

# For the Life of the World...



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

As I ponder our 2017 Rocky Mountain Synod focus on **Re•Formation** and look ahead to our 2018 theme - **For the Life of the World** - three things are clear to me.

## 1. The Holy Spirit has need of us.

I am convinced that our particular witness to the gospel as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America matters more than ever - not just for us, but for the life of the world. Through our congregations and ministries, synods and churchwide expression our calling isn't to survive - it is to be Christ's Body in the world so that together we might proclaim and embody God's unconditional love for all. It's that big.

## 2. It's time to fully invest.

To be the church God is calling us to be for the life of the world, it's time to be "all in". It's time to claim the gifts that give our ELCA life and witness relevance in the



world and make us good companions in ministry. It's time to nurture the continued growth and re-formation of all our leaders. It's time to commit to new and imaginative ways of being Christ's Church into the future. Now is the time.

## 3. We can't do this alone.

It's simple but true: We are Christ's Church, Better Together. We are better together as fellow members of the ELCA. We are better together with our ecumenical partners and through our inter-religious relationships. We are better together when we are deeply connected to both our global communion and our local communities. We cannot be the Church Christ needs us to be alone.

**Christ's Church, always re-formed for the life of the world!**

Yours in Faith,

## 2016 by the numbers

### Claiming our Gifts

Over **\$26,000** supports our work as a public church through Advocacy, Border Servant Corps, Urban Servant Corps, Lutheran Family Services, and Upbring.  
**\$38,500** to support summer campers at Sky Ranch and Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camps.  
**\$242,750** in support of 7 Campus Ministries.  
**\$1,039,600** shared with our Churchwide ministries.

### Connecting in Ministry & Witness

**11** Office of the Bishop staff members made over **363** visits to **115** congregations for Sunday worship, council meetings, exit interviews, retreats, and installations, **79** visits to **17** of our partners in ministry: campus ministry, outdoor ministry, social ministry organizations, and education institutions, and hosted **19** large gatherings at the Lutheran Center.

### Equipping All Leaders

Through Educate, Equip, Enact: **14** congregations participated in Stewardship for all Seasons, **70** leaders joined the Ministry of Money Matters Workshop, and **18** rostered ministers received grants to address financial challenges. We convened **186** conversations with over **11** committees and teams, working as Christ's Church, Better Together to further our work and witness across the Rocky Mountain Synod.

### Accompanying one another into God's Future

We accompanied **54** congregations in transition, shepherded **57** current candidates for ministry, and offered **18** seminary scholarships. **6** NM congregations became Advocating Congregations. **\$100,000** was shared to support the work of our mission congregations. **\$9,000** was shared with the Caribbean Synod to support their hurricane recovery.

# What we did, together, in 2017

## Claiming our Gifts

**Working towards, unity,** we joined in a liturgy of Common Prayer with 7 of the Roman Catholic Dioceses that overlap the RMS.

## Connecting in Ministry & Witness

**Seeking to equip all of God's children to act for justice,** we hosted Advocacy action and education events

**Embodying our commitment as a global church,** a RMS/ELCA delegation visited our 4 companion synods in Madagascar.

**To strengthen our witness,** we developed video and teaching resources about our gifts as the ELCA.

**Challenging our privilege and seeking mutual understanding,** the synod council and staff traveled to EL Paso to learn about the Border.

**Bearing public witness to unity,** our ecumenical partners joined the 476 attendees at Synod Assembly.

## Equipping All Leaders

**Valuing excellence in leadership,** 168 leaders attended a Theological Conference focused on hard conversations, vulnerability, and financial stewardship.

## Accompanying one another into God's Future

**To better align our structures to serve our mission,** a team worked to update our synodical constitution.

**To strengthen our shared witness,** we partnered with the Episcopal Diocese for congregational leadership training.

**To better support our leaders,** we began Educate, Equip, and Enact to address the financial challenges of rostered ministers.

**As part of our public collective witness to the gospel,** RMS leaders and ecumenical partners led the Easter Sunrise service at Red Rocks Amphitheater.

**Equipping new leaders and renewing congregations,** we hosted a training for Mission Developers and Redevelopers.

## looking ahead to 2018

### **Claiming our Gifts**

- Creating an expanded curriculum for the Claiming Our Gifts teaching resource
- Hosting a joint middle school and high school synodical youth gathering
- Traveling to Houston for the 2018 Youth Gathering

### **Equipping All Leaders**

- Developing a Comprehensive Leadership Strategy for promoting excellence in Leadership
- Supporting participation in Stewardship for All Seasons
- Hosting Fall Missional Gatherings in each conference

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

- Implementing a comprehensive communication strategy that encompasses current technologies
- Convening those serving in part-time ministry
- Hosting leaders from our companion synods in Madagascar

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

- Increasing our mission support share to Churchwide ministries from 46% to 47%
- Exploring a 3rd outdoor ministry site in the RMS
- Electing a bishop at our May Synod Assembly
- Continuing to pay close attention to justice in public policy