



## OUR PEOPLE REPORT

### From Bishop Jim Arends

Bishop of the La Crosse Area Synod

Friday evening's worship gathering heard a gentle but powerful meditation on fear among the faithful, beginning with the disciples in Mark 16 who ran from the empty tomb, too afraid to tell or even acknowledge the Good News. Bishop

Arends didn't just name those fears for us, he evoked them from us, and helped us name them. It was a moment of clarity, considering the response of the listeners, who wrote their fears and brought them to the cross at the front of the room. The evening closed with a braver church.

### From Rev. Libby Howe

Director for Evangelical Mission  
Assistant to the Bishop

The church in Timothy's time was subject to a variety of harassment for its cultural deviation. The church has always found it convenient to 'spiritualize' its faith in order to minimize conflicts that often resulted when they lived out their faith. They feared being identified as too different. The culture we live in is also too interested in drawing the line between 'us and them' Paul to Timothy, "God gave us a spirit of power and love and of self-discipline." Power for Christians is further defined by the rest of the statement, power because of love and self-discipline. Thus our power is strategic in our conversation with the world. Can we dare be brave enough to think of our conversation as having that kind of power?



**H. Julian Gordy**, Bishop, the Southeastern Synod, our companion synod in the ELCA. Bishop Gordy gave us a quick and friendly description of this astoundingly unique ELCA Synod that is our companion synod. It covers four entire states: Mississippi Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee Less than 0.2% of the population

is Lutheran; yet they have 83 active candidates for ministry (The La Crosse Area Synod currently has three). It is also called the "disaster" synod, because it borders the Gulf, the Atlantic, and contains the southern tornado alley. In the last decade the synod grew by sixty congregations. Two, in Nashville and Atlanta are Swahili language congregations. Read more at: <https://www.elca-ses.org/>



**It is all online!** For a fascinating and complete look at the **2018 Assembly**, and to **review it** for reporting to your congregation, visit the webpage and enjoy it all again!

<http://www.lacrosseareasynd.org/>

Check out the webpage for our new companion Synod!

<https://www.e-cirkev.cz/>

## from the TREASURER

The 2019 proposed budget reflects a 2.08% increase in total expenditures when compared to the 2018 approved budget passed by the 2017 Synod Assembly. Total expenditures for the 2019 proposed budget equaled \$837,293 compared to the 2018 approved expenditures equaling \$820,224. As in the past years, the 2019 proposed budget does reflect a net loss. The 2017 budget was approved with a net loss result; however, 2017 actual activity resulted in a net income. This occurred due to the generosity of our congregations and Synod staff keeping expenses under budgeted amounts.

## WORLD HUNGER PROJECT: SHEEP !!!

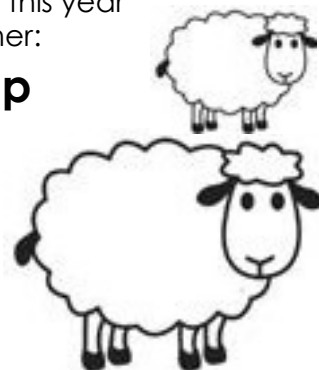
The Hunger Project this year has brought together:

**122 sheep**

and has collected as of 6 pm 6/9

**\$ 53.533.29**

in checks for the ELCA World Hunger project.



## REPORT OF THE ELCA



### Worship as Holy Engagement and Imagination

Kevin Strickland, Assistant to the Presiding Bishop, Exec for Worship

Pastor Strickland grew up and studied within the bounds of the Southeast Synod, and the ministry of the Lutheran church there changed his life, and he testified to its powerful message of grace continuing to exert that power in the world to change lives. He brought greetings from ELCA churchwide and described the worldwide projects of our denomination, and praised our deepening associations with the Czech Brethren. He reminded us that everyone one of us made promises at the font, at baptisms and affirmations, promises that have changed the world. "Even a dollar in the offering plate changes the world." He recalled for us the four simple statements that fully define our ministry in the ELCA:

**We are church  
We are Lutheran  
We are church together  
We are church for the sake of the world**

## Upcoming

### La Crosse Area Synod - School of Theology

Increase your knowledge and skills, and get your important questions addressed at our own school of theology, open to members of the La Crosse Area Synod and their friends.

Courses available:

**Bible - 6 courses, Church History - 3 courses  
Theology - 6 courses, Ministry Skills - 6 courses  
Spiritual Development - 2 courses**

Next scheduled course:

### INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

Thu, September 27, 5:30-9:00 pm, Peace Lutheran Church-Tomah Call: 608-343-7322  
(leave a message)

### God's Work Our Hands - Day of Service

Sunday, September 9, 2018 has been designated God's Work Our Hands Sunday. For more ideas and planning resources go to:

<https://www.elca.org/dayofservice>

## Holy Experiments

An invitation to innovate ministry and share with the synod. We had some early and inspirational experiments shared at this assembly, From:

**De Soto & Freeman Lutheran Churches** from Pr Lori Kleppe. Wednesday after school program meets every other week during the school year for elementary grade children with a purpose of nurturing relationship with God, one another and the world. We learn to be the body of Christ alive in God's world as we come together for fellowship and worship. Our young people study the upcoming gospel reading using a children's bulletin and then at 4:30 pm enter the sanctuary to hear God's Word and receive the sacrament where they serve as worship leaders, greeters, ushers, custodian, altar guild and more. Our children love Kids' Praise. They are growing in faith and being followers of Jesus.

**Grace Lutheran in Elroy**, from Carrie Krueger and Tracy Gibeaut. The congregation wanted to help increase the interest and participation of young members. They initiated a Wednesday night gathering for families with young children: *Wednesday Evening Bible Stories*, where two songs were practiced, go to church, families bring their children, do crafts, puppets, hear the stories. Kids love telling Bible stories with the puppets- practice songs for Sunday. The kids recognize that the whole thing is THEIRS and oriented to them. They close by making a big circle, sing a song, pass a blessing around, "Jesus loves you, and you are blessed." It is delightful to see and hear a 3-year-old do that for the first time.

## RESOLUTIONS

**R1 to Protect the Human Rights of Palestinian Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation:** PASSED

**R2 Feed My Sheep:** PASSED

Synod congregations are strongly encouraged to designate at least one World Hunger Sunday each year.

**R3 Regarding the Farm Bill:** PASSED

**R4 Regarding the Separation of Immigrant Children from Parents** PASSED

**Read the text and background of these resolutions at the link:**

<http://www.lacrosseareasynd.org/2018-synod-assembly>