



**South Dakota Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## **June 2020 Congregation Newsletter Inserts and Resources**

*Congregations of the South Dakota Synod are invited to use any of the following newsletter inserts for their regular newsletter schedules. These short articles are written by members of the staff and our partners in ministry.*

### **From the Bishop's Desk**

Lutheran Social Services in South Dakota (LSS SD) and the South Dakota Synod office have had a longstanding relationship for the sake of ministry to the neighbor. As I began my call as your Bishop, we were faced with flooding across the eastern part of the state, which followed a long winter, wet spring and summer. I reached out to LSS SD to see if we can partner to bring hope and tools to be a caring neighbor to the neighbor in our rural communities. I especially asked about a tool that can be accessed from the comfort of one's home to empower the individual to be confident about reaching out with a message of hope and practical steps to a neighbor that might be hurting. LSS SD went to work and developed such a web-based tool, called Psychological First Aid. This is a web based self guided resource that allows lay people and rostered leaders alike to acquire new skills in times of stress and grief to walk alongside community members with confidence and hope. Please look for detailed instructions on how to access and utilize this tool to the well-being of your community in the coming weeks. Thank you LSS SD for your partnership in ministry and you, ministry site partner, for being a good neighbor. Well done, good and faithful servants.

Journeying with you in Christ,  
Bishop Constanze

### **Blessings in the midst of chaos**

*Rev. Jonathan Steiner*

Although our world has been rather chaotic lately, there are still so many things to give thanks for. God has blessed us with a life together, with a community to be part of, and with blessings in so many shapes and forms. One of those blessings is that we are stewards, caretakers of God's creation and everything in it. How are you taking care of what God has entrusted to you?

How might you share your blessings with your neighbors?

### **General Ministry Housekeeping**

*Crystal McCormick*

#### **ELCA World Hunger:**

More than 820 million people in our world today are undernourished. As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are called to respond. Working with our neighbors in the United States and in more than 60 countries around the world, we start by listening and learning about how we can accompany them to help break the cycle of hunger and poverty — for good. From water wells to animal husbandry, microloans to health clinics, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger. And they don't stop there. We engage Lutherans in advocacy and hunger education to act and speak in ways that can make a difference. We rely on your gifts. ELCA World Hunger is funded solely by gifts from ELCA members and congregations such as yours. Thank you for making this work possible through learning, action, prayer and giving. Visit <https://elca.org/hunger> for ways to give and get involved.

#### **Subscribe to the Synod News:**

A good way to stay informed and updated is to subscribe to the Synod news. This can be done by visiting <https://sdsynod.org/> and inserting your email address into the box at the bottom of the home screen where it says "sign-up for Synod news" and hit the yellow subscribe button. We will keep you informed as postponed events get rescheduled as well as continue to share reliable information and resources regarding COVID-19 and how our ministries are moving forward amidst these times.

#### **Higher Income + Lower Taxes = Generosity**

*Kathy McHenry, Executive Director*  
*Lutheran Planned Giving of South Dakota*

School might be out for the summer, but this is one equation you'll want to remember. Charitable gift annuities offer a guaranteed fixed income for life, a current tax deduction AND the opportunity to create a legacy with a gift that makes a huge difference in the ministries you care about. Rates depend on age and the number of people receiving income, i.e. couples, parent and child, etc. If you're 75 and single, the current rate is 5.8%, with a significant portion income tax-free. Lutheran Planned Giving of South Dakota ([lpgsd.org](http://lpgsd.org)) is a free service offered to you by the South Dakota Synod

of the ELCA and our partners. If you have questions about charitable gift annuities or how to make the most tax-efficient gifts, both now and as a part of a legacy plan, **contact Kathy McHenry at 605.274.5030 or [kmchenry@sdsynod.org](mailto:kmchenry@sdsynod.org)**.

## **Creating Connections**

*Sawyer Vanden Heuvel*

In this physically distanced world, creating connections with one another is important now, more than ever. Throughout this pandemic time, I've realized my need for face-to-face interaction. As someone who is more on the introverted side, I thought I would get along just great working from home, but what I'm finding now is how I long for our connectivity again. Those casual conversations around the office, at church, or gatherings with friends.

**I want to invite you to two great opportunities that the ELCA has to offer for youth and young adults.**

### **ABIDE:**

All who are 18 - 35 are welcome to be a part of this small group community for 1 hour / week!

Registration will be open until May 27.

Group meetings start June 1. If you miss out on summer registration, stay tuned for more opportunities to connect.

Groups will use published abide videos, and previous participants are welcome to join again or sign up to be small group leaders! Learn more by connecting with the ELCA Young Adults on social media @ELCAYoungAdults.

### **PASSAGE:**

A sister program to ABIDE, PASSAGE will connect graduated high school seniors to young adult small group leaders.

Based on Isaiah 43, PASSAGE will be centered on mutual support and wrestling with faith and life in times of transition.

Registration for graduated seniors opens May 27!

Groups meet June 15 - July 31.

Learn more at [elcayouthministry.com/passage/](http://elcayouthministry.com/passage/)