

God's Mission Our Synod

Where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ



Lower Susquehanna Synod

God's work. Our hands.



A Reconciling in Christ Synod

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The Widow of Zarephath

1 Kings 17:8–16

⁸Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah, saying, ⁹“Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.” ¹⁰So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, “Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.” ¹¹As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, “Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” ¹²But she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.” ¹³Elijah said to her, “Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth.” ¹⁵She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. ¹⁶The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.



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Questions

- What hungers do you see?
- Where do you see fear from feeling there is not enough? In the community, in the church?
- How have you experienced the abundance of God?



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Vision and Mission of Our Synod

Lower Susquehanna Synod is where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ.

- The 3 E's
 - Equip Leaders
 - Encourage Cooperation
 - Engage in New Mission

ELCA Future Directions

- **We are confident about who we are in Christ and what God is calling us to do.**
- **Our Shared Purpose**
 - Together in Jesus Christ we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly and serve joyfully.
- **Our Vision**
 - A world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation.
- **Priorities**
 - ELCA Leadership
 - Congregational Vitality

Congregational Vitality

As the ELCA looks ahead to the future, we aspire to have congregations whose faith shines in their relationships with God, each other and their community. Vital congregations experience heightened worship, prayer, study of scripture, and sharing of testimony as they discern the presence and will of God in their midst.

- Relationship with God
- Relationship within the Congregation
- Relationship with the Community

R3

- ReForm, ReNew, ReVision
 - Form New Vision
- Relationship, Relationship, Relationship
- Synod wide renewal program
 - Started at the 2017 Assembly
 - 23 Congregations
 - 18 Months of Training
 - Coaches
 - Cohort Groups
 - Now one year in



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R3 Stories

Click on the photo to start the video.



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How is this Happening?

- It Takes Resources
- Mission Support
 - Congregations Support the Mission of the Synod the ELCA
 - Every Dollar
 - 94.6% in Congregations
 - 2.9% to Synods
 - 2.5% to the ELCA

Synod Mission Resources

- Synod Mission Support 5 years Trends
 - Cut \$300,000 in operations
 - Less 1% to New Mission up to 18%
 - Communities of Hope – Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali
 - Peter's Porch
 - Word of Life Deaf Ministry
 - Homeless Outreach
 - The Tribe
 - R3 in 23 Congregations
 - Missional Readiness



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Mission Fund

- Lebanon Lutheran Cooperative Ministry Relocation Feasibility Study
- South Sudanese Worshiping Community
- Trinity, Rouzerville
- Peter's Porch
- Communities of Hope
- Paul Hoffman (Mentoring)
- St. Peter, Middletown, Youth and Family Min.
- Union, York,
- St. Paul, Carlisle, satellite ministry
- Harrisburg Area Youth Initiative
- Street pastor for Messiah, Harrisburg, to concentrate on the food pantry, advocacy, and legal issues
- St. Bartholomew United, Hanover, to expand Christian yoga

Over \$250,000 in the last four years to grow the God's Mission Here



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Always Being Made New Campaign

- Five Year Comprehensive Campaign 2014-2019
 - ELCA Ministries
 - Synod Ministries
- Areas
 - Congregations
 - Leadership
 - Hunger and Poverty
 - Global Church



Where are we?

- We have met our ELCA Goal of 2.75 Million for ELCA ministries
- We have raised over \$900,000 for synod Ministries
 - Camps
 - Synod Disaster Funding
 - Synod Hunger Projects
 - Mission Fund
 - Seminary
 - Youth and Young Adults

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We have been listening - Areas of Growth

- Develop new models for congregational life together that help us nurture deeper connections with God, one another, and the world.
- Deepen the faith lives of our youngest members in their first third of life.
- Deepen the faith of existing lay leadership and inspire new disciples to nurture vital congregations.

We have been listening - Areas of Growth

- Speak and teach about the relationship between Jesus, justice, and the Christian life.
- Start new missions that re-root us in gospel-starved communities.
- Strengthen our leaders to proclaim God's Word with passion and power.

Hungry for God's Mission

- The World is Changing Quickly
- What once worked in proclaiming the gospel may not work in the future
- The Church does not have a Mission, God's Mission has a church
- People all around are Hungry for the Good News of Christ
- We need to walk together
- Synod – the way together