face dwindling memberships for various reasons, find it difficult to maintain their gospel witness for financial reasons, grow weary in their efforts, or need encouragement to face challenges. The spiritual health of a congregation rests with the congregation, its members and local leaders including the pastor. Yet as believers joined together, we have the responsibility to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ. Such encouragement comes from other congregations within their own area and through the district president and circuit pastor, but all congregations share in the concern for others. Because all share the concern, the association of congregations, the synod, has another task to fulfill. The synod in convention established an organized approach to help congregations "in their ministries of nurture, outreach, worship, and service." Such efforts augment encouragements from others and offer a consistent and organized approach that is available to congregations who need these services and encouragements.

**39. What role, working as a member of the synod, can your congregation play in helping other congregations to remain healthy and focused?**

**40. If the congregation is the primary place for kingdom work to be done, what role does the synod have in the areas of evangelism, worship, discipleship, and ministry to specialized groups such as the blind and those with various other disabilities?**

The commission maintains—as have the last two conventions—that the corporate synod was conceived and established primarily as a means or an instrument to carry out those kinds of kingdom work that cannot easily be done by individual Christians or congregations. The commission agrees with the recent convention resolutions that, in a practical sense, the structure of the human *organization* we refer to as the "synod" has not been established to carry out or to duplicate all of the tasks given to individual Christians and congregations on a larger scale. Rather, the synodical structure and organization is intended to carry out the kind of kingdom work that *assists* congregations in carrying out their ministry or that *requires* the large scale pooling of resources, efforts, and leadership, doing together those things that cannot easily be done separately.

Having established an association of congregations bound together in a common faith, and having taken on the core function of doing together what cannot easily be done separately, we expect that workers within the synod we have established would conduct its work as faithful stewards. We expect them to be diligent in their efforts and accountable, not only to the boards and commissions charged with overseeing the work but also to the individual congregations that make up the synod. Those who conduct our joint work should not be satisfied with mediocrity but should pursue excellence in all things. We should encourage one another to excel. As brothers and sisters of Christ, those who carry out the work of the synod will be humble servants of the Lord of the church, listen to their brothers and sisters in the congregations, and offer encouragement and correction when necessary in an evangelical and loving way. Their service will flow from a deep commitment to the Lord of the church and a humble persistence that understands the autonomy of the local congregations. In other words, they will always have the building of the body of Christ as their goal. Those individual Christians in the congregations who have charged them with their tasks should hold them accountable for faithfulness to God's truth and for excellence in their work. Local congregations will exhibit the same characteristics: faithfulness to the Lord of the church, humility in his service, and a desire for excellence.

***41. Are those who work full time in synodical positions leaders or servants? Explain your answer. (1 Tim 3:1)***

***42. What should congregations expect from those who have been called to synodical positions?***

We have one task to do together "to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the evangelical Lutheran church." When we make use of the gospel, the Holy Spirit does his work. He has promised to work through this powerful means, and we have no such promise when we fail to use this "power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16). When we use the gospel, God's work will be done. But we will not be satisfied with anything but the best efforts at sharing God's truth. Our desire for excellence in the ministry of the Word leads us to encourage one another to continue to grow spiritually by regular study of the Word in an individual and personal way and also in a formal, organized way. For members of our congregations, this means encouraging attendance at worship services and Bible classes. For pastors it means personal study and making use of educational opportunities beyond graduating from our seminary. For teachers and other called servants, it means the same commitment to personal study and continuing education.

A simple note is in place at this point concerning the use of God's Word. As Lutherans we understand the necessity of both the law and the gospel. We are confronted daily with our own failures and sins, and the law reveals them clearly and painfully. We are led daily to despair of our failures, because they deserve the judgment of Christ the Lord. But the Lord does not leave us in despair. Instead, he announces his sweet love and forgiveness. Daily we turn from what is so foul within us and by his power turn toward his grace. In that daily repentance we find the comfort, strength, courage, and commitment to live as his witnesses here in this world. So often an exhortation to turn to the Word of God means to follow the recipes found there, and it becomes so easy to make the Word of God a legal canon. It is, instead, a powerful tool by which God leads us away from our own shortcomings to his grace. This understanding is important for each member of each congregation, each called worker in local congregations, and everyone entrusted with the joint work of those congregations of the synod.

**43. What is it that alone accomplishes the mission that God gives to congregations and the synod?**

**44. Planned ministry programs can be very valuable in helping to carry out the mission of the church in an organized way. With that in mind, however, what alone enables the church to carry out its mission effectively? (Is. 55:11; 1 Cor 2:1-4; 1 Cor 3:6)**

There will always be room for discussion about which specific ministry efforts and leadership functions fit into the stated definition of the synod. But it is clear that the synod can and does run into difficulty when it, with all good intentions, broadens the narrower purpose and loses its focus on its core reasons for existence. While we conduct our work together, issues will arise as to the appropriate relationship between the local congregations of the synod and the leadership we have established to carry out the assignments of the synod. We might struggle with differences of opinion as to which efforts can *best* be carried out together (synodically) as opposed to individually (by congregations or individual Christians). But through brotherly discussion and debate, we can settle on which have the highest priority at a particular time, within the level of available support. We believe that the discussion of this commission's report will help to clarify those issues and will enable us to arrive at a unified understanding of the synod and its mission.

Finally, any human effort, discussion, decision, or debate within the visible church here on earth will be flawed by our sinful natures—individually and corporately. Unintended consequences often attend actions even when carefully and prayerfully taken. We therefore turn to the Lord of the church, humbly asking for his guidance in all we think, say, and do. Our goal is the welfare of our visible church, and we cling to the promise of our Lord that he will make all work out for the good of his saints in spite of our shortcomings. May he keep us faithful to his truth and bless our humble efforts to witness to his grace.

**45. Is it a bad thing when members of the synod have differing ideas as to how best to carry out the work that God has given us to do? Why is discussion and debate important?**

**46. How should we react when what seem to be good plans do not seem to work out in keeping with our desires? (Acts 16:6-9)**

**47. Once a decision is made regarding mission and ministry programs, what is important to remember and to do regardless of your own personal opinion?**

**48. List 5 ways in which your congregation can become more aware of and involved in the work we do together as a synod.**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**49. How can your congregation provide input to those who have been given the responsibility of planning and carrying out the synod's work?**

**50. How would you complete the following statement: "What is the synod? The synod is . . ."**

## Scripture references

- **1 Cor 3:16** Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple, and that God's Spirit lives in you?
- **Gal 3:26** You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
- **Eph 2:19-22** Consequently [because of what Christ has done], you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household.
- **Eph 1:22-23** God placed all things under his feet and appointed him [Jesus] to be the head over everything for the church, which is his body.
- **Matt 18:20** For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.
- **Matt 28:19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . . and teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you.
- **Matt 16:18** On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it
- **Is 55:11** So it is with my word. It will not return to me empty, but it will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.
- **John 8:32** If you hold to my teaching, then you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free
- **Ro 16:17** Watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.
- **1 Cor 1:2** To the church of God in Corinth . . .
- **Ac 13:1** In the church at Antioch . . .
- **Rev 1:20** The seven stars are the angels [=messengers, pastors] of the seven churches [in Asia Minor].
- **Heb 10:24-25** And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another
- **1 Tim 4:6** [After discussing the danger of false teachings] If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.
- **1 Cor 1:2** To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **1 Tim 3:1** Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.
- **1 Cor 2:1-4** When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. . . My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power.
- **1 Cor 3:6** I [Paul] planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.
- **Acts 16:6-9** Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bythinia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. During the night, Paul had a vision of a man from Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

