Rocky Mountain Synod
the Lutheran Church, ELCA in Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and El Paso

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Generosity begins with the gifts God has already given us. We give not to earn God's love, but in gratitude for the generosity we have received and in response to the needs of our neighbors.

In Exodus 35–36, the Israelites bring their varied gifts to build the tabernacle—materials, craftsmanship, time, and talents. Together, their gifts become something greater than any one person could accomplish alone. The same is true of our life together as the church.

Mission Support is the portion of offerings that congregations and ministries share with the Rocky Mountain Synod to strengthen our collective ministry. These gifts support ministry in three important ways:

First, 42.5% of Mission Support offerings received goes to the ELCA Churchwide Organization, supporting global missionaries, Young Adults in Global Mission, Lutheran Disaster Response, ELCA World Hunger, and other ministries we accomplish together. Some of these resources also return to our synod through grants and support for local ministries.

Second, Mission Support invests in people, particularly our synod minister team, whose ministry is to support, connect, and equip more than 150 congregations and ministries. Through relationships, visits, leadership development, congregational transitions, vitality initiatives, communications, and events, our team accompanies congregations and leaders throughout the synod.

Third, Mission Support strengthens ministry partnerships, including new and redeveloping ministries, Lutheran Family Services, and other social ministry organizations serving our communities.

Our **Second Fruits initiative** complements this work by providing direct grants to congregations, ministries, and community projects through resources from previous capital campaigns, property sales, and holy closures. We think of Second Fruits and Mission Support as two branches of one tree, both rooted in generosity. While Second Fruits funds support ministries/people on the local level, your **ongoing Mission Support sustains the people, relationships, and foundational ministries that make our shared work possible.**

Faithful stewardship also requires transparency and trust. Our move to Iliff School of Theology has freed financial resources and staff time for ministry, while our two-year budget cycle creates greater opportunity for shared discernment and planning.

Our goal for the coming year is for 100% of our congregations and ministries to participate in Mission Support. We recognize that financial circumstances, past experiences, and questions about how gifts are used can affect participation. We welcome those conversations and opportunities to listen, build trust, and strengthen our shared ministry.

Above all, thank you for the many ways you proclaim the gospel in your communities. Like the Israelites bringing their diverse gifts together, we trust that what God has entrusted to us will continue to strengthen this part of the Body of Christ.

With gratitude in Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni
Bishop, Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

The Rev. Chris Davis
Synod Minister for Generosity, Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA