

Assembly Ambassador Monthly Toolkit

Ministry Focus: *Advocacy***Thoughts from Bishop Jim:**

For many people in our nation, the notion of “church” and “state” belong in separate realms. As ELCA Christians, we recognize the inseparable connection between the role of government and our voice as the church when it comes to the life of our marginalized neighbors, especially those living with hunger or poverty. Advocacy is an essential ministry of our church calling us to engage public leaders, asking them to partner with us as people of faith in developing solutions that address systemic issues related to our neighbors in need. What a gift to use our voices as God’s instruments of justice for the life of the world!

Mission Moment: *Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-New Mexico Advocacy Conference*

The 2018 Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-New Mexico Advocacy Conference was held on Saturday, November 17 at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Albuquerque. There were over 100 attendees with many full communion, ecumenical, and interfaith advocacy partners joining advocates from ELCA congregations in New Mexico.

Director of ELCA Advocacy, Amy Reumann, was the keynote speaker

with the theme of “God’s Word Spoken Publicly, Boldly, and Honestly.” Rocky Mountain Synod Bishop Jim Gonia opened the conference with prayer and remarks. Attendees networked with each other and learned about ELCA advocacy and LAM-NM issues that are expected in the upcoming 2019 legislative session. Those issues included creating a Medicaid Buy In program for low-income people; creating the mid-level profession of dental therapist to help deal with the lack of access to dental care; and building a “Roadmap to a Stronger New Mexico.” During lunch, Justin Remer-Thamert, executive director of the New Mexico Faith Coalition for Immigrant Justice and a member of the LAM-NM Policy Committee, updated the gathering about migrant advocacy work along the border and in New Mexico.

Mission Moment Image:

Over 100 advocates participated in the recent Advocacy Conference, committing to stronger New Mexico and world.

Hymn: ELW 710 *Let Streams of Living Justice*

Prayer Petitions:

God of compassion, whose Son became poor for our sake: Help us to see the face of Christ in those who are poor, and in serving them to serve you. Give us generous hearts so that those living in poverty may have adequate food, clothing, and shelter. By your Spirit move us to affirm the dignity of all people and to work for just laws that protect the most vulnerable in society, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Look with mercy, gracious God, upon people everywhere who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Rouse us from our complacency and help us to eliminate cruelty wherever it is found. Strengthen those who seek equality for all. Grant that everyone may enjoy a fair portion of the abundance of the earth; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Offering Connections *(to include in the offering portion of worship)*

- January 6:** As the ELCA, we are members of and support the work of the Lutheran World Federation, a global communion of Lutheran bodies currently working on issues of gender justice as part of their shared witness
- January 13:** Your gifts support the work of our ecumenical partnerships: Colorado Council of Churches, New Mexico Conference of Churches, and the Wyoming Interfaith Association
- January 20:** A portion of your mission support goes toward the advocacy work done through our 11 public policy offices, including two in the Rocky Mountain Synod.
- January 27:** Your offerings support our on-going theological discernment on public policy and social concerns, reflected in our Social Statements and Social Messages.