FROM DAN’S DESK: STIRRED BY THE SPIRIT

When I was in high school, God put on my heart a concern and challenge. At that time, I would certainly not have phrased it that way, because I didn’t realize then that it was God’s Spirit at work in what stirred me.

I had inherited family stories, a narrative where those a generation, two generations, three generations before me struggled for long seasons and at times many years with hunger. People died, were weakened, and many migrated simply for the security of food. Yet for me, food was plentiful every day.

I saw pictures and headlines of famine and starvation. This was the ’70s, and crops were failing in Africa and Asia. The prediction for the future was bleak. I look back now and wonder what youthful optimism or justice-seeking indignation could have driven me to believe that what others seemed to see as inevitable did not have to be. Today, I would call that seeing the world “with eyes of faith.”

Does it work? Dare we believe that “all might be fed?” The percent of those in the world who experienced periods of extreme, persistent hunger was 28 percent in 1975. It is now 11 percent. Some say that we are dreamers to believe in such possibilities – dreamers, change agents, the people who are turning the world upside down (or right-side up). Such is the burden and the blessing of what it has meant to be followers of Jesus.

Today, more people are displaced from their homes than at any time since after World War II. Rains come in increasing intensity and in new patterns in many places in the world. Temperatures are on the rise, and drought is visited upon some of the most challenged families and communities. Wells and water systems fail or are spoiled. It is a new season of challenge to our persistent work. Thank you to all the dreamers, whose hearts are broken but whose spirits soar.

The way we serve, in accompaniment, we work with dreamers and change agents in places around the world and communities around this nation. We find ourselves, not alone, but paired with heroes who are turning the world right-side up. Thank you for your partnership – dreamers, change agents, world turners of ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response.

Daniel Rift, Director
ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal
INTERN INSIGHTS: MICAH KASSAHUN – FUNDRAISING INTERN

ELCA World Hunger has a long history of accompanying young adults as leaders in this church and in the world. One way this is done is by hosting summer interns. In June we introduced you to Scott. Last month we introduced you to Shubira, and this month we are excited to introduce you to Micah. If you would like to learn more about each of them and the work they have been doing this summer, be sure to follow the ELCA World Hunger blog this summer at blogs.ELCA.org/worldhunger/.

Meet Micah:
Q: What led you to doing an internship with ELCA World Hunger?
A: I had always heard about the amazing work that the ELCA accomplishes through my dad, an ELCA churchwide employee. His dedication to his work piqued my interest thus compelling me to apply for a position on the ELCA World Hunger team!

Q: What is one interesting fact that you have learned about ELCA World Hunger?
A: There is a lot of preparation and planning that goes on behind the scenes to pull off incredible events such as the ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering. This is done by amazing teams within the churchwide office who take the time to sit down, organize and make these events flow effortlessly.

Q: If you could eat lunch with anyone (dead or alive), who would it be and why?
A: I would like to sit down and share a table with Martin Luther. The other ELCA World Hunger interns and myself have been reading Samuel Torvend’s “Luther and the Hungry Poor,” and the book has given me great insight on Luther’s stance on hunger and socioeconomic justice. Growing up I was always taught about the 95 theses (which was about it), but Torvend’s discussion on the foundational principles of Luther’s writings and teachings in accordance with the Scriptures put Luther in a different category for me. Luther was really preaching the gospel in a way that encourages my own faith. I have found his work and his stances very similar to mine, and I would enjoy discussing those points with him.

ELCA CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY & GRACE GATHERING IN REVIEW

The 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly met in New Orleans Aug. 8-13 under theme “Freed & Renewed in Christ: 500 Years of God’s Grace in Action.” Assembly participants had many opportunities to learn about and engage with ELCA World Hunger during the assembly, including the ELCA World Hunger report (Plenary 5, 1:31:16) and the Lutheran Disaster Response report (Plenary 9, 2:08:10). In addition, ELCA World Hunger’s Walk for Water was open for walkers and included the new Flint, Mich., track story.

As part of the assembly, participants went out into New Orleans to learn more about “God’s Grace in Action” in the city. Fifty people joined ELCA World Hunger on the “Food Security” track. We visited the Southern Food and Beverage Museum, where we learned about the development of cuisine in Louisiana, especially the ways economics and race shaped the cuisine visitors now experience. Participants in Café Reconcile’s job-development program told us about what they have learned and the jobs they have secured with the support of the café’s staff. In an 11-week program, young adults learn job skills, gain experience in a full-service restaurant, and have a paid internship at hotels and restaurants around the city. Our last stop was at Crescent City Café, a pay-you-can café in a Methodist church. Guests, many of whom are homeless, are treated to a hot breakfast twice a month. The tables are covered in white tablecloths, the volunteers wait on them as if at a restaurant, and the guests are able to stay as long as they like to enjoy the food and fellowship.

For more information about the ELCA Churchwide Assembly recap, see page 3 for the monthly network webinar and ELCA.org/en/CWA-2016.
PARTNERSHIP OF THE MONTH: CAMPUS KITCHENS PROJECT

The Campus Kitchens Project is a national non-profit working with students passionate about ending hunger. It partners with high schools, colleges and universities to share on-campus kitchen space, recover food from cafeterias, and engage students as volunteers who prepare and deliver meals to the community.

The project is a partner of ELCA World Hunger, and this year, we are proud to announce the launch of a new Campus Kitchens site at Augustana College (Rock Island, Ill.) with the support of ELCA World Hunger! The launch will begin this upcoming school year. In addition to this new site, the Campus Kitchen at Augsburg College (Minneapolis) received support this year from our Domestic Hunger Grant program. You can learn more about this partnership on the ELCA World Hunger blog.

FALL REGIONAL GATHERINGS

The fall Regional Gathering season is right around the corner, and we’re looking forward to seeing you! The regional gatherings give us all a chance for fellowship and learning together in between our ELCA World Hunger Leadership gatherings. The date for each gathering is below along with the email address for each regional coordinator. Your regional coordinator is responsible for registration so check with them now for more information and to express your interest in attending.

**Region 1:** Oct. 21-22, Spokane, Wash.
Mark Nelson: Mark.Nelson@elca.org

**Region 2:** Nov. 17-20, El Paso, Texas
Margy Schmitt-Ajer: Margaret.Schmitt-Ajer@elca.org

**Region 3:** TBD

**Region 4:** Nov. 18-19, Kansas City, Mo.
Herb Palmer: Herb.Palmer@elca.org

**Region 5:** Oct. 27-29, Elkhorn, Wis.
Ramie Bakken: Ramie.Bakken@elca.org

**Region 6:** Dec. 6-10 (these dates will be refined)
Marilyn Smith: Marilyn.Smith@elca.org

**Region 7:** March 2017, more information coming soon

**Region 8:** Oct. 6-8, Waynesboro, Pa.
Online registration is now open: Click here

**Region 9:** Met in April 2016; future dates TBD

MONTHLY NETWORK WEBINAR: AUGUST LINK AND SEPTEMBER MEETING DATE

This month, the ELCA World Hunger webinar featured a recap of the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly and related activities. Listen to hear the many ways ELCA World Hunger was present at the assembly. We also previewed a number of the items that will be arriving in your mailbox in the Advent Packet. You can listen here. The recording is listed by topic below:

00:00 - 01:43 Welcome and introductions
01:44 - 35:14 Feature topic: 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in review
35:15 - 39:15 Fundraising discussions
39:16 - 42:33 Networking discussions
42:34 - 47:24 Resource highlight
47:25 - 51:33 Questions and discussion

Next month’s webinar: Tuesday, Sept. 20 8:30 p.m. Eastern/7:30 p.m. Central/6:30 p.m. Mountain/5:30 p.m. Pacific
**Featured topic:** Quarterly update on giving trends with the Fundraising Team
BY THE NUMBERS: THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE ELCA

Can we grow? Yes, we can!

More than once, the image of Babe Ruth pointing to the stands (where he intends to hit the ball) has been used as an image related to Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA (an image guaranteed to make Cubs fan shudder).

Can a someone who has played the game for more than 25 years, in the environment of changing generations, still deliver? Is the same possible for a program of the ELCA?

Giving so far this year to ELCA World Hunger is up by more than 10 percent – mostly in gifts collected through synods and congregations. The network of hunger leaders and others in the church are influencing this success in the year “for ELCA World Hunger” as part of the campaign. Thank you!

Can we maintain this pace of growth through the end of the year? Can we grow? ___ __ ___!

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<tr>
<th>ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Rift, director</td>
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<td>Robin Brown, associate director</td>
<td>ELCA World Hunger</td>
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<td>Ashley Debilzen, development assistant</td>
<td>Phone: (toll-free) 800-638-3522, ext. 2616</td>
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<tr>
<td>Krystal McClinton, development assistant</td>
<td>or 773-380-2616</td>
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| ELCA World Hunger Engagement and Education | Order all of our resources online at: |
|-------------------------------------------| ELCA.org/resources. |
| Mikka McCracken, director                 |                      |
| Ryan Cumming, program director            |                      |
| Jessica Fairfax, program associate        |                      |
| Iain Chester, assistant                   |                      |
| Elyssa Salinas, program assistant         |                      |

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<th>Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA – Totals as of the end of June 2016</th>
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<td>ELCA World Hunger year-to-date (toward overall goal of $24 million by end of FY2016)</td>
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<td>ELCA World Hunger (toward The Campaign for the ELCA goal of $115 million by end of FY2018)</td>
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<td>Overall The Campaign for the ELCA (toward overall goal of $198 million by end of FY2018)</td>
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