

**2016 Report to Synod Assemblies**  
**Paul Baglyos, Coordinator for Ministry Leadership, ELCA Region 3**

**Our Culture of Call**

Lutheran Christians understand God's call to public ministry leadership in the church to involve two essential dimensions: internal and external. The internal dimension of God's call involves a person's own discernment that "God is calling *me* to this." The external dimension of God's call involves the discernment of others regarding that person—"God is calling *you* to this."

Raising up leaders for the church requires that the whole church participate in the external dimension of God's call. Some of the most common stories people tell when they begin to prepare for ministry leadership in the church are stories about other people encouraging them to do so. "Have you ever thought about seminary? "You would make a good minister." "I can see you as a leader in the church." Those sorts of promptings from ministry leaders and other church members, from family and friends, are common to the stories of people who become ministers of Word and Sacrament or Word and Service in the church.

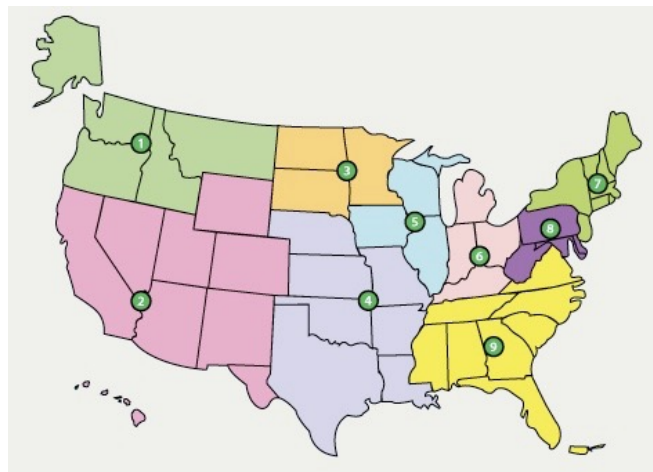
Evidence suggests that our shared participation in the external dimension of God's call to ministry leadership is becoming less vigorous than it has been in the past, even the recent past. For example, over the twelve-year period from the 2004-2005 academic year to the current academic year (2015-2016) the total enrollment of students in Master of Divinity degree programs (the preparatory degree for pastors) at the eight seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has decreased from 1,252 to 735, or 41%. No single factor by itself accounts for that decrease, but it is reasonable to believe that one contributing factor is a neglected commitment to identify people with demonstrated gifts for ministry leadership and to encourage such people to step forward in preparation for leadership.

The ELCA's Model Constitution for Congregations stipulates that one of the responsibilities of congregation councils is to "seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel." Congregation councils bear that responsibility in collaboration with all members of the church, all of whom participate in the external dimension of God's call to ministry leadership.

Integral to this report, therefore, are these questions to all who will read it: How vigorously does your congregation attend to its responsibility to "seek out and encourage" gifted people to prepare for leadership as ministers of Word and Sacrament or Word and Service? How many members of your congregation have been or are enrolled in seminary to prepare for such leadership? Who are the people in your congregation that you can envision as effective ministry leaders, perhaps awaiting your encouragement and support to step forward in preparation?

The members of your synod who serve on your synod's candidacy committee work with the people who come forward from your congregations, your outdoor ministries, your campus ministries and other contexts of discernment and call to prepare for public ministry leadership in the ELCA. Your candidacy committees accompany those people in formation for leadership, helping them further to discern both their gifts and their growth areas pertaining to leadership, guiding them in their seminary programs, assessing their learning in field experience, and, when they are ready, approving them for ministry leadership in the ELCA under congregational call.

A major part of my work as Coordinator for Ministry Leadership in Region 3 of the ELCA is to work with each of the candidacy committees in the nine synods of our region. The map below on the left shows the territory of the nine synods of Region 3; the map below on the right shows the territory of the nine regions of the ELCA. I serve as deployed staff of the ELCA working in partnership with your synod's candidacy committee to coordinate its work with that of all other candidacy committees as together we attend to the formation of leaders for the ELCA.



The members of your synod who serve on your synod's candidacy committee engage their work with reverence and wisdom and grace. We are deeply grateful for all the people who come forward to prepare for ministry leadership in the ELCA, and deeply grateful to all of you who have helped to identify, encourage and support them.

To learn more about the work of your synod's candidacy committee and the people currently preparing for ministry leadership under the care of your synod's candidacy committee, speak with any member of the committee or with your bishop or bishop's associate responsible for candidacy. The work that we do together in the formation of leaders for the ELCA is made possible by the mission support your congregation gives to the synod and by the mission support your synod shares with the larger ELCA.

## **ELCA Region 3 Archives Report to 2016 Synod Assemblies**

### **Introduction**

This year marks the *28th year of the ELCA Region 3 Archives* program. The cooperative arrangement with Luther Seminary continues to work well. Paul Daniels serves as the Region 3 archivist half-time and for Luther Seminary half-time. Luther provides space for the large archives collection while also making available student workers and volunteers from the Friends organization (currently, 8 volunteers work in our office) to stretch the reach of both archives' programs. One of our other benefits includes support from the school's IT office.

### **Use of the Region 3 Archives**

Our presence through our website ([www.luthersem.edu/archives](http://www.luthersem.edu/archives)) continues to increase both our visibility and our patron use numbers. The site, hosted by Luther Seminary, is regularly updated with new training material for congregations interested in records care as well as providing inventories of the Region 3 Archives collections themselves. The website is our main "front door", attracting more researchers every year. We continue to support our patrons with phone calls, drop-in visits and traditional mail as well.

+The Archives assisted 923 reference patrons in the past year. Sixty-two percent are congregational committees working on scanning projects, anniversary planning, history writing and records care issues. Other significant user groups include synod staff, ELCA church wide personnel and individual students and researchers.

+Daniels worked on-site with all 9 synod offices, gathering permanently valuable office records for retention, including all candidacy records for each synod. He visited each synod office at least 6 times during the year. These visits were coordinated with 32 on-site congregational visits throughout North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota, the Region 3 territory)

+Daniels spoke at 14 adult forums in congregations throughout the Region. The main theme of these talks was the use of memory and story in the life of the congregation, as well as to provide updates on the services available through the Region 3 Archives.

### **Collection Growth**

+The Archives received 430 linear feet of synod records from the 9 offices. These materials included legal, financial, personnel and program files.

+Daniels gathered an additional 224 congregational histories - collection totals 6,725 history files.

+The Archives received 550 biographical pieces on clergy and lay leaders - collection totals 7,330 files.

+An additional 18 congregations scanned their valuable church records through the digitizing program.

### **Outreach and Education**

+Daniels led workshops on congregational archives at 4 Region 3 synod assemblies in 2015. He also presented sessions at 2 fall theological conferences on Region 3 Archives service offerings.

+The Archives distributed an additional 455 copies of "Memory Work: A Guide for Congregational Archives and History" to congregations and individuals. It is also available electronically on the website.

+Daniels continues to promote the Iron Mountain storage space for sensitive types of synodical records, including materials on candidacy, disciplinary action and litigation.

### **Professional Development**

+Daniels remains an active member of several professional organizations, including the Society of American Archivists, the Midwest Archives Conference and the Twin Cities Archives Roundtable.

+Daniels maintains his renewable archival certification in the Academy of Certified Archivists.

+A former board member of the Lutheran Historical Conference, Daniels continues his support of this pan-Lutheran organization of archivists, historians, librarians and students.

***Respectfully submitted, Paul A. Daniels, ELCA Region 3 Archivist and Luther Seminary Archivist, 3.15.16***



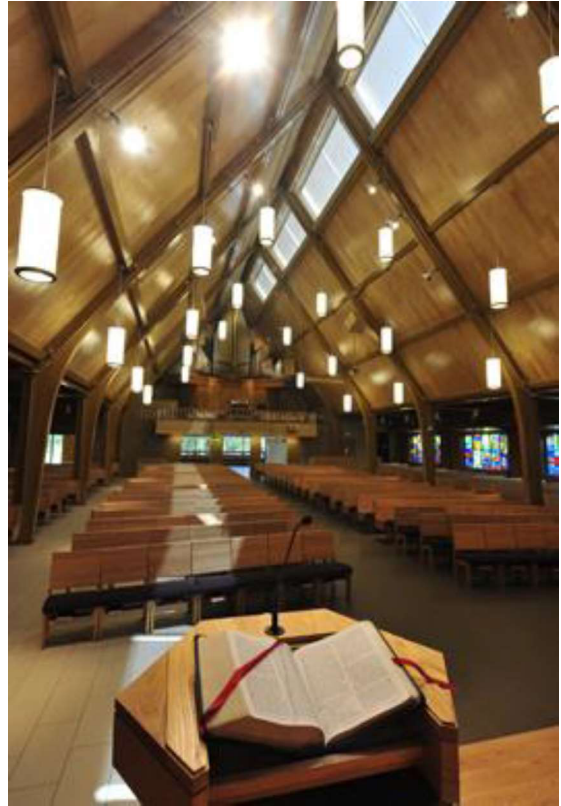
**Mission Investment Fund**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a financial ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, makes low-interest loans to established ELCA congregations, new-start congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building projects.

Established congregations use MIF loans to renovate, expand or relocate. New-start congregations rely on MIF loans to buy land and construct their first church buildings. ELCA-related ministries use MIF loans for a variety of capital projects.

At year-end 2015, MIF had 830 loans outstanding, totaling \$492 million.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio of investments for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. MIF investments offer adjustable- or fixed-rate terms and earn interest at competitive rates.



At year-end 2015, MIF investments by congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries totaled \$464 million. The Mission Investment Fund is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of \$663 million and net assets of \$194 million at year-end 2015, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 29 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

### **MIF Investments and Loans in the South Dakota Synod**

#### **As of December 31, 2015:**

- 8 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$2,348,829, are at work throughout the synod.
- Investments in the Mission Investment Fund by 223 individuals, 102 congregations, 21 ministries and the synod totaled \$8,864,704.

#### **MIF representative**

The Rev. Daniel B. Carlson, Regional Manager: Tel. (773) 682-2943; e-mail: [dan.carlson@elca.org](mailto:dan.carlson@elca.org)

## South Dakota Synod 2016 Vice President's Report

The vision of the South Dakota Synod is *that all may be filled*; nurtured in word and sacrament, God sends us to become a joyful sign of God's abundant blessing as we proclaim the good news of Jesus to every hungering soul, share compassion with all who suffer, and feed all whose bodies lack nourishment. The core values of the synod are prayer, human dignity, gratitude, the neighbor, and grace. The Synod Council as the board of directors of the synod and interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly has endeavored to live out the vision and values this past year. Highlights of Synod Council activities and actions include:

- Responded to encouragement from Bishop Eaton and a request from the Southern Black Hills text study group to begin conversations about racial justice. The Synod Council met at Pine Ridge in August. Pastors Natanael Lizarazo and Barbara Wangsness shared the history of the Pine Ridge ministry. Guest speaker Andrew Iron Shell presented information about the Thunder Development Corporation. The Council spent time in conversation about racism. The discussion continued at the October meeting when Pastor Herb Wounded Head shared experiences and perspectives from his life. Council members also listened to webcasts conducted by Bishop Eaton and William B. Horne II. This is an important topic that directly relates to the vision and values of the South Dakota Synod. Congregations are encouraged to begin, or continue, such conversations. Resources can be found at <http://www.elca.org/webcast>.
- Approved a congregation new start in partnership with the Presbyterian Church (USA) and issued a letter of call to Pastor Jessica Daum to serve as mission developer. This new church community, called Table of Grace, gathers in and around Harrisburg to build connections, share with others, and worship God.
- Approved a Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC), Church on the Street, to provide ministry to the marginalized homeless community of Sioux Falls. This ministry serves in response to God's love to meet human needs, advocate dignity, stand with the poor and powerless, while proclaiming the Word through God's love, prayer, witness, and service. Rebel Hurd serves as the servant leader for this new community.
- Visited congregations to express appreciation for ongoing mission support to the synod and engage in conversation about ministry.
- Served as visitors to share information with other synod leaders about the Listen God is Calling appeal. As of March 2016, members of the Synod Council, Candidacy Committee, and Support to Ministries Committee have committed over \$200,000 to the appeal.

On a personal note, I had the privilege of joining Bishop Zellmer, Susan Marone, and Pastor Nate Lizarazo in representing the South Dakota Synod at the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for our companion synod, the Lutheran Church of Faith and Hope (ILFE) in Nicaragua.

I would like to extend a special word of appreciation to outgoing members of the Synod Council: LuAnn Denke, Bear Butte; Alex Jensen, Crossroads; Pastor Jan FitzGibbon, Prairie Coteau; Christy Kimball, Southeastern; and Brody Danielsen and Haleigh Johnson, Youth.

Thank you to Bishop David Zellmer, Pastor Bill Tesch, Susan Marone, AIM, Suzanne Hansen, AIM, Pastor Natanael Lizarazo, Pastor Karen Ressel, Crystal McCormick, Lois Borchardt, Kevin Stillson, Jim Schade, Kurt Osborne, Pastor Bob Hansen, and Marilyn Green for their commitment and passion for the ongoing work of the synod.

God's blessings to you as we continue to live out the vision *that all may be filled*.

*Candace Boncler*

**Report of the Support to Ministries Committee**  
**2016 South Dakota Synod Assembly**  
Pastor David Schoeld, Chairperson

The Support to Ministries Committee (STM) continues to work to connect pastors seeking a call with congregations seeking a pastor. This continues to be a struggle as there are currently more calls than there are pastors available for those calls. It gets even a little more rough when you factor in congregational needs with pastoral gifts – will it be a good fit? Will both pastor and congregation find life and joy as together they work to share God’s love and grace with community and world?

Last year I talked about the changes that are coming for our ministry sites – and for pastoral ministry in general: changing call processes, heavier debt load due to seminary expenses, changing pastoral education processes; reduced number attending seminary. These are concerns you’ve likely heard addressed by the synod, the bishop, your pastor, or any number of articles in magazines or online.

In the face of these changes, you should be proud to be a part of the South Dakota Synod, and the good work that the synod office has been putting into creating a system to help pastors deal with education, costs, and placement. They are seeking unique and creative ways to address the concerns that the church on the prairie (and in the cities, too) face. But no matter how effective they are, without the encouragement and support of the people and congregations of the South Dakota Synod, speaking with and to those with skills to help lead this church in its mission, we’ll fall short.

At the risk of repetition, I’ll reiterate what was in this report last year, I’ll repeat: “...it is the congregational members and pastors who have the best ability to change this. Do you know a pastor who might like a change? Have you promoted the synod resources and direction – feeding the hungry, physically and spiritually, as well as our “Listen God Is Calling” appeal to keep pastors on the prairie? Your words, your invitation, may be just what’s needed.”

I am thankful for the prayerful support of the STM Committee for each other and the congregations of South Dakota in the midst of change; their familiarity with, and concern for, congregations throughout the synod as they ask difficult questions and deal with difficult situations; their joyful conversation and uplifting spirit in the midst of ministry.

Thank you also to Susan Marone, AIM (Associate to the Bishop), the Rev. David Zellmer, (Bishop), and Crystal McCormick, (Candidacy and Mobility Office Coordinator) for direction, encouragement, and support.

Thank you, also, to the congregations of the synod for your prayerful support and concerns.

In Christ’s Service,  
David

## Campus Ministry - Collegians In Christ's Service (CICS) at Northern State University

*Ashley Geist-Cusick, Director*

Greetings from Northern State! It has been a year filled with many blessings here at NSU and I am honored to share some of the highlights from our year with you below.

**Our Service Learning trip to Texas was again, a highlight of our year.** The trip included nine student members and two leaders serving at the Bokencamp Children's Shelter for unaccompanied migrant youth from Central and South America.

Our group had the opportunity to share in praise music, crafts, Bible stories, and praying with these amazing youth. We also learned a great deal about immigration and had the opportunity to provide encouragement and support to the staff at the Bokencamp shelter. We also served at the Food Bank of South Texas by packing food boxes and at Metro Ministries by helping clean in their medical clinic, organizing donations, cleaning and organizing in the women's shelter, and conducting an evening of crafts and Bible stories at the shelter for women and children. Every one of our participants also led devotions during the trip.



While in Texas the students also visited several learning locations including the USS Lexington Museum on the Bay, the Art Museum of South Texas, the Texas State Aquarium, and Malaquite Beach National Park.



Each student who has been on these trips has said that they are life changing! We thank our supporters including all of our local personal donors & ELCA congregations, Support to Ministries and the Northern Plains Conference for making these trips a reality for our NSU students. These learning experiences would not be possible without the generosity of many, and we are thankful for this support!

**Above:** Students at the Bokencamp Shelter: Cody Folden, Alicia Lorig, Brandon Vockrodt, Olivia Forman, Cody Klein, Megan Vockrodt, and Charles Sersen.

**Above Right:** Brandon Vockrodt of Pierre visits the Gulf of Mexico at Malaquite Beach, National Park.

### *Other Highlights Include.....*

- Celebrating the graduations of nine senior members.
- Winning the NSU award for Service Project of the Year for the third year in a row and were nominated for outstanding senior, outstanding student leader, outstanding freshman, outstanding advisor, and outstanding program.

-10 of our students plus our leader attending the Peer Ministry Training workshop with Lyle Gienger presented at Bethlehem Lutheran in October.

- Donating over 52 hours of service to the Aberdeen community between our Fall Food Drive and the Christmas Day of Service which included Christmas caroling at nursing homes, making blankets, and more, all in one day.

-Conducting a campus wide donation for toiletry items for our local women's shelter this Christmas

-Worshipping, learning & having fun with Wednesday worship, three Bible Studies per week, and a fun social event on most Fridays. We have also welcomed four faculty & staff guest speakers from the NSU community at our weekly services and many of our local ELCA pastors.

-Collaborating with other NSU ministries for a welcome back picnic in the fall and a Christian music night on campus.



***At left, top:*** CICS Peer Ministry team, Director and members attend Peer Ministry Training in October.

***At left, lower:*** CICS group photo of students attending the Annual Celebration Gala in 2015.

***Below, right:*** Group from the 2015 Spring Retreat to camp Nesodak near Waubay, SD. We welcomed CICS Board President, Pastor Liz Dieseth from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Aberdeen as a guest presenter.



Last spring brought us another successful Annual Celebration Gala which helps to send our students on Service Learning trips and to spread the message of Campus Ministry at NSU.

The gala included conversation between students, board members, parents and donors, a slideshow presentation of the year's activities, recognition of our graduating seniors, a silent auction, and an evening of fellowship complete with dinner and dancing.

Funds raised at the gala were used to defray expenses for our Service Learning trip in 2015 to Corpus Christi, Texas.

This March also brought another successful gala night where we raised funds to defray costs for this spring's trip to Washington, D.C. along with other regular activities like weekly worship and Java with Jesus Bible study & discussion. Last Friday 6 students participated in our new, local mini faith retreat that was a huge success!



## **Campus Ministry Report**

### **The Luther Center at USD, Vermillion SD**

The Fall semester began with a bit of a slow start with Pastor Andy leaving. The call process hasn't yet been quite fruitful, and the discussion began on hiring an interim director. The students all decided that if the Luther Center's focus was on creating leaders for the future of the church, we might as well get started. I have been acting as the interim director for a full semester now, and it has been a great experience. Most of the students asked to chip in and utilize our talents in order to keep the Luther Center functioning without delay. So far, our activities include :

Organizing worship services for middle school children and their families, worshipping at St. Dymas in Springfield SD, ringing bells for the Salvation Army, as well as several community building events. Most prominent of the activities would be our Wednesday meals and Worship, Monday tea'ology (drink tea and talk Jesus), And LC @ OLC (church outside the walls). We have awarded a scholarship for a graduate student who is going on a trip to Guatemala to fit and equip immobile persons for wheelchairs. However, I myself have the most appreciation for your support to us, for I am being exposed most directly to life in ministry. Because of this opportunity and your support , I now have greater knowledge and appreciation for what the church is and how it operates.

We have made an intentional effort to practice the art of asking questions and seeking answers both in the text and in daily life. The question we are exploring now is "Where do we encounter Christ?". It has overwhelmingly allowed us to observe that Christ can be found just about everywhere our eyes can see, our ears can hear, or hearts can feel.

The beginning of the spring semester was very energetic, as the students had a more confident voice in the ministry setting. The music talent has flourished, as we have utilized music from all over the spectrum, bringing in pop music, classic rock music, camp songs, and hymns from the blue book. The students also seem to have taken quite the interest in service. Much like the fall semester, we have another student taking interest in service in the country of Guatemala. This time we awarded the same scholarship for the student, but she will be more focused on assisting in environmental sustainability measures. We continue the same type of events, Teaology, LC @ OLC, and both of these programs allow for time, and conversation spent on the gospel and ministry in this day and age.

During the lent season, the students have had a chance to hear some of the area pastors speak, as we had a "round robin" scenario. For the students to become more aware of different voices in the rural setting, this was the perfect experience.

We have also introduced some of our musicians to local churches to play special music, and this was also great exposure to see the different settings in which God's word takes place. We have continued to ask the question "where do we encounter Christ?" and it seems that the only place he is not, is in the tomb!(Easter sermon).

We have a lot to look forward to as a majority of the students will be returning next year (two are graduating). We are also very hopeful that the call process is advancing, and that we might get back into full swing. Thank you once again for all of the support, and your part in keeping campus ministry alive!

Submitted by Shadoe Hanson

## **LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY AT BLACK HILLS STATE UNIVERSITY**

The second academic year of the cooperative ministry agreement between the Lutheran Campus Ministries at BHSU and SDSMT has been filled with blessings and challenges. At BHSU, this year we had a great group of students who were active at both of our weekly gatherings on Mondays and Wednesdays. The students loved getting to know congregational members over the meals, and getting to have in-depth conversations about faith and life. In partnership with the students from LCM at SDSMT, we were able to volunteer together and serve a community meal at Thanksgiving, and joined in fellowship through hiking and exploring the Black Hills. The Adopt-A-Mom program continues to serve student mothers on our campus, and this summer, six active participant families will be attending family camp at Outlaw Ranch. We look forward to next year, when we plan to expand programming to include more students and opportunities for service. Thank you for your generous support of LCM at BHSU!

Rachel Nelson  
Lutheran Campus Ministry  
Black Hills State University  
The Living Room  
810 N. Yale Street  
Spearfish, SD 57783  
lutherancm.bhsu@yahoo.com  
605.641.7661

## **LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY AT SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF MINES & TECHNOLOGY**

The second academic year of the cooperative ministry agreement between the Lutheran Campus Ministries at BHSU and SDSMT has been filled with blessings and challenges. At SDSM&T we continue to enjoy weekly worship on Sundays, Bible study on Tuesdays and fellowship over lunch on Thursdays. We have been active on campus stocking the food shelf, assisting with the MLK day of service, delivering Thanksgiving baskets to families in need, and joining in fellowship with the Mines Buddies program. In partnership with the students from LCM at BHSU, we were able to volunteer together and serve a community meal at Thanksgiving, and joined in fellowship through hiking and exploring the Black Hills. We look forward to next year, when we plan to expand programming to include more students and opportunities for service. Thank you for your generous support of LCM at SDSM&T!

Rachel Nelson  
Lutheran Campus Ministry  
South Dakota School of Mines & Technology  
The Luther House  
324 E. St. Joseph Street  
Rapid City, SD 57701  
lcmsdsmt@gmail.com  
605.641.7661

## South Dakota Synod Candidacy Report 2016

The South Dakota Synod is blessed with 46 individuals, or candidates, that seek to become rostered leaders in the ELCA. As these candidates make this journey to become leaders in our church, there are 15 individuals from throughout the SD Synod, both pastors and lay people that walk with the candidates on their journey. The individuals walking with the candidates are members of the SD Synod Candidacy Committee.

Candidates for rostered leadership in the ELCA pass three mileposts: applicant for entrance, endorsement, and finally approval for leadership in the ELCA. The Candidacy Committee meets to discuss with the candidates the process of candidacy and major steps in candidacy. A relator from the Candidacy Committee is assigned to each candidate to walk with them on their journey to become a rostered leader in the ELCA.

The SD Synod has been blessed with money that has been given by individuals, organizations, endowments and foundations for scholarships for those in candidacy. The Candidacy Scholarship Committee in 2015 awarded \$184,565.80 in scholarships to 21 individuals on this journey to become rostered leaders in the ELCA.

The Candidacy Committee feels that God is truly calling us to join with our member congregations in the South Dakota Synod to give out of our abundance to the “Listen God is Calling Campaign”. This provides all of us the opportunity to invest in leadership development for the church for future generations by providing our financial support for a future generation of new pastors and rostered leaders. Please prayerfully consider your gift or an additional gift to the “Listen God is Calling Campaign.”

All of us as members of congregations of the SD Synod, are called to play an important role in talking with and encouraging individuals that have the qualities to become new pastors and rostered leaders in the ELCA. As Paul writes in Romans Chapter 12 of the different gifts of Christian service, we are called to lift up those with gifts to become leaders in our church.

Finally, continue to pray for your pastors, rostered leaders, Synod Staff and members of the Synod Committees to continue God’s work being done in this world with our hands.

If you have any questions about Candidacy, please contact [Susan Marone, AIM](mailto:smarone@sdsynod.org), Associate to the Bishop, [smarone@sdsynod.org](mailto:smarone@sdsynod.org), phone: 605/274-4022; or [Crystal McCormick](mailto:emccormick@sdsynod.org), Candidacy and Mobility Office Coordinator, [emccormick@sdsynod.org](mailto:emccormick@sdsynod.org), phone: 605/274-4024. Or click on: <http://www.sdsynod.org/candidacy>

## **Report Multicultural Committee 2016 - By Natanael Lizarazo, Chair**

As Synod's Multicultural Committee, it is our joy and responsibility to provide leadership for ethnic-specific ministries. Given the fast demographic changes taking place in South Dakota, mission opportunities abound for sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with new immigrants, refugees and ethnically-specific communities. God is always inviting us to embrace the amazing diversity which we see reflected in gas stations, grocery stores and in every aspect of daily life.

Our Committee represents all seven conferences and works in collaboration with the Evangelical Outreach Committee. This facilitates greater participation and fluid communication. Though geography is wide-spread, the use of technology allows us to participate in meetings without spending traveling time or significant financial resources. Face-to-face meetings do take place as well. Current members are Rev. Bill Schrub, Rev. Daryl Schubert, Gayle Cole, Rev. Natanael Lizarazo, Daniel Gayetaye, Rev. Kwen Sanderson, Sheldon Engen, Rev. Tim Sersen, Connie Woehlhaff, Rev. Chris Baesler, Dennis Paulson, Rev. Karen Ressel, Sarah Holz, Rev. David Piper, Rev. Herb Wounded Head, Rev. Art Weitschat, Jim Bishop and Rev. Bill Tesch.

Our core responsibilities are: (1) advise the Evangelical Outreach Committee on matters related to the oversight/funding of ethnic specific ministries (2) develop strategies to help us become a more multicultural church (3) advocate with and for ethnic communities at every level of ministry and leadership in our Synod, and stand in solidarity with people who experience injustice (4) teach the people of our Synod how to listen and interact with different cultures, so that there may be a mutual blessing (5) encourage congregations and leaders who are involved in multicultural ministry (6) seek generous giving and participation from churches, individuals, and organizations toward the cause of multicultural ministry.

The ethnic specific ministries we accompany are: Lakota Retreat Center in Pine Ridge, Woyatan Lutheran Church (Rapid City), Intentional Young Adult Community (Rosebud), Pueblo de Dios (Sioux Falls) First Lutheran African Ministry (Sioux Falls). These ministries keep moving forward in proactive ways. Significant highlights we celebrate include a very positive ministry review of Pueblo de Dios, the calling of Pastor Henrique Fleming to serve Woyatan Lutheran Church and of Abraham Gayetaye as spiritual leader of First Lutheran African Ministry.

As we address our growing ethnic diversity, it is critically important we make these ministries visible, invest in leadership development and provide greater participation for people of color in our shared life. Alongside five other synods in the region, we have entered into a relationship with Agora, a multicultural network housed at Luther Seminary in St Paul MN. Through Agora we completed two different training courses at Pueblo de Dios and one at First Lutheran African Ministry. On behalf of our Synod's Multicultural Committee, we joyfully invite you to support these ethnic-specific ministries with your ongoing prayers and financial resources.

## **Evangelical Outreach Committee Report to the Synod Assembly 2016**

The Evangelical Outreach Committee, in coordination with the Multi-cultural Committee of our synod works with these ministries in South Dakota:

1. Pueblo de Dios, Sioux Falls
2. African Ministry at First Lutheran, Sioux Falls
3. Native American ministries:
  - a. Woyatan, Rapid City
  - b. Pine Ridge
  - c. Wopila House

The committee helps these ministries with their funding, supporting their pastoral leadership, and encouraging them in their ministry.

The committee works also to develop or redevelop outreach ministries through staffing, funding and other support. Current developing or redeveloping congregations are:

1. Westside Lutheran, Sioux Falls
2. First Lutheran, Newell
3. A congregation being developed at Harrisburg
4. "Church on the Street," A new ministry among the homeless in downtown Sioux Falls.

We also work to promote renewal in congregations and have done so by sponsoring GIFT (Growing In Faith Together) events for congregations and a retreat for rural pastors during the year.

The Committee offered scholarships this year to its members and Synod leaders interested in learning more about developing "House Churches" to attend an event regarding various models of this innovative yet historic approach for building God's Church.

**Report to SD Synod Assembly 2016 - by Natanael Lizarazo,  
Coordinator Companion Synods**

"For the rendering of this service supplies the needs of the saints and overflows in many thanksgivings to God". 2 Cor. 9:12. Overflowing generosity! Ministering to the saints! Thanksgivings to God! These realities do inspire our mission relationships with The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon and The Lutheran Church of Faith & Hope of Nicaragua.

With the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon we facilitate communication, collaborative relationships and shared work with our ELCA Global Mission Unit and with other mission companions in the United States and Canada. Our Synod is part of the Cameroon Network which just met in April at our Synod's offices to share experiences and coordinate ongoing mission efforts. At this Assembly we celebrate the presence of Bishop Ruben Ngozo and the unique opportunity we have to review with him our mission priorities. Bishop Ngozo will preach in three congregations, speak at our Mission Prayer Breakfast, preach at our Assembly closing worship and share the mission of the Lutheran Church of Cameroon in other ministry settings.

Projects which continue in **Cameroon** are the Roofs for Congregations, Train up a Child, support for the Hospitals of Garoua Boulai and Ngaoundere, Women Sewing Project and Seminary Scholarships at Meiganga. Improving housing facilities for students at the Seminary in Meiganga is also possibility **These projects do require a commitment of over \$120,000 per year.**

Milestones related to the Lutheran Church of Faith & Hope of Nicaragua (**ILFE by its acronym in Spanish**) included ILFE's 25th Anniversary which Bishop Zellmer and others from our Synod were honored to attend last July. While in Nicaragua we reviewed our shared mission priorities: Green Project of Cedro Galan, Facilities at Cedro Galan, Synod's missionary, elementary schools, synod's pastor to teach/preach during Reformation week, youth exchanges and the Women Training Center in Masaya. **These projects require a commitment of about \$90,000 per year.**

A timely project in Nicaragua right now is improving the facilities at Cedro Galan, the national training center for ILFE, expected to be done by August. Improvements include upgrading bathroom, kitchen, dining and sleeping facilities. The cost is U\$50,000 of which we have raised \$20,000. We are inviting congregations and its ministry organizations to consider mission gifts ranging from \$500 -\$1,500. For a visit or additional information, contact Pastor Natanael or a member of our Companion Synods Committee at [companion-synod@sdsynod.org](mailto:companion-synod@sdsynod.org) or at 605-261-7450. A description of this project along with photos can be found at our Synod's website.

As we move forward, it is vitally important to realize the huge impact these relationships have for the mission we share. It is also critically important to commit ourselves to ongoing prayer, visits and sharing of financial resources. Whether our gifts go for Cameroon or Nicaragua, they glorify God! Specific descriptions of these projects can be found in our Synod's webpage. **Thank you people of God in the South Dakota Synod for your ongoing mission generosity!**

## **South Dakota Synodical Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Report to the South Dakota Synod Assembly, 2016

The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Synodical Convention of the South Dakota Women of the ELCA was held June 26-27 at Faith Lutheran, Rapid City. There were 86 registered attendees. The theme was “Be Transformed” and the theme verse was Romans 12:1-2—“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Our pre-convention event included a chuck wagon dinner and entertainment at Fort Hayes and the Lighting Ceremony at Mount Rushmore. We thank the women at Faith Lutheran for a delightful convention experience. The 2016 convention is scheduled for First Lutheran in Mitchell June 24 & 25, 2016. The theme is “Daughters of the King”. We plan to celebrate our sisterhood in Christ and our place as beloved daughters in the Kingdom of God. We invite all women of all ages to join us.

Planning is underway for many women from the South Dakota Synodical organization to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Triennial Convention and Gathering in Minneapolis in July, 2017. Eight voting members from our synod will be selected at the convention in Mitchell and our Triennial Coordinator, Darla Toben, is working on arranging bus transportation for those interested in attending the Gathering. This event will likely never be any closer for us than this, so we hope to have many participating. Work is underway in cooperation with churchwide to bring a woman from one or both of our companion synods (Cameroon and Nicaragua) to the States to attend the Triennial Gathering and visit the conferences within our synod during the summer of 2017.

Women of the South Dakota Synod continue to reach out in service with quilts and kits sent to Lutheran World Relief, gifts to local food pantries, support for persons in crises, and to “the church, the society, and the world.” (Purpose statement of the Women of the ELCA) I commend the women of our synod for the creative and thoughtful ways that they serve in their communities, becoming the hands, feet, and heart of the church in action.

Women of the ELCA provide quilts and other handmade items for the annual Lutherans Outdoors quilt auctions, providing support for the young campers in our synod. Local women continue to meet for Bible study—many using the Gather magazine published by the churchwide organization. This year we have focused attention on bringing the Dina Johnson Scholarship up to the amount required to be fully endowed, thus insuring that this scholarship to an Augustana University student can continue to be awarded.

We welcome the women of the Wyotan community in Rapid City who have recently formed a unit of Women of the ELCA. We look forward to formally greeting them at our convention in Mitchell in June.

Our goal is to continue to work creatively and think “outside the box” to reach women of all ages and vocations to become an active part of the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to bring new ideas, new hope, new joy into our work together.

Glenda Ofstehage, President



# The State of South Dakota

## *Helping Members be Wise with Money and Live Generously*

As a membership organization of Christians, we have 49,083 members in the State of South Dakota who are our owners. Our purpose is to serve our members and society by guiding both to be wise with money and live generously. We believe that all we have is a gift from God and that generosity is an expression of faith. We succeed when our members, their families and their communities thrive.

### ***Statewide Member Involvement - 2015***

Our members don't just raise money. They raise people up by building homes, serving food, assisting a neighbor in need and more. And because we're a membership organization, members often get together just to have fun.

- 144,077 members and others participated in Thrivent Action Team and other member activities in the State of South Dakota resulting in 294,448 volunteer hours. Funds raised through these local activities total \$5,013,536 which was combined with \$639,510 from Thrivent to increase the impact.
- 1,197 people were involved, along with the Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity program, in building 4 homes and repairing another 6 in the State of South Dakota which impacted 28 individuals.
  - 8,019 members in the State of South Dakota directed \$1,308,363 in Choice Dollars to 1,156 enrolled churches and organizations.

### ***National Impact - 2015***

- \$2 billion paid out to member families/beneficiaries through insurance and annuity benefits.
- \$187.4 billion life insurance in force, ready to help when needed.
- \$203.9 million in total outreach with \$100.3 million provided by Thrivent and additional \$103.6 million raised and donated by members and supporters.
- 313,700 Thrivent members directed \$54.3 million Thrivent Choice Dollars to 29,196 enrolled churches, schools, social ministries and other nonprofits.

### ***Support from the Thrivent Financial Foundation - 2015***

The Thrivent Financial Foundation provides grants to Christian and other nonprofit groups nationwide. The Foundation awarded more than \$8.6 million in 2015, of which \$4 million was from employee matched gifts.

For more information, please visit <http://www.thrivent.com> or <http://www.thriventbuilds.com> or <http://www.thriventfoundation.com>