

# As the Body of Christ...



**Rocky Mountain Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
 God's work. Our hands.

Paul writes to the church in Corinth: Now you are the **body of Christ** and individually members of it.

When we read the New Testament we discover something critical about the nature of Christ's Church. It always finds expression BOTH in local communities of disciples AND as a universal community of faith. There is an inherent **mutuality** that never allows one part of the Body to exist in isolation from the rest.

One of the gifts of our life together as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is that we take this Scriptural understanding of the church seriously, BOTH honoring our expression as individual communities of faith AND recognizing our shared ministry and witness. We claim the gift of the **mutuality** as we BOTH accompany one another in our local contexts AND support the ministry to which we are called as a synod, as a wider church, as a global communion, and as an ecumenical partner.

Mission support is a tangible expression of our **mutuality** as Christ's Church. By providing resources for our shared participation in God's mission—



as a synod, as a wider church, as a global communion, and as an ecumenical partner—we extend our local capacity to proclaim and embody God's unconditional love for the sake of the world while bringing the fullness of Christ's Church into our particular context. What a gift!

As you consider the fruits of our life together as the

Rocky Mountain Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, I pray that you will find joy in sharing the resources that enable us to continue in ministry and witness as Christ's Church, Better Together.

Yours in Faith,

## 2016 by the numbers

### Claiming our Gifts

**\$51,300** for Equipping new leaders at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary.  
**\$5,000** to Betela Seminary in Madagascar.  
**\$38,500** to support 5,373 summer campers at Sky Ranch and Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camps.  
**\$242,750** in support of 7 Campus Ministries.  
**\$1,038,500** shared with our Churchwide ministries.

### Connecting in Ministry & Witness

**11** Office of the Bishop staff members did over **400** visits to **117** congregations for Sunday worship, council meetings, exit interviews, retreats, and installations and **43** visits to **11** of our partners in ministry: campus ministry, outdoor ministry, social ministry organizations, and education institutions.

### Equipping All Leaders

Bishop Gonia or the Office of the Bishop staff took part in **1** Consecration, **4** Ordinations, **26** Exit Interviews, and **25** Installations of pastors and deacons.  
**155** ministers participated in our annual Theological Conference.  
**488** attended the annual RMS Assembly.

### Accompanying one another into God's Future

Accompanied **60** congregations in transition and shepherded **35** current candidates for ministry.  
 Supported **12** new, renewing, and ethnic-specific ministries.  
**137** WebEx videoconferencing meetings took place, bridging our vast synod distances.

# What we did, together, in 2016

## Claiming our Gifts

**Together**, we formed Re-Formation Teams and provided resources for congregation Re-Formation Heritage Events.

## Connecting in Ministry & Witness

**Together**, we met monthly for planning and decision making: Conference Deans, Synod Council, and Faith Formation Coordinators.

**Together**, we attended the 2016 Churchwide Assembly to worship, elect leaders, and support new initiatives.

**Together**, we supported refugee resettlement through Lutheran Family Services.

**Together** with Cristo Rey, we hosted the Region 2 Global Mission Gathering and Border Immersion in El Paso, TX..

**Together**, 7 teams, tables, and committees met in person or via WebEx to support our life together as the RMS.

## Equipping All Leaders

**Together**, we worked with seminaries, candidates, and Bishops to improve the assignment process for first call leaders.

## Accompanying one another into God's Future

**Together**, we engaged in synod-wide conversation to develop a 3-year strategic plan for the Rocky Mountain Synod.

**Together**, we hosted the Region 2 First Call Theological Event: Leadership in a Public Church.

**Together**, leaders gathered in Cheyenne, WY for retreat, community, and learning at the Fall Theological Conference.

**Together**, we walked with 15 new & renewing RMS congregations with financial resources, leadership development, and staff support.

**Together**, we embraced a unified Word and Service Roster under the title, *Deacon*.

## looking ahead to 2017

### **Claiming our Gifts**

- Deepening our Unity: Common Prayer Services with 7 Roman Catholic Diocese around the RMS
- Supporting unaccompanied migrant minors through AMMPARO

### **Equipping All Leaders**

- Launching *Educate, Equip, Enact (3E)* to begin addressing economic challenges of rostered ministers
- Developing Fiscal Wellness Teams and Coaches

### **Connecting in Ministry and Witness**

- Connecting a contact person for all candidates awaiting call and all leaders new to the synod
- Developing new digital resources: RMS App, online directory, and video resources for teaching
- Continuing congregational visits by Office of the Bishop staff

### **Accompanying one another into God's future**

- Reviewing synodical teams and committees to ensure structure promotes effective and creative ministry
- Convening the Mission Imagination Table to explore new models of ministry