



Global Mission

Global Mission

The Global Mission unit is responsible for the ELCA's mission outside the territorial United States and serves as the channel through which churches in other countries engage in mission to this church. This engagement occurs through the theology and practice of mission known as accompaniment, journey with many companions where the unrecognized Christ shows up time and time again with and among us, frequently in quite unexpected ways.

In this triennium since the 2016 Churchwide Assembly—with heartfelt thanks to *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*—Global Mission has been able to deepen and extend programs in evangelism and leadership development, some examples are the Young Adults in Global Mission and the International Women Leaders programs. The outreach ministry in South Sudan continues to grow as well as the work in Cambodia, Malaysia, The Gambia, Russia and Costa Rica, and in China with the Lisu ethnic minority, to name a few places where it is evident that the gospel has free reign and is transforming lives.

The Global Mission unit has developed two strategies, “God’s Vulnerable People on the Move” and “A Commitment Toward Gender Justice,” that bring together some previous work into comprehensive and integrated responses to pressing concerns and injustices in the world today. “God’s Vulnerable People on the Move,” the ELCA’s global migration strategy, responds to the massive displacement of people created by civil strife and wars, social and economic insecurity, and the effect of climate change on vulnerable communities. “A Commitment Toward Gender Justice” seeks, among other things, to “promote gender justice as a theological foundation to proclaim dignity and justice for all human beings and to promote gender equality as a universally recognized human right ... [and to] address systemic and structural practices that create barriers to full participation of women and men in leadership at levels of decision-making.”

Please pray, participate and provide for the global mission efforts of this church: “*And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds*” (Hebrews 10:24a).

Report of work 2016–2019: Stewarding global companion church relationships and receiving their gifts of Christian witness

Global Mission area desk staff, including and managers for relationships, steward the ELCA’s relationships with, and receives gifts of Christian witness from, global-companion churches in five regions around the world and here in the United States.

Asia and the Pacific Area Desk:

- Church-to-church companion relationships were established with the Lutheran Church in Cambodia and two constituent churches within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Himalayan States.
- Following the 2015 Nepal earthquakes, schools and a hospital were reconstructed, and the leadership capacities of community leaders were strengthened, including among the Dalit (outcasts) and women.
- With support from *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, the Lutheran Church in Malaysia birthed new congregations, welcomed people into the faith through baptisms and Christian education, and witnessed to the marginalized Orang Asli indigenous people. The Lutheran Church in Cambodia planted churches and new missions and strengthened the capacity of leaders.
- HIV and AIDS work was supported in Nepal (education resources, training materials), Thailand (health care support, countering stigma, education) and Indonesia (health care support, job training and support, countering stigma, peer education).
- Women’s ministry programs were deepened in Indonesia (crisis ministry), India (addressing atrocities, Bible women, capacity building), accompanied dialogues toward women’s ordination with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea and the Manipur Evangelical Lutheran Church (India), and supported planning of a major human trafficking conference in Thailand.
- Relationships were deepened with the Lutheran Church of Australia, which started with the Young Adults in Global Mission country program there and now includes theological education and mutual engagements across Asia.

East and Southern Africa Area Desk

- This area desk stewards relationships with Lutheran churches composed of 25 million individuals in 14 countries—22 million in East Africa and three million in Southern Africa—and manages 37 ELCA companion relationships: 22 companion synods with East African churches and dioceses and 12 companion synods and three large ELCA congregations with Southern African churches and dioceses.
- The desk focuses on five strategic priorities: evangelical outreach, gender justice, health and well-being, leadership development, and peacebuilding and reconciliation.
- Twenty-five missionaries serve in this region, in the following areas: evangelism, health care, leadership development and theological education. Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers serve in South Africa, Eswatini and Tanzania.
- Key companion ministries in this region include a health clinic, built in South Sudan with support from *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, where 32 women had fistula surgery; three seminaries in Namibia, South Africa and Tanzania; and four national health care facilities in Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Sudan and Tanzania, where 15% of all health care is provided by Lutherans.

Madagascar, West and Central Africa Area Desk

- Nineteen Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers serve in the region through three country programs, along with missionaries supporting theological education, public health and development.
- The desk continued its response to the Ebola pandemic in Liberia and Sierra Leone, violence in Nigeria, landslides in Sierra Leone and drought and measles in Madagascar.
- With support from *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, a new church relationship was nurtured with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in The Gambia. Two more relationships with new churches in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau are being explored.
- With the Lutheran Communion in West and Central Africa, the desk observed the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in Liberia with the Lutheran Communion of West and Central Africa in Liberia.
- Through a series of regionwide workshops, Lutheran identity, law and gospel preaching, practices related to stewardship, and gender justice were strengthened.

Latin America and the Caribbean Area Desk

- The desk stewards relationships with 36 companion churches and organizations in 18 countries. Twenty-four ELCA synods and four synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada are in companion-synod relationships with churches in this region.
- Healthy leadership transitions have taken place in companion churches in Honduras (in 2016), Mexico (2018), Brazil (2018) and Bolivia (2019).
- Companion churches in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Bolivia and El Salvador are growing. In El Salvador, 14 new pastors were ordained.
- Of the 28 in-country scholarship beneficiaries in the region, 10 are women (a ratio of 36%), and eight World Hunger projects focus on women. Many other women in the region benefit from the ELCA's International Leaders program—including the first student to graduate from the International Women Leaders program, who hails from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname.
- Projects in Mexico and the Central American Northern Triangle are doing effective advocacy and providing entrepreneurial opportunities for deported migrants returned to their countries of origin. These programs allow them to thrive in their own countries, addressing economic hardships that would lead to future migration.
- Comprehensive care and advocacy were provided to Venezuelan migrants fleeing the humanitarian crisis who found refuge in Colombia, Peru, Chile and Argentina.

Europe, the Middle East and North Africa Area Desk

- The desk accompanied churches in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa through leadership development, education, pastoral ministry and support of migrants, refugees and marginalized people, especially women, children and youth.
- Specific ministries in Europe included Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers serving in the United Kingdom, Hungary and Serbia; English teachers staffing church schools in Slovakia, Poland and Hungary; ELCA pastors and seminary interns serving in international English-language congregations and the ELCA Wittenberg Center; leadership training for the Lutheran church in Russia; international women's seminars in

Wittenberg, Germany; programs assisting the Roma people in Central Europe; and assistance for refugees in Serbia and Hungary and for internally displaced people in the Ukraine.

- In Jerusalem and the West Bank, the ELCA accompanied the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. Young Adults in Global Mission, pastoral staff and communication experts helped ELCA companions share the good news of Jesus Christ globally and locally, even as the church, its schools and its ministries continued to labor under an oppressive occupation.
- The Middle East and North Africa region has the greatest number of displaced persons in the world, due to the war in Syria (11.5 million people), the conflict in Iraq (4.65 million) and the civil war in Yemen (more than 3 million) added to the 5.2 million Palestinian refugees in the region.
- The desk supported refugees in Cairo, Egypt, through St. Andrew's United Church of Cairo. Over the three-year period, the number of people served rose from 3,500 to 35,000 due to the increased demand for help.
- Gender justice efforts included working with survivors of gender-based violence, providing livelihood opportunities and empowering women to claim their rights, all critical to ELCA engagement in the Middle East. These efforts come alongside peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, focusing especially on women and religious leaders impacted by trauma.
- Peace Not Walls, an ELCA churchwide strategy adopted in 2005 for engagement in Israel and Palestine, continues to guide the ELCA's accompaniment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and advocacy for Israelis and Palestinians to co-exist in justice and peace.

Relationships

The Global Mission area desk staff, including managers for relationships, accompanies, nurtures and strengthens 126 companion-church relationships through 64 synods of the ELCA and five synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). Since 2016, this number has grown from 119 to 126, with another 21 companion churches seeking formal relationships. Two major shifts in ELCA companion relationships include:

- Working more closely with companion-synod networks and deepening these relationships through additional consultations, gatherings, assemblies, trainings and visitations.
- Building relationship networks with companion churches through ELCA large congregations, independent Lutheran organizations, ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries, and other Lutheran networks.

Since 2018, ELCA and ELCIC congregations, synods and companion churches have demonstrated deeper understanding of their role in engaging and collaborating with international companions and their global ministries through the values of accompaniment.

Events

Following is a list of activities related to consultations, gatherings, assemblies, trainings and visitations:

- **Consultations** involve ELCA companions (for example, companion synods to Latin America and the Caribbean) meeting with their partners in ministry (for example, church leadership in Latin America and the Caribbean) for several days to share stories of ministry, support one another through worship and prayer, and learn approaches to ministry while developing strategic plans for future engagement. From 2016 to 2019, there have been 11 consultations engaging companions in critical conversation, learning and strategic planning.
- A **gathering** primarily involves the ELCA network engaged in a specific region of the world (for example, Southern African countries) meeting to discuss common ministries and approaches to ministry and to deepen their understanding of what it means to engage in God's mission today. From 2016 to 2019, Global Mission conducted 28 gatherings involving ELCA synods; ELCIC synods; ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries; large congregations; and, in some cases, ELCA members that are dedicated to the country or region.
- Managers for relationships are asked to conduct workshops or serve as a plenary speakers for **synod assemblies**. From 2016 to 2019, the relationship managers were invited to six assemblies to present and share the work of Global Mission.
- A growing number of requests and invitations were received for specific **training** on accompaniment and its values, cultural awareness, orientation, and assistance with global mission strategic planning. The relationship managers have conducted 29 training sessions since 2016.
- The relationship managers assist with planning and implementing **visits** by international leaders to the Lutheran Center in Chicago. Sixteen individuals and additional groups or teams from our global companions visited from 2016 to 2019.

Missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission

The Global Service team is charged with recruiting, training, deploying and providing in-service support for more than 220 ELCA missionaries serving in more than 40 countries around the world. During the reporting period (2016–2019), this church sent more than 300 new missionaries into service. They included:

- 13 long-term (four-plus years), salaried personnel serving as physicians, pastors, professors, health and development professionals, community organizers and program coordinators.
- Nine Horizon International seminary interns who are candidates for Word and Sacrament ministry in the ELCA served their required internships in congregations around the world.
- Seven teachers served through the Japan English-as-a-Second-Language program.
- 23 volunteers serving from six months to two years in a variety of roles, such as nurses, health consultants, companion-synod liaisons or members of the ELCA's Central Europe Teachers program.
- 253 Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) volunteers. The YAGM program invites young adults ages 21 to 29 into a transformative, yearlong journey in international service across one of 9 country programs.

International relief and development

The Global Mission Diakonia team directs the ELCA's international relief and development work, including programming of ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response funds. Through accompaniment in diaconal work, the ELCA deeply participates in relationships with companion churches, Lutheran and ecumenical partners, and communities. The team also relates internally within the churchwide organization to ensure effective impact reporting about this work.

- ELCA World Hunger funding for international relief and development projects reached \$16,851,656 in fiscal year 2017 and \$16,518,997 in fiscal year 2018; together with a planned expenditure of \$13,904,955 in fiscal year 2019, the cumulative three-year support for this work will total \$47,275,608.
- These funds support over 250 projects implemented in more than 60 countries annually by companion churches and organizations and Lutheran and ecumenical partners, including the Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Church World Service, and the World Council of Churches.
- Since fiscal year 2016, 86 new projects have been supported (28 in fiscal year 2017 and 46 in fiscal year 2018, with plans for 12 more in fiscal year 2019). Many of these focus on gender justice or work with migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- Financial support for the work of companion churches and organizations has continued to grow, from 42% of the annual ELCA World Hunger international budget in fiscal year 2016 to a planned 46 percent in fiscal year 2019.
- Annual ELCA World Hunger support for programs of the Lutheran World Federation reached a high of \$6.2 million in fiscal year 2017. With \$5.9 million given in fiscal year 2018 and a planned commitment of \$4.9 million in fiscal year 2019, this support over three years totals more than \$17 million and provides for critical engagement with refugees, IDPs, host communities and other at-risk communities at a time when the need for this work has increased globally.
- The percentage of funding provided for peace, justice and human rights projects has continued to grow, from 7% in fiscal year 2016 to nearly 20% in fiscal year 2019; this includes peace and reconciliation projects promoting the rights of exploited groups and a wide variety of gender justice initiatives globally.
- With the new ELCA GrantMaker system, international grant application forms for ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response have been updated to collect more extensive demographic data, including the gender of project leaders and participants, for better tracking of gender justice initiatives.
- Engagement in Europe and the Middle East continues to grow, maintaining a base in annual ELCA World Hunger support of over \$450,000 along with additional support of approximately \$250,000 in fiscal year 2018, particularly for work with Roma communities and refugees.
- Annual support for the new health clinic in South Sudan began in fiscal year 2017; in fiscal year 2018, not only were clinic operations supported, but additional funding of approximately \$100,000 enabled clinic upgrades as well as new livelihoods and literacy initiatives.
- HIV and AIDS programming continues to be a priority internationally. Between 2016 and 2018, Global Mission stewarded \$3,610,574 toward 30 HIV and AIDS projects in 15 countries (Botswana, Colombia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand and Zimbabwe), as well as other programs implemented globally.
- Since 2017, ELCA World Hunger has prioritized support for companions to increase the impact of their programs through socialization of knowledge and mutual sharing of best practices and experiences with

one another. Four exchange opportunities were organized in fiscal year 2018, with plans in place for at least seven opportunities in fiscal year 2019.

- In coordination with the Lutheran Office for World Community and the International Leaders Program, 23 representatives of companion churches and organizations have participated in global advocacy events to advance gender justice and human rights, including the International AIDS Conference, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and other U.N. events.
- Malaria programs continue in seven countries: Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia and Zimbabwe.
- Over fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018, more than \$5.3 million was provided through Lutheran Disaster Response-International to support responses to natural disasters, including hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, flooding, drought and Ebola outbreaks, as well as military conflict and other humanitarian crises.
- A significant portion of Lutheran Disaster Response-International grants have been provided in response to the huge number of people on the move globally over the last three years, providing support for migrants, refugees or IDPs; in fiscal year 2018, these accounted for over 50% of total Lutheran Disaster Response-International expenditures (nearly \$2 million), including work in Venezuela, South Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Bangladesh and elsewhere.
- The international work of the Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities program (AMMPARO) has been a critical component of migration initiatives over the past three years, with nearly \$1.8 million in expenditures. Four projects in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, as well as new work in Mexico, supports migrants along the journey, as well as reintegration initiatives including livelihoods and psychosocial support for those who have returned.
- As of early April 2019, Lutheran Disaster Response has been responding to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, through companion churches, the Lutheran World Federation and ACT Alliance, with approximately \$300,000 to support relief efforts.

Global faith formation for vital and culturally competent ELCA congregations and leadership

The Mission Formation team creates resources, conducts training and hosts events to equip members in the re-formation of global mission engagement, narratives and practices through experiential learning.

- Mutuality in relationships is one of the main values of accompaniment. Learning to receive the gifts and expertise of global companions is key to living out accompanying relationships in mission.
- Through Mission Formation's education and interpretation work, synods, congregations and ecumenical and global partners share and learn the importance of understanding accompaniment in action.
- Content presented Global learning events includes education that is learner-centered, worship that is rooted in the global church, leadership that reflects the diversity of our context, and the building of cross-cultural competencies for ministry.
- Since 2016, approximately 32,000 people have been reached across the United States, the Caribbean, Peru, Suriname, Guyana, Tanzania, Thailand and India through Global partnerships at synod assemblies, domestic events, mission personnel orientations, ecumenical training, international Globals and an intercultural competency program to build leadership competencies for service and leadership in diverse contexts.
- Through almost 110 events from 2016 to date and several resources each year, the Mission Formation team offered an estimated:
 - 150 plenaries, workshops and worship services that included diverse voices at synod assemblies.
 - 30 worship services and workshops at youth and young adult events.
 - 10 training sessions at events with ecumenical and interfaith partners.
 - 500 Intercultural Development Inventory assessments.
 - 15 training sessions for synod councils, networks, companion-synod relationships and missionaries.

Lutheran Office for World Community

The Lutheran Office for World Community (LOWC) is located near the United Nations headquarters in New York and represents the social-policy views of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to U.N. member states, the U.N. secretariat and others. From 2016 to 2019, LOWC advanced these views, with a distinct emphasis on gender justice and global migration. Some examples of this work:

- LOWC hosted approximately 78 Lutheran representatives for the annual session of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Furthermore, LOWC facilitated discussions alongside the CSW sessions on topics such as “Leading the Way—Innovative Examples of Government and Faith-based Actors for Equal Access to Social Protection” and “Do You Have Faith in the SDGs? (Sustainable Development Goals) Faith-sensitive Gender Justice Mainstreaming.”
- LOWC collaborated with the Lutheran World Federation to build the capacity of women to be more aware of and report honestly on their nation’s obligations to advance the status of women in national contexts. For example, in 2019 the coordinator of the human rights program for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia worked with others to prepare a shadow report to the official one submitted by the Colombian government to the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- LOWC monitored and reported on negotiations toward the U.N.’s New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants in September 2016 and its Global Compact for Migration in December 2018.
- LOWC convened the May 2018 event “Grassroots Perspectives on Migrants’ Lived Realities in Different Contexts” with ELCA and LWF partners from Serbia, Guatemala and Colombia.
- On behalf of the LWF, LOWC joined a 2017 civil society statement of principles for “a transformative agenda for human mobility, migration and development.”
- LOWC participated in a nongovernment organization (NGO) working group on the United Nations Security Council, raising concerns for the most vulnerable in conflict areas, regionally and within nations, and urging the council to take preventative action before conflicts intensify—for example, the civil strife in Cameroon. LOWC has also reminded U.N. ambassadors of the forgotten conflict in the Central African Republic, among others.

International Leaders program

The International Leaders program accompanies companion churches and educational institutions around the world to expand access to education and training, with the goal of raising up leaders who are strategically equipped for mission and ministry. This work happens primarily through awarding scholarships and hosting leadership-training events, with an emphasis on those traditionally marginalized from leadership opportunities because of their gender.

- During the past three years, the International Leaders program awarded scholarships and provided leadership training to 339 individuals from global-companion churches and institutions. Of these, 205 individuals from 58 companions received scholarships for formal academic programs and 134 individuals from 43 companions participated in leadership seminars.
- Thirty-eight percent of scholarship recipients studied at educational institutions in the United States, primarily ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries. The remaining 62% studied at educational institutions around the world.
- Of the 205 scholarship recipients who received ELCA support during the past three years, 100 have successfully completed their programs of study. These individuals have returned to serve their sending churches and institutions in strategic leadership positions in a wide variety of ministries. The remaining 105 students continue in their programs of study in preparation to serve their sending churches and institutions.
- Twenty-seven young women have received the International Women Leaders scholarships, which provides full financial support for women pursuing bachelor’s degrees at participating ELCA colleges and universities. This program currently includes 11 ELCA colleges and universities: Augsburg University, California Lutheran University, Concordia College, Gustavus Adolphus College, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Luther College, Newberry College, St. Olaf College, Texas Lutheran University, Wartburg College and Wittenberg University.
- Over the last five years, the percentage of the total scholarships awarded to women increased from 32% in 2014 to 58% in 2019. 2015 was the first year in the program’s history for which women represented more than half of the scholar community.
- The International Leaders program staff led the Global Mission unit in the creation of “A Commitment Toward Gender Justice,” a landmark document that has strategically integrated gender-equity foci across the work of the entire unit. Ongoing monitoring of the work plans included in this strategy shows that Global Mission is addressing gender equity in more comprehensive, integrated and strategic ways.

Major directions for 2019–2022

1. Global Mission will continue to align programmatic emphases and resources with the global migration strategy and “A Commitment Toward Gender Justice.”
2. Global Mission is working with the Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran World Relief to expand its work in the Middle East to Syria, Iraq and Yemen.
3. A new program, for older adults will provide opportunities for retired ELCA members to share their gifts and talents with global companions and their expertise with the church in the areas of leadership and congregational vitality.
4. Global Mission will increase the number of shared global personnel with global companions in order to grow the capacity of their global mission offices.

The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, *executive director*