

2026 Annual Report



Southeastern Iowa
— SYNOD —

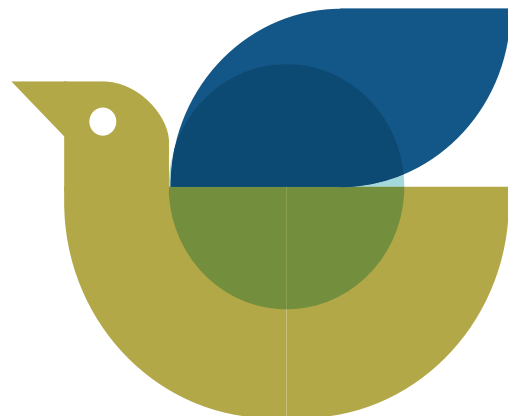
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Table of Contents

Synod Staff	4
Synod Council.....	5
Message from Bishop Current	6
Mission Support	8
Peace Throughout the World.....	10
Peace in our Communities	13
Peace Between People.....	16
“Peacing” for Comfort	18
Partnerships	20
Iowa Campus Ministries.....	20
ELCA Seminaries.....	20
Lutheran Services in Iowa	21
Grants.....	22

John 20:21-22

- 21 Jesus said to them again,
“Peace be with you. As the Father
has sent me, so I send you.”
- 22 When he had said this,
he breathed on them and said
to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”



Synod Staff



Rev. Amy Current
Bishop of the Southeastern
Iowa Synod



Rev. Dan Kuckuck
Assistant to the Bishop
for Leadership and
Congregational Transitions



Rev. LeAnn Stubbs
Assistant to the Bishop
for Congregational
Discipleship/Director for
Evangelical Mission



Jackie Baumhover
Associate to the Bishop
for Candidacy, Events, and
Governance



Samantha Fash
Associate to the Bishop
for Administration and
Communication



Amy Van Dyke
Associate to the Bishop
for Finance



Evoke Experts
Communications Partner

Synod Council

Pastor Nathaniel Adkins

Area 3 Clergy
Term Ends: 2030
First Lutheran Church,
Fairfield

Lori Anderson

Lay, Synod Council-Area 1
Term Ends: 2028
Immanuel Lutheran Church,
Ogden

Deb Cook, SAM

At-large
Term Ends: 2028
Trinity Lutheran Church, Tipton

Bishop Amy Current

Bishop
Term Ends: 2032
St. John, St. Donatus

Elyse Eichelberger

Youth
Term Ends: 2028
Shepherd of the Cross
Lutheran Church, Muscatine

Wendy Essary

Lay, Synod Council-Area 5
Term Ends: 2030
Zion Lutheran Church, Davenport

Alan Fabel

Lay, Synod Council-Area 3
Term Ends: 2028
Unity Lutheran Church, Burlington

Jana Grimm

Treasurer
Term Ends: 2029
First Lutheran Church,
Cedar Rapids

Keith Jones

Vice President
Term Ends: 2028
Peace Lutheran Church, Pella

Kevin Mote

Secretary
Term Ends: 2030
Seeds of Faith, Lisbon

Pastor Joel Nau

Area 5 Clergy
Term Ends: 2028
Redeemer Lutheran Church,
Bettendorf

James Pillers

Lay, Synod Council-Area 6
Term Ends: 2030
Zion Evangelical Lutheran
Church, Clinton

Isaac Rodenberg

Lay, Synod Council-Area 2
Term Ends: 2030
St. James Lutheran Church, Johnston

Pastor Tamara Siburg

Area 6 Clergy
Term Ends: 2030
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Clinton

Richard Tiegs

Lay, Synod Council-Area 4
Term Ends: 2028
Christ the King Lutheran Church,
Iowa City

Pastor Melissa Waterman

Clergy At-large
Term Ends: 2028
St. Paul Lutheran Church,
State Center



Bishop's Message

Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”
When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

—JOHN 20:21–22

Peace be with You, dear ones of the
Southeastern Iowa Synod,

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all congregations, pastors, deacons, synod authorized ministers, lay leaders, and children of God for the countless ways you share the Good News of God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Whether in worship, fellowship, learning, or service within your communities, or across the globe, your generosity is deeply appreciated. Every contribution of time, prayer, leadership, and financial support serves as a tangible reminder of God's grace. Your generosity is changing lives, and I thank God for every one of you.

Each year at our Annual Synod Assembly, we adopt a budget rooted in the anticipated mission support generously pledged by our congregations. This 2026 Annual Report shares how the gifts you shared are being faithfully stewarded—supporting ministry in Southeastern Iowa, across the ELCA, and throughout the world.

This year, our synod's theme is **Peace Be With You**. “Peace be with you” are the first words the Risen Christ speaks to the fearful disciples when they are locked

away on the day of the resurrection. “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you” are the next words Jesus speaks to these same disciples, turning them from their fear to hope. “Receive the Holy Spirit” are his next words as he breathes new life—Spirit life—into the disciples. Jesus sends them, and us, into the world with peace through the power of the Spirit. Jesus knows that it is human nature to lock ourselves away in fear and, by the Spirit's power, we are sent out in peace filled with God's gracious love.

This love, this peace, this good news is what compels us, God's beloved ones, to be led by the Holy Spirit to share God's love, to share our gifts in our daily lives, to share our financial gifts, and to share Christ's promise of peace.

Remembering that having received God's forgiveness, you have given your time, your financial gifts, your baptismal gifts, and just before heading to the Lord's table of grace, you turn to your neighbor and look them in the eye, “Peace be with you” just as Jesus did, breathing peace into your relationship and then receiving God's precious gift of forgiveness in the body and blood of our Savior. Then, as the Spirit sends us forth, “Go in Peace. Christ is with You” guides our feet into the way of peace.



I invite you to witness the Spirit's presence in these four stories:

Peace Throughout the World

Peace in our Communities

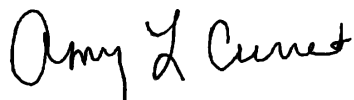
Peace Between People

"Peacing" for Comfort

As you reflect on these inspiring stories, I encourage you to think about how your generosity sustains this remarkable mission we share, especially as your congregation or ministry prepares for its budget for 2027. The ministry you and your congregation/ ministry share is vital, and your generous giving to our Southeastern Iowa Synod, and through our Synod to the ELCA and our mission partners, enhances your ministry. Together, we extend generosity, hope, and peace far beyond what any one of us could accomplish alone.

It is a profound honor and joy to witness the Spirit moving among us, opening hearts and lives to God's abundant love. Thank you.

Peace be with you,



Bishop Amy Current



Mission Support

Together in God's Mission

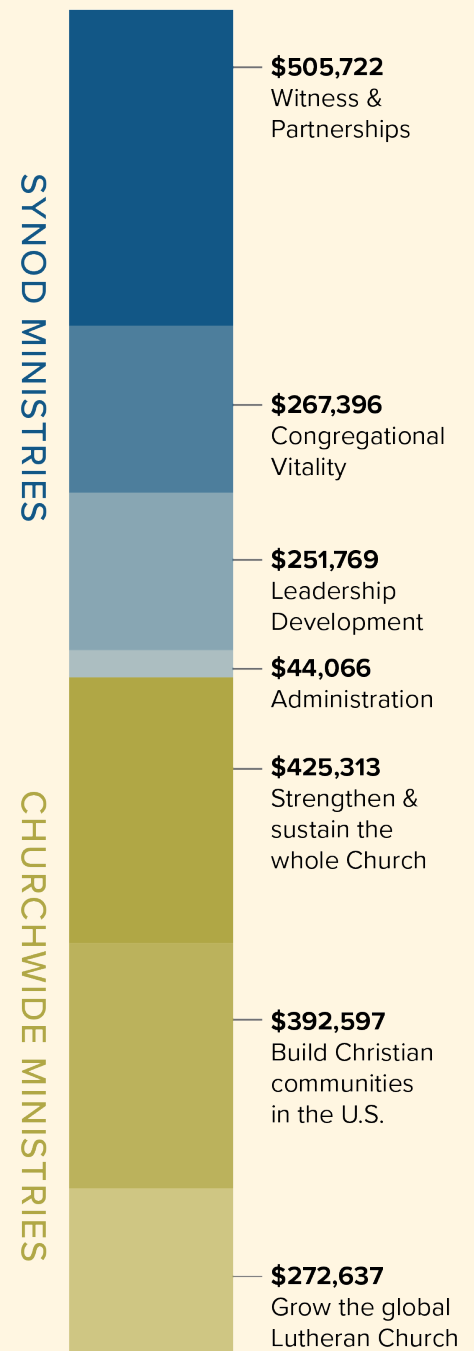
Mission support is what we in the ELCA call the portion of a congregation's offerings/budget that is given to support the mission and ministry of the synod and the churchwide organization. Some may refer to this as benevolence. Mission support is how we share in God's work together. More than financial giving, it is a faithful response to God's abundant grace and a tangible expression of our shared calling as the body of Christ.

By increasing or sustaining your congregation's mission support, you amplify the impact of ministry in your congregation, in the Southeastern Iowa Synod, across the ELCA, and throughout the world. Together, our gifts become something greater than any one congregation could accomplish alone. Mission support strengthens congregations, equips leaders, nurtures faith, builds partnerships, and gives witness to the good news of God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. With it, we, as a synod, respond to the needs of our neighbors, support ministries of compassion and justice, and participate in God's mission in the world. Every congregation's generosity is celebrated. Every gift matters. And when we give faithfully and generously, we join hands with one another in sharing God's love.



Distribution of 2026 Synod Mission Support Funds

Budgeted Mission Support—
\$2,159,500



Here's why increasing mission support matters more than ever:

Strengthen Congregations

CONGREGATION VITALITY

Your mission support connects your congregation to the large network of vibrant and faithful congregations and ministries. Congregational vitality supports renewing ministries, equips congregations with resources and coaching, strengthens faith formation, and provides practical training for healthy, thriving ministry. Together, we share in the Spirit's power.

Invest in Congregation Leaders

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Your mission support empowers faithful, healthy, and well-equipped leaders who can adapt to an ever-changing world through coaching, scholarships, formation, resources, and support. By investing in leaders today, we help equip the church for its ministry tomorrow. Together, we share in God's call to ministry.

Support Ministry Partners

WITNESS & PARTNERSHIPS

Your mission support extends our Gospel witness through partnerships with organizations that serve in Christ's name both locally and globally. From seminaries, Lutheran Services in Iowa, campus ministries, world and domestic hunger, global mission, congregational resources, and more, these impactful ministries serve people in need and build compassionate communities in Christ's name. Together, we share Christ's love.

Make Ministry Possible

SYNOD ADMINISTRATION

Your mission support makes the work of the Southeastern Iowa Synod Office of the Bishop and Synod Council possible. The Synod Council and the Office of the Bishop proclaim, equip, accompany, and celebrate the mission we share with congregations, ministries, partner organizations, the ELCA, rostered and lay ministers, and all the baptized. Together, we share the Good News of God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

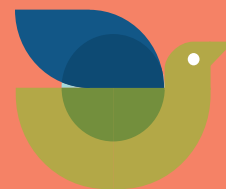
Fuel Global and Churchwide Ministry

ELCA CHURCHWIDE MINISTRIES

Our synod's mission support is a faithful expression of unity in the ELCA. Over half of the mission support received by the Southeastern Iowa Synod is given to the ELCA Churchwide organization to strengthen and sustain the whole church here in the US and throughout the world. Together with the other 64 synods, our generosity becomes part of a much larger story of God's people responding to the needs of the world.



Peace Throughout the World



Imani Moja (One Faith) Walking together with our companions in Tanzania

One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism unites the Body of Christ throughout the world. It is a gift to celebrate God's gracious gift of faith as partners in the global church. One of the ways that the ELCA celebrates God's gift of faith is through global companion synod partnerships. These partnerships are not traditional or colonial partnerships of the US church teaching or influencing our global partners. Instead, these relationships are centered in our shared faith and accompaniment together as we share the Good News of God throughout the world.

For four decades and counting, the Southeastern Iowa Synod and the Pare and Mwanga Dioceses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania have shared in Imani Moja. The Office of the Bishop, many congregations, and individuals have walked alongside, prayed with, nurtured meaningful relationships, exchanged visits, shared resources, and grown in faith with our companions in Tanzania.

Bishop Current, Pastor Kuckuck, and Pastor Stubbs recently returned from a visit with our partners. Together, we celebrated our friendship, our faith, and focused on the future of our partnerships through the 2026 ELCT-ELCA Consultation. We are committed to strengthening our communication, intentionally gathering as congregation-to-parish partners as well as synod and dioceses, and connecting in faith through prayer, worship, learning, and shared generosity.

There are currently 17 congregations in the Southeastern Iowa Synod that celebrate active partnership with parishes in the Mwanga and Pare Dioceses. There are so many beautiful stories of pen pals, shared projects, visits, and imagination. There are more parishes willing to grow in partnership if there are congregations interested in exploring these connections. Please let Bishop Current know if you are interested.

Through these congregation/parish partnerships, there is often generous financial support shared with Tanzanian parishes as they tend to projects that enhance the well-being of their local communities—clean water, schools, social services, medical needs, and church buildings. This generosity is deeply appreciated by the dioceses and the parishes. *Thank you.*



Pare Diocese Youth with Bishop Current and Pastor Kuckuck at the site of the future Youth Center.



The ELCT/ELCA gathered partner synods and dioceses. Here is our group from Pare, Mwanga, and SE IA with Bishop Mjema, Bishop Current, and Bishop Mono.

As we gathered for our 2026 “Peace be with you” Synod Assembly, our offering resulted in \$19,200, which has been shared evenly with the Pare Diocese and Mwanga Diocese. This offering was not solicited by our partners; instead, we shared to celebrate and support the ministry that our partners have at hand. Many asked what type of project the offering would support. The intention was not to support a project but to give freely and generously to our partners in faith so that they might tend to the ministry needs at hand.

As our Southeastern Iowa trio shared time and space with our partners, they were so grateful not only for the monetary gift received but also for our sincere partnership in faith.

- **Bishop Mono, Mwanga Diocese**, expressed gratitude for the gift and shared that it allowed the diocese to provide support for the widow of the late Bishop Sendoro, benefits for diocese staff, sustenance support for retired pastors, and maintenance of diocese vehicles. All of this became possible because of an unexpected gift from the Southeastern Iowa Synod. *Thank you.*
- **Bishop Mjema, Pare Diocese**, expressed gratitude for the gift and shared that it has allowed the diocese to provide laptops for diocese staff, the development of a diocese database and reporting system, and that there are remaining funds that they are continuing to discern the greatest need. *Thank you.*



Mwanga Diocese Maasai congregation welcomed Pastors Stubbs and Kuckuck as well as Bishops Mono and Current for song, prayer, speeches, and a feast.

It is not about the money; it is about faith and friendship. It is about our shared faith in the Triune God. It is about our Lutheran witness in the world. It is about being the Body of Christ together. It is about the words of the risen Christ, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, now I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit". We, in Southeastern Iowa and in Pare and Mwanga, continue to be sent out from our places of worship, into our local communities, and connected to the Body of Christ throughout the world. What a gift it is to grow in Imani Moja with our partners in Tanzania.

LEARN MORE

ELCA Global Companion:

elca.org/how-we-serve/global-mission

ELCT Pare Diocese: elctpare.or.tz

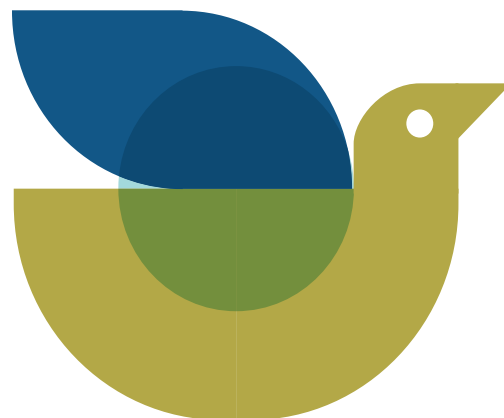
ELCT Mwanga Diocese: elctmwd.org

MAKE A GIFT

seiasynod.org/companion-synod

Reach out to Bishop Current if you are interested in building a connection with our companions.

Pray for our companions in Pare Diocese and Mwanga Diocese.



Peace In Our Communities



In Muscatine, peace is taking shape through congregational and community partnerships.

For four Lutheran Congregations—Grace, New Era, Shepherd of the Cross, and Zion—peace is experienced through a growing partnership. The journey these congregations are taking together has been years in the making, growing not from a grand plan, but organically, one relationship and one step at a time.

Before 2020, Grace and Shepherd of the Cross were already working together in youth and confirmation ministry. That collaboration grew into Family Faith Night, creating opportunities for people of all ages to grow in faith together. Over time, Zion and New Era joined and expanded the activities from youth and confirmation to an intergenerational holistic faith formation program.

A few years ago, when New Era needed pastoral coverage for worship and pastoral care, the congregations began discerning together. The other congregations shared in providing leadership and care and partnered in welcoming a seminary deacon. When Zion later entered a pastoral vacancy, the same model expanded to include all four congregations.

What began as a practical response to congregations in need became something more: an opportunity to ask what God might already be doing among them and how the Spirit may be calling them into future partnership.

Listening for the Spirit

The congregations formed a Discernment Team, with two lay leaders from each congregation. Their task was not simply to solve problems or determine a structure for the future. They were called to pray, listen, notice where God was already at work in their congregations and communities, and consider where the Spirit might be leading. At the heart of their work was a deeper question: **What does it mean to be the church together?**

The answer is still unfolding.





Through this discernment, the congregations have discovered that they can offer more when they share their gifts. They can provide a wider range of faith formation opportunities, support one another in worship and pastoral care, and uplift both lay and rostered leaders to serve where their gifts and callings are strongest.

But they have also discovered something less tangible and perhaps more important: partnership changes how they see one another.

“We are all better when we lean into one another,” Pastor Susan Bantz reflected.

The four congregations are beginning to see themselves not as separate silos, but as partners in ministry. Each congregation carries its own history and identity while also bringing unique gifts to the body of Christ in Muscatine.

This shift has not always been easy. Collaboration requires patience, trust, clear communication, and a willingness to let go of what once felt familiar. Like any new thing, there have been some moments of suspicion, fear, and uncertainty. But partnership does not mean giving up a congregation’s identity; rather, it means making room for one another and discovering what might become possible together.

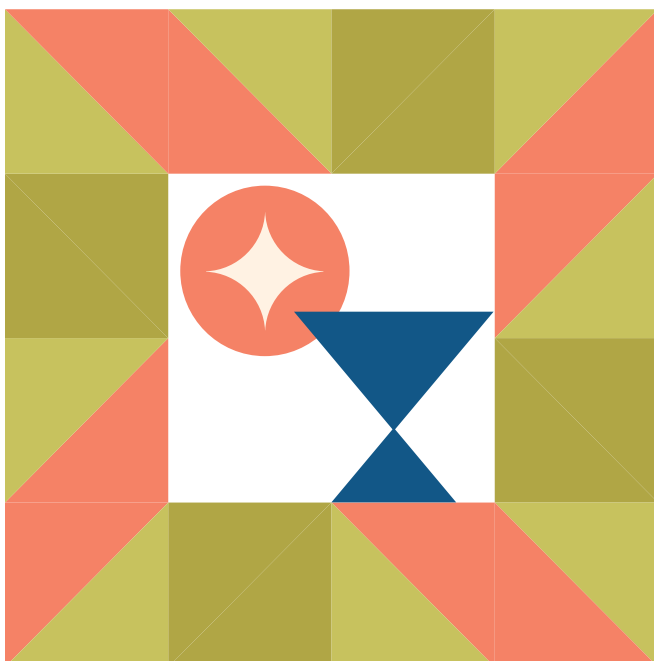
One example came through shared worship in Lent. The congregations intentionally blended traditions meaningful to each congregation and gathered for worship in a way that naturally led into Family Faith Night. Holden Evening Prayer, interactive faith practices, musicians, readers, and leaders from all four congregations became a part of one shared experience. What could have felt like losing something familiar instead became, in their words, “life-giving.”

Partnership Beyond Four Walls

Partnership is not simply about doing more; it is about being together in community—not because they have to, but because they want to. Through collaborative efforts beginning with youth in mind, several adult faith formation groups became the launching point for authentic connection with one another and to grow with Christ. Dwelling together in Scripture, engaging in prayer, and learning the practice of discernment have been central to a renewed vision for sacred ministry in the body of Christ.

The spirit of collaboration reaches beyond the four ELCA congregations. Through Christian Day Camp, leaders from 41 churches in the greater Muscatine and Wilton area have joined together to create summer ministry for children across the communities. While distinct from Faith Together Muscatine, the ministries are woven together like threads in the same tapestry: what strengthens one can strengthen the other.

The next chapter is already in the works. The Discernment Team has recommended exploring a parish model, an opportunity to uplift Synod Authorized Ministers, and additional ecumenical partnerships. An Exploratory Team has begun gathering information and asking, “Is this that path?” They are not rushing toward an answer. They are continuing to listen—to one another, to their communities, and to the Spirit. For now, they are “Faith Together Muscatine”.



Peace Takes Practice

Perhaps one of the greatest lessons Muscatine offers about peace is that partnership takes time. Trust does not happen overnight. Neither does a new understanding of what it means to be church together. These congregations are learning to move at a pace that honors each community while remaining open to share where the Holy Spirit is leading them.

“Some things need to die for other things to be born,” Pastor Aleese Kenitzer reflected. “Partnership of any form takes intentional investment with Christ and with one another. But with that investment, the church has the opportunity to bear fruit for the sake of all God’s people.”

For the congregations, peace is not the absence of disagreement or difficulty. It is a practice of listening across differences, trusting one another, honoring each congregation’s story, and continually returning to the question: **Who does God in Christ want us to be, and how is the Spirit calling us to live together in this moment?**

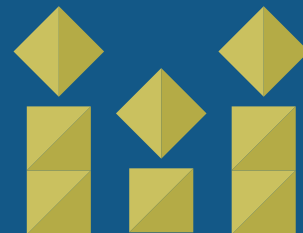
Together, they are learning that following the wind of the Spirit is never predictable. But walking in step with Jesus and alongside one another, they are discovering just how much more enriching the journey becomes when it is shared.

Pray for congregations in Muscatine and other congregations engaging in partnerships.

IF YOUR CONGREGATION IS INSPIRED BY THIS STORY OF PARTNERSHIP

Please contact Pastor LeAnn Stubbs, Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Discipleship and Director for Evangelical Mission at stubbs@seiasynod.org.

Peace Between People



“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”—JOHN 20:21

When Jesus spoke these words to his disciples, he did more than offer words of comfort; he sent them to share peace in the world. Today, Jesus is still sending us to cross boundaries, to welcome our neighbors, and to discover the peace that can grow when people walk alongside one another.

Gilbert Lutheran Church has responded to God’s call through the accompaniment of refugee and immigrant families. An invitation to sponsor a refugee family first came through retired ELCA Pastor Russ Melby and Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partners (ASIP), an ecumenical group of individuals and congregations that sponsors refugees. A Gilbert Lutheran couple heard the invite and stepped forward as primary sponsors. Gilbert Lutheran became secondary sponsors while offering support to both the refugee family and those walking most closely alongside them.

For Gilbert Lutheran Church and its members, accompaniment has involved providing support in practical, everyday ways, such as offering food and school supplies, giving rides, assisting with paperwork, helping navigate resources, and sharing in fellowship. Initially, much of the effort focused on helping the family secure basic necessities and find their way in an unfamiliar community. The asylum process was complex and daunting for this family, and the congregation’s members offered friendship, solidarity, and guidance.

As the family began to feel more settled, received work permissions, and grew comfortable in their new home, the congregation found joy in simply accompanying them in their daily lives. As Shelley expressed, “It didn’t take long for our church community to fall in love with this family.”

And in that journey, something changed in the congregation, too.

As the congregation and family got to know one another, friendship blossomed. What initially might have seemed like a story about difference became a story about connection. Gilbert Lutheran members discovered a family not so different from their own—a middle-class family working hard to support themselves, provide a good life for their children, and contribute to their community.

When asked what family means to him, the father replied, “When I think about my family, I feel enormous motivation to be a better person every day.” His words became a point of connection and a reminder that beneath differences of language, culture, and circumstance, we share many of the same hopes.

The mother offered another reflection, “Family is where life begins, and love never ends, and whoever has it has everything. Love is one of the many threads that connects us all to each other. Jesus taught us to ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’” One of many lessons the congregation and families have learned from this experience is that showing compassion by welcoming people in need with open arms is one very satisfying way to follow Jesus’ teachings.

These words reflect the essence of accompaniment. What may have started as practical assistance often evolves into deep, transformative relationships for everyone involved. Initially, recognizing someone in need of help, but over time, they become a neighbor, a friend, and we see in one another the face of Jesus.

This is peace between people: creating spaces where people can live with safety, respect, dignity, and a willingness to serve one another. It does not require that every challenge be resolved. It asks us to see one another’s humanity and respond with compassion.

The family's child drew this picture of the church and gifted it to Pastor Christian in 2025. For Pastor Christian, it remains one of the most meaningful gifts he has received in ministry.



Pastor Christian begins each service at Gilbert Lutheran with these words: “Wherever we are in our life journey, wherever we are in our faith journey, we are in the right place right now. We belong to God. We belong to each other. And so we are here.”

Christ’s gift of peace draws us together, no matter our circumstance, at the font, at the table, at the open door, at the border, and at the foot of the cross. Gilbert Lutheran is one among many congregations and individuals that actively engage in a long and wide welcome for new Americans (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, and migrants).

Pray for immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, and all who provide a wide and long welcome.

IF YOUR CONGREGATION IS INSPIRED BY GILBERT LUTHERAN’S STORY OF WELCOME, PLEASE CONSIDER LEARNING MORE THROUGH:

ELCA AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities): elca.org/how-we-serve/relief-and-development/ammparo

Lutheran Services in Iowa: lsiowa.org/ircs-2

Global Refuge: (formerly known as LIRS) globalrefuge.org

"Peacing" For Comfort



At Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, peace is stitched together one quilt at a time.

What began as a small summer quilting group has grown into a ministry of remarkable generosity, compassion, and connection at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Des Moines.

In 1999, a small group of quilters who had previously gathered during the summer months began looking for new ways to share their gifts. After seeing a newspaper advertisement seeking quilts for homeless shelters, the group imagined something more. They decided to start quilting year-round, creating a ministry that would grow far beyond what they first envisioned.

Just two years later, another opportunity emerged. An elementary school teacher and Good Shepherd member learned that teachers were being asked to bring old towels to keep the preschoolers warm during their nap time. He wondered if something else could be provided for the children and brought the idea up with the quilters. That first year, they made 20 quilts for a preschool class.

The Good Shepherd quilters now gather twice a week throughout the year, with many also continuing their work at home. In 2025 alone, they gave away 703 quilts: 535 child-sized quilts to Des Moines Public Schools preschoolers and 168 twin-sized quilts to shelters and food pantries throughout the Des Moines area. Over the past 17 years, the ministry has created and given away more than 8,700 quilts. And the work continues.

On August 31, 2026, another 536 preschool quilts were delivered to 11 Des Moines Public Schools. For children who may be experiencing uncertainty or hardship at home, these quilts offer something simple but profound: warmth, comfort, security, and something they can call their own. Preschoolers use the quilts during their daily naps, and at the end of the school year, they take them home.

Teachers have shared countless stories of the joy these quilts bring to their students. One teacher recalled a little boy who loved his quilt so much that when she told him to put it in his locker, he simply refused to let go. She could not pry it from his hands because for that child, the quilt had become more than a blanket. It represented safety and comfort.

The peace created through this ministry is stitched into the hearts of the quilters.

The Good Shepherd quilters are 11 retired church women and their friends who together contribute about 90 hours each week to this ministry. Their work is an act of service plus deep friendship in community. They gather, talk, laugh, create, and care for one another. In a world where isolation can easily take hold, this ministry gives them a place to belong and a sense of purpose. It also brings them immense joy knowing their time and talents are creating a difference in children's lives. One quilter calls their time together her "therapy session."

Perhaps that is another way to understand what it means to say, "Peace be with you." Peace is not always something we find by sitting still. Sometimes peace is something we create together with fabric, thread, friendship, compassion, and a willingness to respond to a need. And sometimes, peace looks like a child falling asleep under a quilt made just for them.

The Good Shepherd quilting ministry goes beyond preschoolers. For instance, a young man who had recently been released from prison received a Good Shepherd quilt while staying at a halfway house. He was so grateful and aware that others could benefit from the same gift, so he asked whether there were more quilts available for the other residents, and the quilters provided them. Later, as his life became more stable and he found full-time employment, he began sending donations back to Good Shepherd to help sustain the ministry so that others could experience the same gift.

A quilt given became a gift returned. That is the beauty of “peacing” together: every stitch is connected to another. A quilter’s time becomes a quilt. A quilt becomes comfort. Comfort becomes hope. Hope becomes gratitude. And gratitude becomes generosity.

Piece by piece, one person at a time, the Good Shepherd quilters remind us that peace can be made with our hands and shared with the world.

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd is one of many congregations that gather quilters, knitters, crocheters, health and school kit preparers, canners, and crafters to create for the sake of the neighbors. Some quilts, prayer shawls, kits, and food are shared in local communities, and others are shared through global ministries. What a gift it is to gather together to offer a sign of Christ’s peace.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who generously donated lap quilts and prayer shawls to the synod assembly. Your contributions are deeply appreciated!

IF YOU ARE INSPIRED BY THE GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN QUILTERS, PLEASE CONSIDER LEARNING MORE ABOUT:

Lutheran World Relief: lwr.org

Quilt auctions to support our ELCA Outdoor Ministries

Connecting with Southeastern Iowa Women of the ELCA: seiasynod.org/swo

Pray for all who gather to create and for all who receive their gifts, and for comfort that connects.



Partnerships

The Southeastern Iowa Synod provides generous support to five partner organizations annually. We prioritize our regional ELCA Seminaries, Iowa Campus Ministries, and Lutheran Social Services in line with our mission commitments in our synod's constitution.

Iowa Campus Ministries

Lutheran Campus Ministries at Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, and the University of Northern Iowa split \$65,286 in mission support from the Southeastern Iowa Synod budget. The Synod Council allocated \$6,000 from the Southeastern Iowa Synod Endowment Fund and the Community Foundation of Johnson County to Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Iowa and Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa State University.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa State is a welcoming, grace-filled community that, through Jesus Christ, engages the gift of faith in every person and empowers life-giving relationships to share God's love through our words and deeds. Our values include extending community, engaging faith, and empowering relationships.

lcmames.org



UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

A safe place for students to explore their faith, Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Iowa's purpose is to serve as a safe, accepting, loving community where students can explore their faith and spirituality. We accept undergraduate and graduate students of all races, genders, sexualities, abilities, and faith backgrounds. Anyone can come to LCM, and we mean it!

lcmatui.org



ELCA Seminaries

In 2026, the Southeastern Iowa Synod provided \$93,930 in direct grants to the two seminaries in our region, Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, and Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC).

In addition to the partnership support through our Southeastern Iowa Synod Annual budget, the synod provided \$35,600 to Seminarians through the Southeastern Iowa Synod Fund for Leaders in Mission Scholarship.

WARTBURG SEMINARY

Wartburg Theological Seminary serves Christ's church through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by being a worship-centered community of critical theological reflection where learning leads to mission and mission informs learning.

The community embodies God's mission by stewarding resources for engaging, equipping, and sending collaborative leaders who interpret, proclaim, and live the gospel of Jesus Christ for a world created for communion with God and in need of personal and social healing.

wartburgseminary.edu



LUTHERAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY (LSTC)

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, forms visionary leaders to bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ.

lstc.edu





Lutheran Services in Iowa

In 2026, the Southeastern Iowa Synod provided \$149,265 in a direct grant to Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI). Responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service, LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America).

LSI VALUES:

Unite—Together we are stronger. We can achieve greater impact by supporting, celebrating, and trusting each other and our community.

Respect—Every person is a unique gift of God, worthy of being treated with humility, empathy, and integrity.

Grow—We create a culture of continuous learning and innovation to uplift one another and those we serve.

Empower—We amplify the voices of those who are not heard, advocate for social justice, and encourage people to achieve greatness.

lsiowa.org



ELCA Grants and Support to Southeastern Iowa Synod

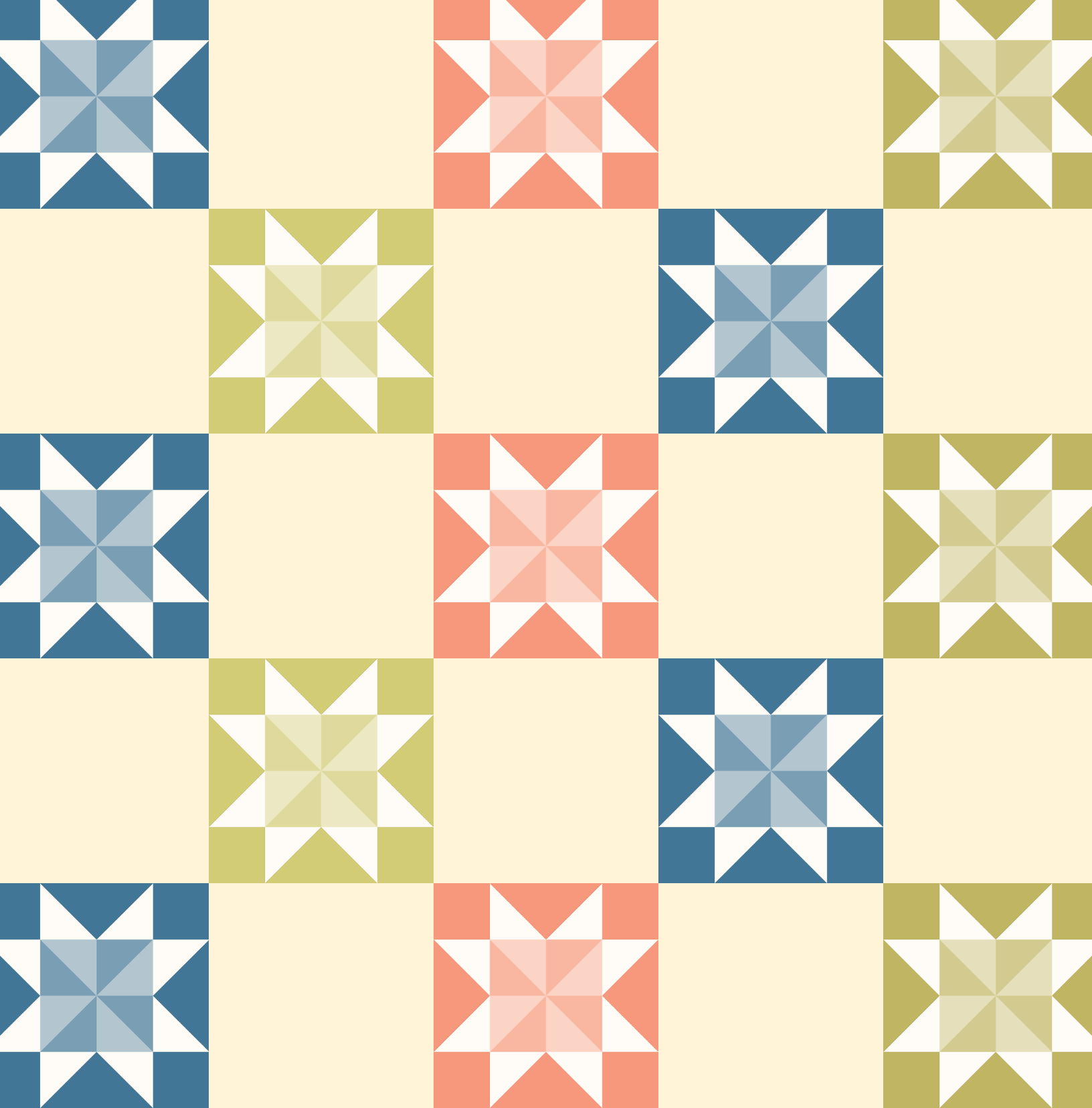
In 2026, the Southeastern Iowa Synod received generous grant support from the ELCA for various ministries. These grants and support reflect the ELCA's continued investment in congregational vitality, new ministries, and support for anti-hunger efforts domestically and internationally.

- ELCA annually provides full salary and benefits for the Southeastern Iowa Synod Director for Evangelical Mission, plus an annual \$9,500 grant to support synod ministries.
- ELCA provided a \$26,552 new ministries grant for Quad Cities Latine Ministries (Iglesia Camino de Emaús).
- ELCA Curious Christian Children selected Faith Lutheran Church in Andover as one of 11 ELCA congregations to receive a grant and training for a nine-month project.
- ELCA Congregations Lead provided training, coaching, and a \$1,000 grant to each of four Southeastern Iowa Synod congregations: St. James Lutheran Church in Johnston, Grace Lutheran Church in Adel, Peace Lutheran Church in Adel, and Resurrection Lutheran Church in Ankeny.
- ELCA World Hunger awarded Daily Bread Grants of \$500 each to seven Southeastern Iowa Congregations to support local food insecurity ministries: Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids, Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Slater, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Des Moines, Trinity Lutheran Church in Pleasant Valley, All Saints Lutheran Church in Davenport, St. John Lutheran Church in Preston, and St. John Lutheran Church in Ely.
- ELCA World Hunger awarded \$30,000 in Domestic Hunger Grants to Iowa City Free Lunch Program and Feed Iowa First in Cedar Rapids.

WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY CASTLE PROJECT GRANT 2025–2026

The Southeastern Iowa Synod, in partnership with Western Iowa Synod, Northeastern Iowa Synod, and South Central Synod of Wisconsin, received over \$80,000 from The CaSTLE Grant, an initiative of Wartburg Seminary. The CaSTLE project provides resources to country and small town congregations to live into a model of congregational life that empowers members of congregations to set their foundation in their baptismal identity, rather than an identity built on the ministry of a pastor or building. In Southeastern Iowa, these funds will be used to strengthen congregations who anticipate a future without an ordained minister, providing resources for Synod Authorized Ministers (SAMs), training and compensation for mentors, and learning opportunities for congregations as a whole. Learn more at thecastleproject.org.





Southeastern Iowa

— SYNOD —

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

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