

Where Does My Giving Go? January's Money Minute

Here's a part of how your giving is currently Making Christ Known!

In November, the Youth Group took a Sunday evening to talk about tithing. Specifically, we talked about how Nativity tithes (gives 10% of our income) to the North Carolina Synod each month. It was a great evening of conversation and exploration, as we learned about the different ways our tithe (called Mission Support) is spent by the Synod, and the surprising number of organizations we help support through this giving. It was great to realize that Nativity is supporting many more ministries than what we list in the Annual Report and that we're partnering with Lutherans around the state and the country to do so.

In the ELCA system, Mission Support works like this: members give offerings to their congregation, and then the congregation gives a Mission Support offering to their synod. In our case, our Mission Support goes to the North Carolina Synod, of which we are a part. Nativity has committed to giving a full tithe each month - 10% of our income - as our Mission Support. Much like a congregation counts on the gifts of its members to keep ministries running, the NC Synod counts on Mission Support from its congregations.

Once the Synod receives Mission Support, they then use those dollars for ministry. But first, they make their own offering of Mission Support to the ELCA Churchwide body. In 2017, the NC Synod sent \$1,000,000 to Churchwide, and intends to do the same in 2018. With the remaining gifts, the NC Synod is able to support a wide variety of ministry. Our Synod supports many Lutheran organizations in NC, including Lenoir-Rhyne University, Lutheridge & Lutherock ministries, Lutheran Family Services, Agape & Kure Beach, and Southern Seminary. A good number of us are connected to at least one of these organizations in some form or fashion, and it was great for the Youth to learn that our congregation is supporting ministries that are important to us. We also learned that the NC Synod makes a point to support Multicultural ministries, Social Justice and Advocacy ministries, and Global Mission and Outreach –things that we as a church teach our Youth are priorities in our call in baptized ministry. Our Youth were especially excited to see how much NC Synod Mission Support is given to college campus ministries; more than \$120,000 is designated to Campus Ministry in 2018. A number of our recent graduates benefit from these ministries, and soon many of our current Youth will, too.

After we learned about some of the great ministries the NC Synod is supporting, we followed the million dollar giving from NC to see how it becomes part of Churchwide's ministry. We discovered that almost 25% of the ELCA's budget goes towards hunger relief and food production development both nationally and globally. It was great to learn that our ministries at Nativity (providing food to those in need) are reflected on a global scale, and that our gifts go towards ensuring that all of our brothers and sisters will one day be well-fed. We also found that a large amount of money sent up to Churchwide is redirected to congregations, to help plant new churches and redevelop others, and to provide resources for faith and worship opportunities. This means that through our Mission Support, we are helping our neighboring congregations grow and thrive as part of the ELCA!

There are many more ministries that our Mission Support dollars contribute to - far too many to list here - but all worthy of our support. To learn more about how the ECLA Churchwide organization uses Mission Support Dollars, check out this info [poster](#). To learn more about how the NC Synod stewards our gifts, explore the NC Synod website (sitemap [here](#)).

Thank you for your generous support of Nativity, which allows our congregation to generously support the work of the NC Synod, the Churchwide ELCA, and our brothers and sisters throughout the world. Through Mission Support, we are able to join our resources with many others, and support ministries that would be impossible without our combined efforts. As the Church together, we are *Making Christ Known* in more ways than you might imagine!