

The Lutheran Faith Community Nurse Association Annual Report—2025



**LUTHERAN FAITH COMMUNITY
NURSE ASSOCIATION**
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2025 ANNUAL REPORT – LUTHERAN FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE ASSOCIATION (LFCNA)



LFCNA has a long tradition of serving Lutheran Faith Community Nurses (FCNs) and faith communities. This report serves to highlight our accomplishments for 2025. None of this happens without the commitment of our members to support one another, to commit to lifelong learning, and to trust that God's Spirit continues to call them individually and all of us collectively, to this important ministry. *Thank you for your part in moving our specialty forward and in supporting the work of LFCNA.*

LFCNA Mission: To provide leadership, resources, advocacy, and networks that promote the practice of Lutheran Faith Community Nursing.

LFCNA Vision: To promote a culture of health, healing and wholeness in Lutheran affiliates, faith communities, and society.

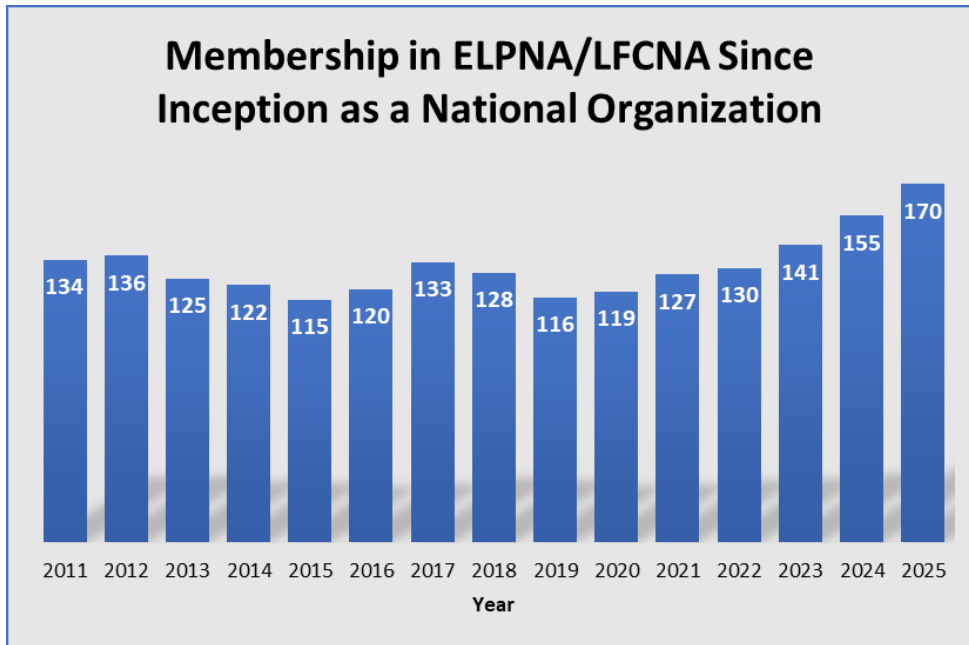
LFCNA Core Values

Guided by God and Christian beliefs LFCNA embraces these core organizational values:

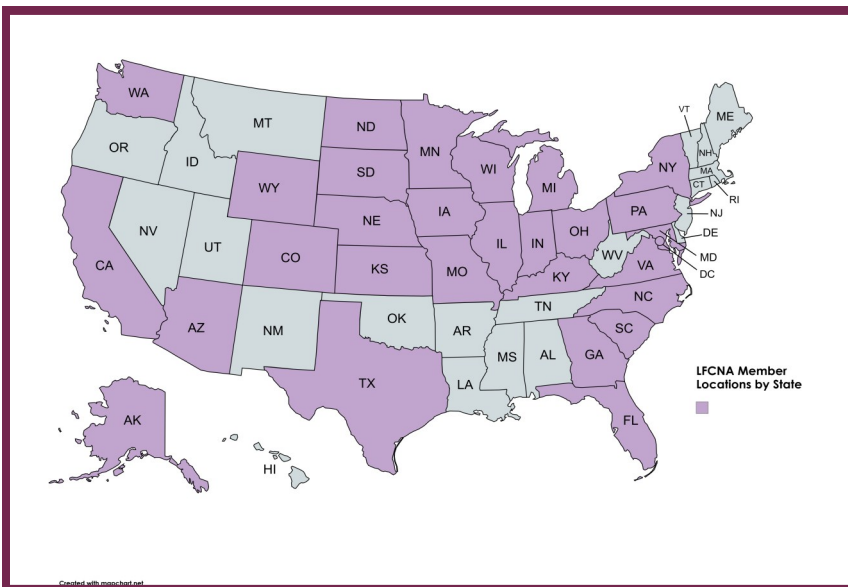
- ⇒ **Stewardship for sustainability:** God's uniting presence in us and those we serve; Stewardship of resources individually and as an organization
- ⇒ **Presence/compassion:** Make God's redemptive love known; Honoring God's presence in us and those we serve; God is the cure-giver; we are the caregiver.
- ⇒ **Excellence in Professional Practice:** Lifelong learning/Education; Fostering mutual support and care of others
- ⇒ **Collaboration:** Networking; Mentoring; Engagement.
- ⇒ **Transparency:** Honesty and Integrity

*I have come that they may
have life, and that they may
have it
more
abundantly*

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH—a clear sign of a vibrant and relevant organization!
Thank you to all of our members and to our Membership Committee.



Where do our members reside and practice?



Major Accomplishments of the Membership Committee in 2025

- ◆ Total membership for 2025 is 170. We received 34 new members with 20 members who did not renew for 2025. This is a net gain of 14 members and 83% retention rate.
- ◆ Offered 4 New Member Orientation sessions with committee members sharing opportunities and resources we offer.
- ◆ A new Emeritus level membership has been added for longtime members who are 85 years of age, have been a member for 15 years and have contributed to the organization in significant ways. Specific criteria were developed.
- ◆ Networking Groups meet regularly in all nine regions.
- ◆ Developed a working relationship with the ELCA Deaconess Community.

“Joining with my fellow Lutheran FCNs has availed so many resources and connections. Being 'way up here' in Alaska can sometimes feel a bit isolated, but this group is so welcoming with their sharing of ideas, encouragement and role modeling of sound practices... it is a gift! Their continuing education offerings always seem to be 'spot on' with what we are working on.”

**Tara Orley, RN—Anchorage, Alaska (Region 1)
Faith Community Nurse, Amazing Grace Lutheran Church**

From the Executive Director ...

What Can We Do Together?

I recently saw this headline, which in the column it headed, was a question applied to congregations and communities. I immediately saw it as a question for all of us as we minister ... yes, in congregations, communities, at the bedside, and in parishioner homes (wherever that might be). The article went on to share examples of where congregations had partnered with community agencies to benefit members.

As I think about our individual and collective work on behalf of those we serve, we often lead the way in creating collaborative relationships in community, as well as in ministry within the congregation. We are not in the business of duplicating ministries that already exist, but we are seeking to be creative in the ways we help individuals and families find greater health, complementing, partnering, and filling gaps where they exist. This is the essence of our ministry.

The subsequent question becomes, for me, what can we do together as colleagues, brothers and sisters in Christ, and in Faith Community Nursing ministry? Throughout this annual report you will see how the Lutheran Faith Community Nurse Association (LFCNA) has offered opportunities for us to be light and hope to one another. As primarily independent practitioners (not another Faith Community Nurse for miles and miles) we need support and encouragement from one another. Some may have local networks that inspire them for ministry and for those we are grateful.

Whatever your situation, please know that this organization, LFCNA, exists to foster collaboration and support within our community and specialty. Our mission is ***To provide leadership, resources, advocacy, and networks that build effectiveness of Lutheran Faith Community Nursing.*** So, today, I ask you how can we do that together? Thank you for your support of LFCNA and our important work in God's Kingdom. Continue being the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

Carol DeSchepper, Executive Director

2025 Grant Recipients:

- ◆ Gateway Lutheran Church, Ft. Myers, FL
Jeanne Griffen, Faith Community Nurse
- ◆ Christ the King Lutheran Church, Iowa City, IA
Carolyn Laxson, Faith Community Nurse



LFCNA Website:

<https://lutheranfcna.org>

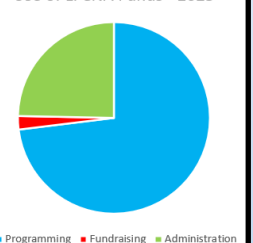
Rising to Serve



LFCNA Stewardship

LFCNA leaders are committed to first serving our members. We are pleased to share that in 2025 73.1% of LFCNA's income went to programming. This is consistent with other non-profits and we will continue to attempt to move more resources toward programming. Programming costs include supporting the newsletter and website; administering grants; supporting most committee work; planning and hosting educational events; attending networking events, outreach to church-wide and synods, among other. Administrative costs include filing requisite reports to the IRS, the state of MN, IT expenses (including the cost of the website and QuickBooks), working with the Governance Committee, Personnel Committee, and supporting the Board of Directors. Be assured that your dues, event registrations, and other gifts to LFCNA are used, primarily to support you, our members and your ministries.

Use of LFCNA Funds - 2025



Outcomes Spotlight ... LFCNA ...

- ⇒ added 34 new members in 2025, bringing total membership to 170. Our membership comes from 28 states and the District of Columbia with members in all 9 ELCA regions
- ⇒ provided seven (7) educational offerings with national speakers to a total of 400 attendees (nurses, clergy, and lay). Additionally, 241 certificates of attendance were requested and provided.
- ⇒ published six (6) issues of the LFCNA newsletter which were circulated online to approximately 500 persons bimonthly.
- ⇒ received the support of over 1850 volunteer hours
- ⇒ gratefully received 6 Thrivent gifts, financial support from two congregational endowment funds, 35 individual donations to support the work of LFCNA, and 87 extra gifts which helped defer the cost of credit card transactions. These are all in addition to those who faithfully paid dues, registered for educational events, and/or served in many different volunteer positions.

Continuing Education Opportunities in 2025— Equipping the called

- ◆ *The Faith Communities Call to Caregiving*
- ◆ *Anxiety Opportunity*
- ◆ *“This Isn’t Kansas, Toto” - Living in the New Digital World*
- ◆ *The Power of Compassion: How to find Joy in Challenging Times*
- ◆ *Creating a Dementia Friendly Congregation*
- ◆ *Hope in Practice: Applying Solution-Focused Communication Techniques in Response to Crisis*
- ◆ *The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning: Decluttering Your Life and Your Legacy*



“His work has been foundational not only to parish nursing but to the broader piece of health ministry. He brought theological understanding. He brought that vision that it doesn’t have to be the way it is today. ... Some people would look at Granger’s life and say that he was into promoting whole person health. Yes, he was. But he was into way beyond that. More than anyone I’ve ever known, Granger was into the transformation of health care. ... He was about changing the way people think about health, the way they relate to health, and the role that the church can play in relating to health and the individual. He is into transforming the church as an agency of health. He is trying to provide an environment in which the individual can be transformed.” (page 254)



Ann Solari-Twadell, PhD, RN, MPA, FAAN

Westberg, J. and Westberg-McNamara, J. (2015). *Gentle Rebel—The Life and Work of Granger Westberg, Pioneer in Whole Person Health*. Memphis, TN: Church Health.

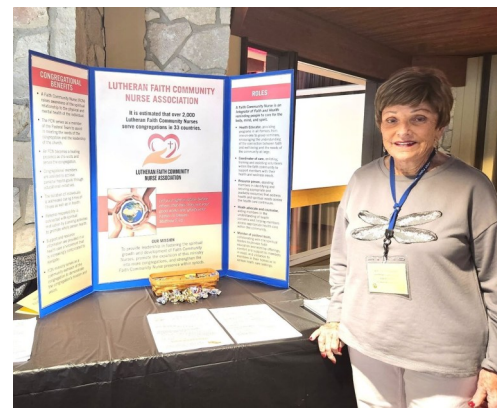
OUTREACH: In 2025, LFCNA had a presence at minimum of 19 events, including the following:

NE PA Synod Learning Day
AK Synod Assembly
Rockies Nursing Conference
Metro NY Synod Assembly
Minneapolis Synod Assembly
St. Paul Synod Assembly
SE Michigan Synod Assembly
NE PA Synod Assembly
SE PA Synod Assembly
Delaware/MD Synod Assembly
Lutheran Church of St. Andrew, Silver Spring, MD Racial Justice Conference
Southern OH Synod Assembly
Central/Southern IL Synod Assembly
Metro DC Synod Assembly
Western IA Synod
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Adult Forum
Central/Southern IL WELCA
Churchwide Assembly
Darke County, OH Fair in the Spirituality Center- August 2025

Each and all provide wonderful opportunities to hear heartfelt and heartbreaking stories, to educate about Faith Community Nursing and LFCNA. Thank you to those who served in this way.



Enid Rank, Rose Sutkins, and Dean Black at the NE PA Synod Learning Day



Sandy Reifsteck at the Central/Southern IL Synod Assembly



Marie Wiegert and Becky Huldén at the St. Paul Area Synod Assembly

Outreach Committee Accomplishments for 2025:

- ◆ Supported LFCNA presence at 19 synod or other events including Churchwide Assembly, a Social Justice Conference in Region 8, a nursing conference in Region 2, and WELCA events in two synods.
- ◆ Coordinated a presentation to Seminarians at United Seminary in Philadelphia, PA regarding Faith Community Nursing
- ◆ Collaborated with ELCA to conduct a Pulse Survey that was sent to a random sample of 25% of congregations to assess the status of health and faith community nursing ministry in congregations that responded. Follow-up is underway in 2026.
- ◆ Held discussions with Portico and the ELCA Deaconess Community about ways to partner in ministry .

2025 Report of Committee Achievements – Lutheran Faith Community Nurse Association (LFCNA)

Governance Committee:

- ◆ Developed the ballot for the 2025 election, for Board members and Officers serving in 2026-2027.
- ◆ Conducted a comprehensive review of the bylaws with changes approved in the spring of 2025
- ◆ Learned about and evaluated LFCNA's website security
- ◆ Reviewed and updated several LFCNA policies/guidelines

Education Committee:

- ◆ Offered 7 paid events in 2025 with 400 attendees
- ◆ Offered 2 Replenishing Your Heart events with a total of 57 persons attending.
- ◆ Conducted an education topic poll for all members
- ◆ Reformatted the 2026 annual meeting agenda to be more interactive

Grants Committee: Presented two \$750 congregational grants

Communications Committee:

- ◆ Connections newsletter sent out 6 issues with a specific theme focus and wonderful member contributions. Membership open rate has been 57-58%.
- ◆ The LFCNA website is continually being updated and reviewed for currency, appearance, and relevance. Resource pages are being reviewed by members with expertise in specific topics and regional pages are reviewed and updated with the assistance of regional directors.
- ◆ Conducted and reported on a poll done for the newsletter.
- ◆ Recruited one new person for the committee and one volunteer to help with Facebook.

Membership Committee:

See page 2 ...

Finance Committee:

- ◆ Provided the board with monthly financial reports
- ◆ Proposed the 2026 budget to the Board of Directors
- ◆ Initiated investments with the ELCA Mission Investment Fund. This is another way that LFCNA can support congregations and other entities throughout the ELCA.
- ◆ Assisted in drafting the 2024 and now, 2025 annual reports
- ◆ Optimized and thoughtfully stewarded the assets of LFCNA.

Personnel Committee:

Designed an employee performance appraisal tool and process and made appropriate corresponding changes to the employee handbook.

Outreach Committee:

See page 3 ...

"When I joined LFCNA I knew the organization was across the country and there was a wealth of information to tap into and to share. I chose to join a committee to become more involved and to get to know some of the members. It's been a blessing to work among very talented nurses as well as being able to share my knowledge and expertise in education."

**Peg Vandenhemel, MSN, RN, AHN-BC—
Region 6, Member of the LFCNA Education
Committee**

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. 1 Peter 4:10

God's Love Made Manifest Through the Ministry of One

Faith Community Nurse and a Congregation that Supports Her and One Another By Vicki Dueringer, RN, BSN, Faith Community Nurse—Trinity Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, WI

My story begins when our Pre-school director asked me if I knew anyone who could help a family who had eight children, all under the age of nine, with two sets of twins under the age of two. Part of my ministry is supporting caregivers in our congregation, which typically meant the elderly. I wasn't sure if I knew anyone who could or would help a family with 8 children, but I would see what I could do.

I met Renee in May. She was dropping off 4-year-old Edward at preschool, while waiting in the van were the other 7 children. I agreed to stop by later at the house to meet the kids and see how I could help this family. After that visit, I decided I was the one to help this family. Looking back, the first 3 months were easy.

Then in early autumn Renee was diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer, along with a cascade of additional crises over the next year. The "I" helping became an army of family, friends, and church community helpers.

Renee spoke to our congregation recently on what this church community has meant to her and the family. Her words express best the impact we, as Faith Community Nurses, have on the congregations we serve. What follows are excerpts from her talk.

My children have grown up seeing faith not just taught but lived. They've seen kindness in action. They've seen what community looks like. And they've seen adults who consistently show up for them—and for me.

And then came a season that tested me more deeply than anything else: my breast cancer diagnosis and treatment. It's a strange thing to have your life split into "before" and "after." There were days that felt heavy—physically, emotionally, spiritually. But I was never alone.

This church filled the gaps when I couldn't. Every gesture made a difference. Every act of kindness mattered. It kept me going. It helped my kids feel secure. It reminded us—on even the hardest days—that light always finds its way in.

Now, standing on the other side of treatment, I look back and I see how deeply God worked through all of you.

This happens to be a story where, as a Faith Community Nurse and in partnership with others of our congregation, we made a major difference in this family's life. But for Faith Community Nurses it is not always "big". It's an unexpected, kind word of encouragement, it's the blessing during a healing service, it's a birthday card sent to a 90-year-old that they are remembered, and so many other routine every day acts of kindness by which Faith Community Nurses show Jesus' love for all in this world.



