

WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER



STORYTELLING ENGAGEMENT

February 2025 Mission Support Memo

LuMin – Creating Belonging

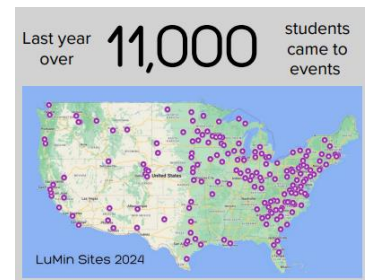
A story about our ELCA Lutheran Campus Ministry Network, adapted from the LuMin Impact Report

As you read this story, what inspires you?

How can you connect with a campus ministry?

Imagine a place in the ELCA where you can build community, deepen faith, expand minds, and inspire service with over 11,000 young adults. Where does this happen? In our 176 local campus ministry agencies and cooperating congregations, where we transform the lives of college students and campus communities through God's abundant grace. ELCA Campus Ministry is carried out through the collaborative efforts of many organizations and individuals: local campus ministry agencies, led by over 200 staff people, synod staff members and campus ministry committees, the Program Director for Campus Ministry and the Young Adult Communities team in the churchwide organization, and the [Lutheran campus ministry \(LuMin\) Network](#), the association of campus ministry practitioners.

Across our nation, each week during the academic year, over 3,300 students participate in some way in our ELCA campus ministry locations. Over 30% of campus ministries are ecumenical partnerships, while 28% are programs within congregations bringing intergenerational ministry to life. It's interesting that only 35% of the students grew up in the ELCA. Almost 50% come from another Christian or faith background. In fact, 17% of participants come from a non-religious background, which might account for why 25% of the campus ministries reported at least one student baptism last year!



ELCA Campus Ministries gather students around the core practices of:

- *Building Community:* Offering places where students experience belonging and safety. Communal meals, fellowship events, and open study space invite students to connect and be nourished.
- *Deepening Faith:* Worship and prayer are at the heart of ELCA Campus Ministry. From weekly worship to contemplative prayer that foster spiritual resilience and ease anxiety and stress.
- *Expanding Minds:* These include faith formation activities, small group conversations, Bible study, as well as studies on theological and social justice issues. Some activities are even offered to the greater university faculty and staff.
- *Inspiring Service:* Campus ministry raises up leaders for the church and for the world. As young adults take on leadership in the day-to-day life of their campus ministry, they are also inspired to become leaders wherever life takes them: congregations, volunteer service programs, ELCA Seminaries, and their local communities. This peer ministry is powerful for all.



The work of ELCA Campus Ministry and LuMin is driven to inspire, connect, and equip campus ministry organizations to better serve students. This ministry clearly addresses a priority of our church to share the love of Jesus with more people who are new to church, young, and from diverse backgrounds. It is challenging work, with potentially 25% of the members leaving each year as they graduate as well as rebuilding community after COVID, staff transitions especially over the last five years, plus financial constraints and operational challenges.

Campus ministry is vital to our work of church together. Many Campus Ministries receive over 35% of their funding from Mission Support and more than 40% from congregational and individual donations. This support is more and more important to continuing this vital ministry. Pastor Mariah Mills, pastor in Boise, ID, says this about her campus ministry experience, “Because of my own personal experience [in campus ministry], I am deeply passionate about every college campus having a faith community that is a place of safety, welcome, and affirmation for all students.” Connect more deeply by reading the [Campus Ministry Impact Report](#) and engaging with the [LuMin blog](#).

ENGAGE WITH US

Narrative Spending Plan – Start Planning Now

Have you been wondering what a narrative spending plan can do for your congregation? Well, it is never too soon to begin learning and planning! A narrative spending plan is a compliment to a congregation budget. It provides a way to tell the story of your mission spending through pictures, anecdotes, quotes, graphs, and stories. If you are considering a narrative mission spending plan, also known as a narrative budget, start now! The ELCA’s [narrative spending plan webinar](#) will lead you through the process of capturing what you do and how it’s important to the mission God has given your congregation.

ELCA Congregational Stewardship also has a number of other webinars you can access in areas of year-round stewardship, grant writing and congregations, reimaging assets, donor mindsets, and so much more. Find out more here: [Congregational Stewardship has a Vimeo page!](#)

GRATEFUL

We are extremely grateful that you have accessed our Mission Support Memos over the last two years. This memo is a key resource for our team to share ministry stories from across our church that we all support together through generous Mission Support. We need your feedback to ensure this resource is meeting your needs. Please [click to complete the short survey](#). Thank you for taking the time to improve this work we do together.

In gratitude,
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Karen Kretschmann, Coordinator for Storytelling Engagement

