

Connecting in
Ministry &
Witness

Equipping
all Leaders

Claiming our Gifts

Accompanying
One Another
into God's
Future

Growing in
Gratitude &
Generosity

AUGUST 2019

For use in your bulletins, newsletters, social media, and worship

Assembly Ambassador Monthly Toolkit

Ministry Focus: 3E: *Educate, Equip, Enact*

Thoughts from Bishop Jim:

This month we are formally applying for a second Lilly Endowment grant that will allow us to grow in gratitude and generosity by expanding our "Educate, Equip, Enact (3E) ministry. This ambitious initiative aims at nothing less than transforming our relationship with money as people of faith so that our full potential as Christ's Church can be unleashed for the life of God's world! We are eager to continue and extend stewardship training for our RMS congregations through Stewardship for All Season while providing our pastors and deacons with support that will enhance their generosity through the Ministerial Excellence Fund. We are also excited to launch a new component of 3E that will invite us to explore components of right-sized ministry for the sake of health and vitality congregations. Church Better Together never looked so good!

Mission Moment: 3E



Educate, Equip, Enact (3E), the Rocky Mountain Synod's three-year Lilly Endowment grant is entering the home stretch, concluding at the end of 2019. In the past three years, 3E has distributed over \$300,000 of debt-reducing grants to 99 pastors and deacons in the RMS through its Ministerial Excellence Fund. 60 congregations have entered Stewardship for All Seasons, deepening congregational generosity. 3E has been a life-giving program in our synod!

The good news is that 3E will continue! The Lilly Endowment has invited us to apply for a second three-year grant that will begin in January 2020. We will continue the Ministerial Excellence Fund and Stewardship for All Seasons, and will be adding a new emphasis called Vital Right-Sized Ministry, exploring how the Spirit may be calling forth a new vision for ministry. Additionally, we will be sharing the resources of 3E with the Grand Canyon Synod.

In the next grant, the RMS will be required to match each Lilly dollar received. Our fundraising goal beginning January 2020 is \$350,000. This means our grant will expend \$700,000. We are grateful that the RMS fully supported the fund-raising goals of the first grant, and we will very much count on your generosity. We are on a dynamic road to growing generosity, vitality, and healthy Christian communities.

[**A 3E Reflection from Project Director Rev. Michael Tassler, featured in The Christian Century!**](#)

Hymn: ELW #845 – Voices Raised to You

Prayer Petition:

Gracious God, in times of confusion and change, you remain faithful to your mission of equipping the church to share your love for the sake of the world. When we feel sometimes hopeless before the immensity of the challenges that lie before us, you give us your creative Holy Spirit to stir up new ways of thinking and possibilities previously unimagined. Thank you for your generosity that opens our hearts to be generous to others for your sake.

Activities and Embodied Prayers

Embodied Offering

Change up how you collect offering during worship. Following our Malagasy siblings, place the offering basket in a central location and have everyone in worship pass by the basket, either to give their offering or to touch the basket and offer a prayer.

Prayer Wall

Hang a butcher paper on a blank wall or set up a bulletin board with paper and markers available. Invite worshippers to write prayers of gratitude for the gifts in their life, for the ministry made possible because of offerings, etc. Create a separate space (box, jar) as a place to offer prayers regarding financial concerns.

Money Autobiography

Hand out the [money autobiography](#) and encourage folks to complete it on their own and/or discuss as a family. Invite them to share some of their learnings or reflections via email or a response box and share some during worship or in a newsletter article.

Money and Church

During an adult forum, Bible Study, coffee hour, or even worship, have conversation using one or more of the [Money and Church](#) activities from the Better Together Summits.

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

August 4: Your generosity has been life-changing in the Rocky Mountain Synod. You have supported *all* matching dollar requirements to expend Lilly grant dollars. Your continued generosity means that the blessings of 3E can extend for another three years starting in 2020.

August 11: Your mission support means that 60% of Rocky Mountain Synod congregations will participate in Stewardship for All Seasons, helping change the root culture of stewardship to radical generosity in our giving.

August 18: Educate, Equip, Enact helps part-time pastors and deacons live out their vocational integrity and find suitable sources of additional income. Because of your support for 3E, we received an additional small grant to design a program assisting part-time rostered ministers and smaller congregations.

August 25: Your financial support for Educate, Equip, Enact has helped send 25 rostered ministers to California Lutheran University's Executive Skills for Church Leaders course, helping pastors and deacons learn MBA level church management skills.

Community Conversations: Money & Church

The video and activity comes from the Conference Better Together Summits. Additional videos, activities, and discussion questions can be [found here](#)

Video and Discussion

- Together, watch [Living Generously](#)
- Discover the group's perspectives using the activity "[Congregational Perspectives](#)". For a small group, folks could share their responses individually; a larger group may need different colored cards or numbered paper to visually show their response

Community Questions:

- Did your parents or other family members share their attitudes about money with you?
- Did your parents or other family members worry about money?
- Who was instrumental in inspiring you to grow in generosity?
- Do you believe your money is a gift from God, or the fruit of your hard work and perseverance?
- Do you consider your financial generosity to be a personal and private matter, or are you willing to share your commitment to financial generosity in order to encourage others?
- Do you enjoy being thanked when you contribute money, or are you more comfortable when you are able to give privately and confidentially?
- Do you give money to your congregation whenever you feel inspired to do so, or do you have a specific, intentional plan to give money to your congregation?

Pray: Take a few moments to share financial joys and concerns of your community (individuals, congregation, leadership, neighborhood). As someone shares, invite another person to pray for that concern or joy.

Just for Fun: Buy a box or piggy bank and decorate it together. Use that to collect your offering or a special collection for a ministry important to the community.

Looking Ahead:

September: Leadership

October: Candidacy

November: New and Renewing Congregations

December: Glocal Church

January: Advocacy

February: Campus Ministry

March: Ecumenical Life

April: Our Life Together as an Interdependent Church

May: Faith Formation

