



Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA

In February 2014, ELCA members, congregations and synods embarked on a courageous and unprecedented journey. Through *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, this church committed to investing in its future, deepening relationships and expanding ministries that serve neighbors and communities in the United States and around the world.

With a goal of raising \$198 million in cash and commitments by June 30, 2019, the ELCA focused campaign efforts on four priority areas: congregations, hunger and poverty, global church and leadership. The campaign goal represents a 64% increase in designated funding for these existing and new ministry initiatives.

Since the campaign's launch, ELCA ministries have witnessed amazing generosity and support from synods, congregations, members and volunteers, leading to incredible growth across this church. Thank you.

Campaign results: Feb. 1, 2014–June 30, 2019 (to be provided)

As of this writing, *The Campaign for the ELCA* is still in progress and quickly approaching its successful conclusion. Once the campaign period ends, this report will include final income results and a report on the campaign impact by program.

Impact on congregations, hunger and poverty, global church and leadership (to be provided)

Participation from across the church

A collective effort involving members from across this church, the campaign engaged with congregations, synods, leadership and other groups to garner support and spread the word. Throughout the campaign, the following groups participated in a variety of ways unique to their contexts:

- **ELCA congregations** conducting their own capital campaigns pledged a percentage of their gifts to the churchwide effort. In addition, congregations led efforts to engage their members in the campaign through annual themes, anniversary celebrations and other special initiatives, and offered grants for select projects through their foundations.
- **Synods and bishops** played a crucial role in hosting local events with key donors in their communities. Through these events, ELCA members got a first-hand account of the campaign and its impact. Synods also highlighted campaign impact at their annual assemblies and encouraged participation in the annual themes and special initiatives. To monitor giving and impact, synods received a monthly report of campaign gifts from their synod.
- **Church Council** members served as advocates for the campaign, bringing progress updates and opportunities to their regions. Through a Church Council fundraising challenge, past and current council members had contributed nearly \$220,000 to the campaign as of May 1.
- Volunteer **leadership councils and committees** provided the campaign with insight and perspectives from a variety of contexts, and members served as ambassadors to their congregations and synods. Committee and council members also hosted local events to help spread the word and connect individuals from their communities with the work of the campaign.
- One of the campaign's goals was to increase engagement and participation among **churchwide staff** through the creation of an employee-giving committee and dedicated giving effort. In addition, the annual campaign "birthday party" on Feb. 1 created an opportunity to thank staff and engage them in the ministries of the campaign.

As of May 1, leadership groups had participated through gifts and commitments as follows:

Leadership group	Participation rate	Total number of participants
Campaign Steering Committee	100%	18
Conference of Bishops	87%	83
ELCA Church Council	79%	87
Churchwide Administrative Team	100%	9
Churchwide senior leadership	97%	33
Bishop's Advisory Council	90%	31
Fund for Leaders Leadership Table	100%	13
ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Response Development Council	100%	12

Building a major-gifts program

A desired outcome of the campaign was development of an individual major-gift program to create sustainability beyond the life of the campaign for the church's many ministries.

A "major gift" to the campaign was defined as \$5,000 or more per year. Through the campaign, ELCA ministries experienced a 40% increase in major gifts between 2013 and 2018:

Gift range	2013	2018
\$5,000–\$24,999	133	181
\$25,000–\$49,999	14	24
\$50,000–\$249,999	19	26
\$250,000–\$499,999	1	2
\$500,000+	1	2
Total	168	235

Through the campaign, the Mission Advancement team implemented a program to track outreach efforts that led to successful and appropriate major-gift proposals and ongoing stewardship of those gifts. Team members were encouraged to meet with donors in person when possible and to consider how new donors might be matched with ministries pursuing their philanthropic interests and personal passions. This also established a comprehensive review of major gifts in the pipeline for the staff of both Mission Advancement and the ELCA Foundation.

Early in the campaign, the team conducted a mapping exercise to identify key geographical areas for outreach. About 20 areas were selected, based on the presence of current congregational and synodical support for the campaign, active churchwide and local volunteer leadership, a strong donor and prospective donor base, staffing and cost considerations, and the presence of other growth opportunities. Individual strategies for each area were subsequently developed. Leveraging existing interests, connections and excitement at the congregational and synodical level helped lift efforts to do more as a church, together.

As part of the campaign, the ELCA launched a new form of giving: multiyear commitments, which allow donors to commit a larger amount to a ministry or ministries by breaking the gift into smaller annual payments. Throughout the campaign, nearly \$18 million was given through multi-year commitments.

Introduced in April 2017, Project 500 was incorporated into the major-gift strategy in 2018 and 2019. The project included monthly major-gift management meetings to promote a coordinated team effort in engaging the ELCA's top 500 major-donor prospects. In 2018, these efforts produced the following results:

- \$7.5 million in cash gifts of \$5,000 or more.
- \$1.5 million in new major-gift commitments.
- \$9 million total impact in current major gifts.
- \$8.6 million in new planned gifts established and documented by the major-gifts team.

Events played a key role in engaging ELCA members with campaign priorities, including two ELCA Women Leaders gatherings, Advent celebrations with Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, annual International Women's Day events around the country and other local gatherings hosted by ELCA members. The largest event, the Always Being Made New Campaign Dinner in Washington, D.C., took place in October 2017 on the 500th anniversary of

the Reformation. The event was instrumental in launching Project 500 and provided a space for current and prospective major donors to gather, be inspired by the work of the ELCA and hear the presiding bishop describe her vision for the future of this church. Two high-profile Lutherans, Mr. Rick Steves and Ms. Lois Quam, co-hosted the event.

Matching gifts were another area of engagement and growth during the campaign. By providing matching gifts, donors helped inspire others in their generosity and created incentives for participation. These matching gifts included:

- Annual (2017–2019) International Women’s Day matches, which helped generate more than \$600,000 for the International Women Leaders initiative.
- A \$515,000 match for ELCA World Hunger’s Global Farm Challenge, which engaged youth and their congregations at the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering and generated \$1.4 million for ELCA World Hunger.
- A \$500,000 matching gift for attendees of the 2015 Youth Gathering who were participating in ELCA World Hunger’s Walk for Water, which generated more than \$1.2 million.
- Other matches used in campaign appeals to generous supporters.

Leadership of the campaign steering committee

The campaign steering committee consisted of 22 volunteers, including the Rev. Brian Maas, bishop of the Nebraska Synod, and Mr. Joseph T. Nolte of Des Moines, Iowa. Bishop Maas is an important link to the Conference of Bishops, whereas Mr. Nolte serves as a representative from the Church Council. Co-chairs Ms. MaryAnn and Mr. Loren Anderson of Minneapolis, Minnesota led, encouraged and inspired campaign staff and volunteers throughout the campaign.

Other members include Ms. Sarah Bowers (Columbia, South Carolina), the Rev. Cindy Carroll and the Rev. Don Haven (Lake Dallas, Texas), the Rev. Simon Fensom (Moorhead, Minnesota), Mr. Tim Krumm (Iowa City, Iowa), Ms. Christine Mummert (Lititz, Pennsylvania), Ms. Jenny Norris Peterson (Saint Paul, Minnesota), Ms. Tanisha Pitre (Lakewood, California), Mr. Wayne and Ms. Phyllis Rickert (Agoura Hills, California), Mr. Duane Sander (Brookings, South Dakota), Mr. Bob and Ms. Becky Shaw (Clive, Iowa), Ms. Sylvia Sloan Black (Chapel Hill, North Carolina), Mr. Steve and Ms. Steph Smith (Minneapolis, Minnesota), Mr. Rick Torgerson (Minneapolis, Minnesota) and Ms. Lauren Winnewisser (Santa Barbara, California). Past members include the Rev. Claire Burkart, former bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod; the Rev. Elizabeth Ekdale (San Francisco, California); and Mr. Kent Dauten (Northfield, Illinois).

Convening in Chicago on a semiannual basis, the committee discussed campaign progress, successes and challenges, and planned for the upcoming six months between meetings. The committee stayed in touch through a monthly newsletter.

In addition to providing advice and input on campaign initiatives, committee members assisted in hosting local campaign events in their communities. Members also helped coordinate the ELCA Women Leaders gatherings, the campaign dinner in Washington, D.C., and the campaign celebration in August 2019.

Communicating campaign opportunities and updates

In addition to integrating campaign messaging with existing ELCA communications, staff developed a suite of materials and special initiatives to engage ELCA members, donors, congregations and synods in the work and impact of the campaign. As the campaign was launched and gained momentum, key materials included:

- The campaign case statement, which provided information such as the origination of the campaign, its priorities and goals, as well as how to make a gift.
- Mini case statements, providing an in-depth look at the program, its impact and its giving opportunities, for all 10 campaign priorities.
- Resources for congregations and synods, including pew envelopes, posters, congregational planning packets, synod introductory packets and bulletin inserts.
- A variety of videos, including *What Does the ELCA Mean to You?*, campaign messages from the presiding bishop, and a celebration of the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

At the conclusion of each campaign year, an annual report was sent both digitally and via U.S. mail to nearly 145,000 recipients, including donors, volunteers, ELCA staff, synods, congregations and other ELCA leadership groups. In addition to the original distribution, development staff used the report in meetings with current and prospective donors throughout the year. All reports were made available for download on the campaign website.

To encourage special involvement and over-and-above giving in synods and congregations, the campaign established annual themes keyed to its priorities: in 2014, malaria; in 2015, congregations; in 2016, world hunger; in

2017, global church; and in 2018, leadership. Themed activities included ELCA World Hunger's Lenten initiative, "40 Days of Giving," and the expansion of communications and fundraising for International Women's Day.

Major-gift proposals and individual-impact reports played a key role in engaging and thanking major donors. These personalized documents, tailored to fit the interests and desires of the respective donors, were utilized by development team members as they cultivated these relationships.

To share the progress of the campaign and its ministries, the ELCA published a quarterly newsletter and distributed approximately 12,000 copies to synods, congregations, volunteers, donors and other stakeholders. For more urgent and timely announcements, the campaign digitally distributed news releases in conjunction with the ELCA publications team.

Three direct-mail appeals to mid-level and annual donors raised awareness of the campaign's "Where Needed Most" fund, generating \$640,000.

Celebrating this church's impact

In early fall 2019, all ELCA donors, congregations, synods, leadership groups and other key constituents will receive a comprehensive report outlining the campaign's impact and final fundraising totals. Materials such as videos and bulletin inserts will be provided to synods and congregations so they might celebrate with their members. Other wrap-up materials, including news releases and a special feature in *Living Lutheran*, will be produced and widely shared as well.

The campaign team looks forward to celebrating and sharing all that this church has accomplished together. A celebration event for Churchwide Assembly voting members and their guests will take place Aug. 7 at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

Six years ago, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly took the bold step of approving *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*. Since then, the support of members and leaders across this church has made a tremendous impact on ministry. Thank you for your efforts to tell the story of this church and for encouraging deeper engagement in *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*. Together, this church can do even more!

The Rev. Ronald T. Glusenkamp, *director*