"Jesus put before them another parable: The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

Matthew 13:31-32
Friends in Christ,

I love the church and I know you do, too. Across the Saint Paul Area Synod there are so many signs of the fresh ways in which congregations are embracing opportunities to be a lively presence in their neighborhood, to worship God with liturgies that are traditional and innovative, and to take to heart our two-fold calling to love our neighbors and to invite them into life in Christ. Where we aren’t doing those perfectly, there is an openness to learning new ways to be the church today.

In recent months we have been challenged by the coronavirus pandemic and by great social unrest. The scale of those challenges, which impacted how we worship and how we understand our communal life, was unprecedented. Even before those crises in 2020, many in our world wondered if anyone even cares about their deepest worries and their greatest dreams. As people of deep faith we know that God cares and that there is a future of hope for everyone – no exceptions. Those who will benefit from our financial gifts include generations we cannot yet see and neighbors we may never know by name, but they are all known to God.

The Planting Hope campaign builds on our strengths and calls us to stretch in new ways as a synod. During the three years of this capital campaign, I hope everyone in our 110 congregations and mission starts will join this effort to plant hope for others. The four areas of the campaign are:

› **Invite** neighbors into life in Christ;
› **Renew** the congregations of the synod;
› **Raise up** the next generations of leaders;
› **Invest** in a transformative project on the East Side of St. Paul with other community partners.

From childhood on I have known the grace of God through my family and the congregations to which I have belonged. The joy of knowing that I am a beloved child of God is at the heart of my life. I want that same experience to be true for many others in the communities where we live.

The following pages describe the contours of the Planting Hope campaign. As you read I hope you will find the place that beckons your engagement. Please join me in praying for and supporting the work we are undertaking together.

Yours in Christ’s service,

Bishop Patricia J. Lull
The **Planting Hope** campaign expresses our confidence that God is at work in the 110 congregations and mission starts of the synod and God is at work in the East Metro of the Twin Cities, the territory served by the Saint Paul Area Synod. This three-year campaign offers an opportunity to contribute to the collective involvement of 120,000 Lutherans of this synod in four activity areas. They include:

- **Invite** neighbors into life in Christ;
- **Renew** the congregations of the synod;
- **Raise Up** the next generations of leaders;
- **Invest** in a transformative project on the East Side of St. Paul with other community partners.

### Invite Neighbors into Life in Christ

Lutherans confess that the Spirit calls us into life-giving faith. We also trust that God invites all baptized Christians to witness to that life in Christ in their daily life and sends disciples to every part of the world. The first activity area challenges every church member to deepen their faith through daily faith practices and every congregation to be an inviting church. This involves more than inviting others to worship services. It encourages the creation of initiatives for adult faith formation, speaking about faith in daily life, telling others the stories of God’s grace today, and preparing adults and children for baptism.

Through the campaign every congregation is challenged to set local, lead metrics by which they will gauge their progress in becoming a more inviting church. This might include training people as faith storytellers, teaching families daily faith practices, starting small groups to incorporate newcomers into discipleship practices, or coaching adults and children as they prepare for baptism.

**$150,000** raised for this activity area will fund **$110,000** in congregational grants and provide **$40,000** for training lay and rostered leaders. The impact goal over a five-year period is to engage 10,000 adults in a process of deepening faith in Jesus Christ including preparation for baptism as new Christians.

> "For me God’s call is to go out into the community and tell people that they are here because of a purpose, the purpose is to do God’s will."

**Peter Songster, Member of Christ the Servant Lutheran Church**
Renew the **Congregations of the Synod**

Lutherans confess that God’s Word and Sacraments are the primary ways that we come to recognize God’s grace in our lives. Congregations, large and small, call individual Christians to be church together with others and provide a center for worship, service, learning and shared life in Christ.

The Saint Paul Area Synod includes many congregations that were founded 100 or more years ago, as immigrant communities moved into the East Metro. In the mid-twentieth century more Lutheran congregations were established in the growing suburbs of this region. In recent years, mission starts have continued the pattern of gathering specific ethnic groups, innovating new styles of worship, or reaching out to neighbors in areas without an established Lutheran congregation.

In the twenty-first century every congregation is a mission outpost, discovering ways to revitalize mission and share God’s good news in a time of increased secularization and indifference to faith life. $700,000 raised for this area will provide $125,000 annually for five years to support the work of current mission starts and intentional redevelopment of congregations and $75,000 over that period to provide stewardship and vitality training in 10 congregations per year.

Even the smallest congregations have an impact well beyond their formal membership. The measurable impact goal for this activity area is to strengthen five to seven mission starts and ethnic specific congregations, lead two more redevelopment congregations through an intense program of renewal, and to engage 300-400 individuals in 50-60 congregations in the process of congregational vitality and stewardship education. Overall, hundreds of thousands of neighbors in the East Metro will benefit from congregations that are stronger, eager to share God’s grace, and firmly planted to serve others in their specific context.

“We had to ask the hard question – are we done? Because of the support we received from the Synod, instead of closing our doors we received an opportunity to be renewed for a new chapter.”

**The Rev. Liz Eide, pastor/redeveloper at Lutheran Church of Peace**
Raise Up the **Next Generations of Leaders**

Lutherans have long respected the difference well-trained, faithful leaders make in the vitality of congregations. The future vitality of the congregations in this synod is linked to who will serve them in coming decades. This includes wise lay leaders, as well as pastors and deacons.

Trusting that God calls all the baptized to live out their faith through their relationships, family life, work and citizenship, we say that each person has a vocation. With the changing demographics of the East Metro, we anticipate that more and more of the leaders needed in this synod will be persons of color, whose sense of vocation needs to be honed from early in their life. In each of the initiatives described below, priority will be given to participants from communities of color. **$700,000** raised in this area will fund three distinct projects.

1. Forty older high schoolers and undergraduates will participate in paid internships in a congregation or faith-based agency, exploring how their academic interests intersect with a faith-filled vocational understanding of life. Over four summers, 10 students will participate in a learning cohort as well as their paid internship. Internship sites might include the administrative offices of a senior housing ministry, a communications post within a congregation, work with a mission start, or a classroom in a parochial school. Throughout the internship participants will have an opportunity to share their learning with others across this synod. The campaign includes funding for a person to coordinate recruiting, placing and guiding these internships over four summers. **$200,000** will be dedicated to this project.

2. Recognizing the power of experiential learning and travel to provide a context for reflection on vocation and faith, **$125,000** will expand current opportunities for young adults to travel to our companion synods in Tanzania and Guatemala, as well as other contexts like the recent synod-sponsored Civil Rights Tour. Vocational discernment will be a part of the curriculum for each participant's experience.

3. Too many of this synod’s pastors and deacons carry burdensome student debt from their seminary education. **$375,000** will create a debt-reduction fund for pastors and deacons serving in this synod. These need-based awards will be combined with financial counseling and will encourage life-long personal stewardship practices. Grants from this initiative are designed to keep our recently graduated rostered ministers serving well for the coming decades.

The impact goal for the **$700,000** in this activity area is 40 young adults with deepened vocational formation through the paid internship initiative, 40 young adults having a transformative experience through mission-focused travel experiences, and 25 rostered ministers and their households released from a portion of their seminary education debt burden over a five-year period.
Invest in a Transformative Project on the
East Side of St. Paul with Other Community Partners

Lutherans believe that love of neighbors stands at the very heart of our faith. While the synod covers Chisago, Ramsey, Washington, Dakota and a part of Anoka counties, some of the most challenging economic realities are concentrated on the East Side of St. Paul. This historic neighborhood has long provided a home to the most recent immigrants and includes seven ELCA congregations, as well as a wealth of community-based initiatives and local non-profits.

$1,000,000 will be raised as a significant investment in a transformative community project in partnership with other agencies and community groups. While the East Side of St. Paul is not the only area with opportunity disparities within the synod’s territory, what 120,000 Lutherans of this synod can accomplish together there will be a witness to all the local contexts in which our congregations are located.

During the first year of the campaign a task force, working in conjunction with other community and faith leaders on the East Side of St. Paul, will determine the actual project to be funded. Conversations over the past several years with the Lutheran congregations and others in this neighborhood have elevated possibilities like a community resource center or affordable housing as timely investments. When completed, the East Side partnership project will be governed by its own board, modeling the willingness of the Lutheran community to invest deeply in long-term partnerships with others.

The intended impact of this investment of $1,000,000 is to provide life-transforming resources and stability to 1,000 persons annually, as well as engaging the Lutheran community of this synod in on-going relationships with these persons.

Timeline for Three-Year Campaign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPRING/FALL 2020</th>
<th>SPRING/FALL 2020</th>
<th>WINTER 2020-SPRING 2021</th>
<th>WINTER 2020-SPRING 2021</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Synod council/former council gifts</td>
<td>Synod campaign introduction</td>
<td>Leadership gifts continue</td>
<td>Outreach to rostered ministers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership gift conversations begin virtually</td>
<td>East Side discernment conversations begin with community partners</td>
<td>Groundbreaking congregation campaigns begin</td>
<td>East Side Project announced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Summary of the $2,750,000 Campaign Goal

| Inviting others into life in Christ | $150,000 |
| Renewing congregations | $700,000 |
| Raising up the next generations of leaders | $700,000 |
| Investing in the East Side of St. Paul | $1,000,000 |
| Campaign communication, staffing and events (4.2%) | $117,500 |
| Consultant’s fee (represents just 3% of overall goal) | $82,500 |
| **TOTAL** | $2,750,000 |

**SUMMER/FALL 2021**
- Groundbreaking congregations continue

**SUMMER/FALL 2021**
- Congregational council campaign invitations

**LATE FALL 2021**
- Congregational leader training

**WINTER/SPRING 2023**
- Anticipated wrap-up in Late 2023

**SUMMER/FALL 2021**
- Leadership gifts continue

**LATE FALL 2021**
- Leadership gifts continue

**WINTER/SPRING 2022**
- Congregational campaigns launched

**WINTER/SPRING 2023**
- Celebration Event
Leadership Participation

Leadership donors are invited to consider a three-year gift commitment to the Planting Hope campaign. Leadership donor commitments leave an indelible mark upon the ministry of the Saint Paul Area Synod, as well as encouraging others by modeling generosity over and above their ongoing ministry support in their own congregations.

To meet our challenging goal of $2.75 million, generous gifts of all sizes will be needed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER OF GIFTS NEEDED</th>
<th>3-YEAR GIFT COMMITMENT</th>
<th>CUMULATIVE TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>many under $3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,750,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Congregational Participation

Congregations will be invited to consider a goal based on average worship attendance in the range of $100 to $200 per average worshipper. The training and materials provided to each congregation will be practical for use by the congregation for special gift fundraising beyond this campaign.

Sample Goal:
Average weekly attendance of 200
Base goal ($100/worshipper) = $20,000
Challenge goal ($200/worshipper) = $40,000

Goals are non-binding and used as a means to help members see the nature of gifts (over and above their generous congregational giving) needed to reach the overall campaign goal. Each household is different, and some will choose to make larger gifts, while some will choose to make smaller gifts or no gift at all. Congregational campaign volunteers will be thoroughly trained to inform, inspire and invite members to discern what their best gift is to this effort.

“I would challenge all of us who have been blessed by the Gospel to invest in something that’s going to bring hope and wholeness to people who don’t experience that right now.”

The Rev. Jeffrey Marian, co-chair of campaign
How Congregations Will Benefit Campaign Participation

A primary goal of this campaign is to strengthen congregational ministry throughout the Saint Paul Area Synod. Some benefits to congregational campaign participation include:

> Training and mentoring in how to conduct an effective and meaningful special gift appeal. The manual provided becomes a resource for future congregational fundraising efforts.

> Training for congregational campaign leaders by the consultants.

> A focus on planned giving education, during and following the campaign effort, teaching members why and how to remember the congregation and/or other ministries of the church in their estate plan.

> Training in the final year of the campaign in how to transition special gifts for this effort into regular, ongoing and generous support of the congregation and shared ministry opportunities.

> Training for lay and rostered leaders in resource development.

> A common derivative of a successful synodical campaign is increased donor generosity to the congregation as well.

“If we take our story seriously, if we believe that this triune God is actually up to something, why would we not want to be a part of it?”

The Rev. Jenny Sung, Mission Developer at The Depot
Commonly Asked Questions

Q: How long does the Planting Hope campaign last?

A: The appeal will last for three years: May, 2020 – April, 2023. However, if you feel you can make a larger gift by extending the time, you are welcome to do so. You may also make a one-time gift or make gift payments for less than three years.

Q: Is it possible just to make gifts to the Campaign without making a specific commitment?

A: Yes, but written responses, while never legally binding, give us an indication of what we can expect and plan for our mutual ministry, and will ultimately determine our ability to change the world for the better.

Q: Do all gifts to the Planting Hope campaign have to be cash?

A: No. Gifts of property, appreciated stock, mutual funds, in-kind gifts needed in property improvements, cash value from insurance policies or policy loan proceeds, Certificates of Deposit (CDs), bonds and annuities are just some of the ways we can give. All of these gifts may be subject to restrictions and limitations, so it is wise to consult your financial adviser or accountant.

Note: Contact the Saint Paul Area Synod office for gifts other than cash. Important! Do not sell the property yourself or you will be unable to avoid the capital gains tax. If you are trying to capture a capital loss, you likely should sell it yourself.

Q: Can I give a gift from my IRA?

A: Recent changes to the law have raised, from 70½ to 72, the age at which you are required to withdraw from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) a certain amount of money known as your Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs). These distributions are taxed as they are withdrawn. Despite this change in the law, a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) continues to allow taxpayers over age 70½ to donate to charities such as the Saint Paul Area Synod directly from their IRA, which would allow you to avoid federal income tax on this money while supporting the Planting Hope campaign. Please call your financial advisor or the Saint Paul Area Synod office for more information.

Q: What is the advantage of giving appreciated stocks or property?

A: You can avoid capital gains taxes and also receive a tax deduction for making a charitable gift.

Q: How do I make a gift of appreciated stock?

A: Have your broker transfer shares from your account to the Saint Paul Area Synod. Contact the Synod office for more information.

Important! Do not sell the stock yourself or you will be unable to avoid the capital gains tax. The Synod's broker will sell the stock, and you will get credit for its average market value on the day it is transferred.

Q: Will I be asked to give a specific amount?

A: You will be asked to prayerfully consider an amount based on the gift chart to reach our goal. If every gift on the chart is fulfilled, we can exceed our goal.
Leadership for The Planting Hope Campaign

In the summer of 2019 Bishop Patricia Lull formed a Bishop’s Advisory Cabinet to provide wisdom during the feasibility phase, leading into this campaign. Members include:

- The Rev. Gary Anderson, Incarnation, Shoreview
- The Rev. Chris Bellefeuille, Trinity, Stillwater
- The Rev. Michael Carlson, St. Andrew’s, Mahtomedi
- The Rev. Ali Ferin, St. Michael’s, Roseville
- The Rev. Roland Hayes
- The Rev. John Hierlinger, Gustavus Adolphus, St. Paul
- Dr. Diane and Paul Jacobson, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, St. Paul
- The Rev. Jonathan Larson, King of Kings, Woodbury
- The Rev. Jeffrey Marian, Prince of Peace, Burnsville
- The Rev. Lloyd Menke, Our Saviour’s, Hastings
- Gail Olson, Trinity, Stillwater
- The Rev. Bradley Schmeling, Gloria Dei, St. Paul
- Trupti Storlie, Roseville, Roseville (through January 2020)
- The Rev. Rick Summy, Shepherd of the Valley, Apple Valley
- The Rev. Jenny Sung, The Depot of St. Andrew’s, Hugo
- The Rev. Christopher Thomforde, St. Paul-Reformation, St. Paul
- The Rev. Jonathan Yurk, Trinity, North Branch

The Synod Council of the Saint Paul Area Synod has played a significant role in shaping and overseeing the Planting Hope campaign. 2020 voting members include:

- The Rev. Patricia Lull, Bishop
- Carol Hood, Vice President
- David Laden, Treasurer
- The Rev. Amanda Simons, Secretary
- The Rev. Marla Amborn, North Conference Representative
- The Rev. Andrew Evenson, East Central Conference Representative
- The Rev. Ali Ferin, North Central Conference Representative
- Jason Langworthy, South Central Conference Representative
- The Rev. Walt Lichtenberger, South Conference Representative
- The Rev. Megan Torgerson, Southeast Conference Representative
- Teresa Bettman, Young Adult Representative
- Mark Lichtenberger, Youth Representative
- Mike Collins, At-Large Representative
- Deb Dahlberg, At-Large Representative
- The Rev. Peter Hanson, At-Large Representative
- The Rev. Chris Bellefeuille, East Central Conference Dean and Voting Dean

In November 2019 the Synod Council authorized work to begin on this three-year campaign. Early in 2020 individuals were invited to serve on the Steering Committee for the Planting Hope campaign, described in this document. Members include:

**Campaign Co-chairs**

- The Rev. Jeffrey Marian, Prince of Peace, Burnsville
- Jason Langworthy, Saint Anthony Park, St. Paul

**Synod Staff and Synod Council Gifts Chair**

- Carol Hood, Vice President of the Synod, Mount Calvary, Eagan

**Rostered Ministers Gifts Co-chairs**

- The Rev. Walt Lichtenberger, St. James, Burnsville
- The Rev. Lauren Wrightsman, Roseville, Roseville

**Congregational Engagement Chair**

- The Rev. Marty Ericson, Como Park, St. Paul

**East Side Initiative Chair**

- Gail Olson, Trinity, Stillwater

**Young Adult Engagement Co-chairs**

- Jessa Anderson-Reitz, St. Paul-Reformation, St. Paul
- The Rev. Jenny Sung, The Depot of St. Andrew’s, Hugo

**Major Gifts**

- Bishop Patricia Lull, Saint Paul Area Synod

**Grants and Foundations Chair**

- The Rev. Roland Hayes
Watch the campaign video at

bit.ly/PlantingHopeCampaign