



**Office of the Presiding Bishop**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Spring 2010

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In Advent, I invited you to dwell in words from Paul's letter to the Romans:

*Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand.* Romans 5:1–2a

This spring, as we gather for the 2010 synod assemblies, we are standing together in God's grace, but we are not standing still. Through God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is fully engaged in the mission of proclaiming Christ and caring for the world that God so deeply loves.

This journey together in Christ does not lead us away from difficulties: neither the earthshaking tragedy in Haiti, nor the discernment, disagreements and decisions of congregations and individuals, nor economic hardship in a global recession, nor any of the other challenges we encounter in communities and households.

Instead, in the midst of it all, God meets us in a renewing word:

*So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.* 2 Corinthians 5:17–18

This word, read during the Lenten season, renews both our identity and our calling. God has given us the grace to stand and to serve in a place filled with promise and opportunity. As the apostle Paul wrote to the Romans, God's Holy Spirit is being poured out so that hope abounds and love fills our hearts (Romans 5:4–5).

Trusting that God's new creation is made evident in and through us, we rejoice that:

- Directors for evangelical mission are prepared, based in synods and ready to serve so that all ELCA congregations are growing as evangelical centers for mission.
- Synod-based partners in evangelical worship are being identified to assist congregations as we seek to be an evangelizing church centered in the means of grace.
- The ELCA's priority for developing new congregations continues. In 2009, 32 new congregations were planted, many in ethnic-specific or multicultural communities, among people living in poverty, and in urban areas. Camino de Vida, a new congregation under development in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is a joint new start with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Mission Developer Jaime Guillermo Yela welcomed more than 400 people for the first worship service in December 2009.
- Leadership is the focus for young adults of African Descent who, in response to "Elisha's Call," are identifying at least 100 new young adult leaders within their communities.
- Creativity abounds through the Book of Faith Initiative as congregations and colleges gather around Scripture in coffee shops and pubs, in homes and in dorm rooms. In one congregation, confirmation students receive Bibles in which their parents, mentors, sponsors and pastors have already marked their favorite passages.
- Social media is playing a vital new role in connecting people to this church. The ELCA News Service transmits releases in real-time via Twitter ([twitter.com/elcanews](http://twitter.com/elcanews)). More than 13,000 fans on the ELCA Facebook page ([facebook.com/Lutherans](http://facebook.com/Lutherans)) share stories, encouragement and prayers online.

The Book of Faith site ([www.bookoffaith.ning.com](http://www.bookoffaith.ning.com)) has welcomed more than 3,300 participants into a conversation about the first language of faith.

- Generosity marks the ELCA's response to the devastating earthquake in Haiti. In the first five weeks, ELCA members gave nearly \$5.3 million dollars, and more contributions continue to flow in. Lutheran Disaster Response works with our partners, The Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran World Relief, to meet urgent needs, including shelter, medicine, drinking water, food, sanitation and psychosocial assistance, in a commitment that will continue for years to come. Mission support, the portion of a member's financial offering that a congregation shares with its synod and the churchwide organization, provides the infrastructure that makes it possible for this church to apply 100 percent of every designated gift to disaster response.

Living in the hope of the risen Christ who is making all things new, we are moving forward in mission and are supported and encouraged by your synod's fervent prayers, generous financial support and evangelical missional imagination.

I give thanks to God for your service in the mission and ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and for the time and resources you share with your congregation, synod and churchwide ministries. As we stand together in God's grace, it is my prayer that God's work will be served with our hands.

In God's grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark S. Hanson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark S. Hanson  
Presiding Bishop



**Region 3** Connecting the Nine Synods of North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

*For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.*  
(Romans 12:4-5)

*For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.*  
(1 Corinthians 12:12)

The sixty-five synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are clustered into nine geographic regions, each of which is served by a Coordinator for Ministry Leadership. The chief reason for the regional clustering of synods, and the chief work of the regional coordinators, is to facilitate collaboration in matters of common concern, especially the preparation of candidates for rostered ministry (including pastors, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry) and the assignment of approved candidates for first call.

Region 3 includes nine synods of the ELCA: Western North Dakota, Eastern North Dakota, South Dakota, Northwestern Minnesota, Northeastern Minnesota, Southwestern Minnesota, Minneapolis Area, Saint Paul Area, and Southeastern Minnesota. Together, the congregations of Region 3 include nearly one-fourth of the entire baptized membership of the ELCA.

As coordinator for Region 3, I work closely with the bishops and candidacy committees of our nine synods in shared effort to ensure the best preparation of candidates for ministry and the best recommendations for assignment of candidates to our region.

Besides our work related to candidacy and assignment in ministry leadership, I and my counterparts in the other eight regions of the ELCA have additional responsibilities involving campus ministry, ELCA ministry policies and procedures, and ELCA regional events such as those pertaining to global mission and world hunger. It is richly varied and rewarding work, involving the opportunity to participate first-hand in the ministry and mission of our church across large territories and in many particular locations. I am deeply grateful for this call to service, and for the opportunity to collaborate with the leadership of the nine synods of our region as well as the leadership of our churchwide ministries.

My contact information is as follows:

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## ELCA Region 3 Archives Report to 2010 Synod Assemblies

### Introduction

This year marks the 22<sup>nd</sup> year of operation of the Region 3 Archives. I continue in the archivist position half-time for the nine synods of Region 3 and half-time for Luther Seminary. This shared arrangement continues to work well, with Luther providing space and access to the student worker pool and Region 3 providing the school a large and useful research collection. We also benefit from the much-needed help of 8 regular volunteers, part of the seminary “friends” group.

### Use of the Region 3 Archives

Our website ([www.luthersem.edu/archives](http://www.luthersem.edu/archives)) presence continues to increase the visibility and use levels of the collections. Luther Seminary hosts the website and provides technical support for it. The site is regularly updated with new training material for congregational audiences as well as listings of the actual archival holdings. The website remains our main “front door”, attracting a growing number of users from within, as well as beyond, the ELCA. In addition to the internet, researchers reach us via phone calls, traditional letters and personal visits.

+The Archives assisted a total of 988 reference patrons in the past year with a variety of research interests. The majority (67%) are congregational committees working on microfilming/scanning projects, anniversary celebration planning, history writing and related questions. Other significant user groups include synod offices and church wide offices as well as individual researchers.

+Daniels worked on-site with all 9 synod offices, gathering permanently valuable office records and assisting with retention plans for each office. He visited each office at least 5 times during the year. These visits were coordinated with 42 on-site congregational visits throughout the Region.

+Daniels spoke at 18 adult forums and study groups in congregations throughout the Region. The main focus of these presentations is the use of memory in the congregation. These sessions also provide an efficient venue to publicize the many congregational services available through the Region 3 Archives.

### Collection Growth

+The Archives received 424 linear feet of synod office records from the 9 offices. These included legal, financial, personnel and program files.

+Gathered an additional 322 congregational histories – collection now totals 5,766.

+Received 489 biographical pieces for files on clergy and lay leadership – collection now totals 5,798 files.

+Additional 39 congregations filmed their valuable church records through the Region 3 Archives microfilming program.

+Collected 30 linear feet of mission photographs, films, papers and artifacts from retired China, Japan, South Africa and Tanzania missionaries.

### Outreach and Education

+Daniels led workshops on congregational archives at 4 Region 3 synod assemblies in 2009.

+Distributed over 790 copies of “Memory Work: A Guide for Congregational Archives and History”.

+Daniels presented workshops at Concordia College’s annual “Conference for Church Secretaries” on records care issues, July, 2009.

+Continues off-site storage program for all Region 3 synods for professional and permanent care of sensitive files, including candidacy, camping staff, financial records and other materials using Iron Mountain Co.

### Professional Development

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

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

+Daniels continues active participation in the Lutheran Historical Conference, a pan-Lutheran group of historians, archivists and librarians.

*Respectfully submitted by Paul A. Daniels, ELCA Region 3 Archivist and Luther Seminary Archivist, 1.5.10*



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

## **Report to the Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly from the Mission Investment Fund**

The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA continues to serve this synod by providing vital loans for capital projects to new mission congregations, established congregations and ELCA-related ministries. The fund is able to fund these loans through the sale of investments to ELCA ministries and congregation members.

Nearly **800 MIF loans** totaling more than **\$465 million** are at work today in ELCA ministries throughout the United States, Virgin Islands and the Caribbean.

**In the Saint Paul Area Synod, 15 congregations and ministries currently have Mission Investment Fund loans totaling \$13,511,734, while many individuals and 55 ministries, including the Saint Paul Area Synod, have investments in the fund totaling \$8,661,048.\***

**MIF serves ELCA ministries.** In addition to the ministry loans and investments that it offers, the fund provides consulting services to ELCA congregations through its church building consultants and staff architects. The consultants help congregations design building programs that support their mission and evaluate the effectiveness of existing facilities or plans for new facilities. Staff architects provide initial schematic design proposals that congregations can take to local architects. The consultants and architects' services are provided at no charge. Area representatives are available to meet with congregations and ELCA-related ministries regarding the fund's loan and investment opportunities.

**Has your congregation invested? Have members of your congregation invested?** Join the thousands of individuals, ELCA congregations, ELCA-related ministries and synods – including the Saint Paul Area Synod – that are earning interest on their investments as they help to build the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Your participation enables the fund to continue this vital ministry. A variety of fixed- and adjustable-rate investment opportunities are available and may be opened with initial investments of as low as \$5. Information on investments and ministry loans is available at [www.elca.org/mif](http://www.elca.org/mif) and through the fund's representatives listed below who serve this synod.

Thank you for your support of and participation in the Mission Investment Fund. It is a joy to work in partnership with you for the advancement of God's kingdom.

Yours in Christ,

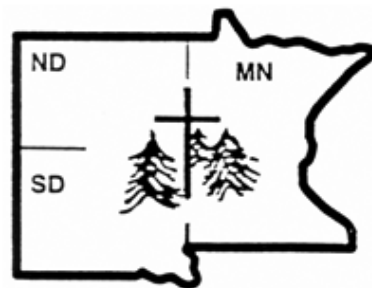
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\* as of 12/31/2009

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ELCA Region 3 Camping Network  
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Executive Committee: Dave Holtz, Luther Crest, President  
Marv Nysetvold, Shetek, Vice President  
Kim Smith, Pathways, Secretary  
Joel Abernethy, Voyagers, MN Representative  
Marti Rokke, Upper Missouri, ND Representative  
Karie Geyer, Lutherans Outdoors in SD, SD Representative  
Sandy Pilgrim, Coordinator

**Hear the Gospel! Celebrate God's Creation! Find Spiritual Renewal!**

## 2010 Annual Report of the ELCA Region 3 CAMPING NETWORK

***The ELCA Region 3 Camping Network exists to support outdoor ministry professionals in Region 3 and its nine synods, and to serve the people and congregations working with them.***

The ELCA Region 3 Camping Network is a grass roots network of ELCA-affiliated Bible camps serving congregations in Region 3. The network is sustained by the pledges of network camps, as well as synod contributions and other gifts. The Camping Network serves outdoor ministry and congregations in the following ways:

- **Recruiting**—Midwest recruiting fairs at colleges and universities are scheduled annually in February. Network camps participate in the fairs, as well as additional camps from across the country.
- **Background Checks**—Using a professional background checking service, the network reviews and coordinates the collection of background information for hundreds of summer staff each year.
- **Communication**—The network website is [www.r3campingnetwork.org](http://www.r3campingnetwork.org). The website includes a listing of all participant camps, program ideas, job postings, a calendar of regional and national camp events, and Summer Staff recruiting information. The network also sends out the *GRAPEVINE*, a monthly e-newsletter reporting camp-submitted news and information.
- **Cooperative Ministry**—The network works to strengthen existing connections with campus ministry, seminaries and congregations.

Region 3 has a wealth of Bible camping opportunities, with more than 40 outdoor ministry sites serving congregations. Ways in which you can partner with outdoor ministries to enrich your congregation's ministry include:

- Designating a week or two of the summer camp schedule for your congregation to participate as a group.
- Offering day camp programs for children and youth during the summer.
- Making confirmation camp and retreat experiences an integral part of your confirmation program.
- Participating in wilderness, high adventure camp programs and mission trips.
- Offering Family Camp.
- Developing programs for older adults.
- Using camp staff to help plan and implement youth and adult programs.
- Encouraging youth and adults to work at camp as paid or volunteer staff.
- Supporting camps in prayer and financially.

There is a place for you! Whether you are a camper, a "work-weekend" volunteer or a financial supporter, you and your congregation can be part of this ministry that is living out the gospel of Christ and shaping leaders for the future!