



Global Mission Updates



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Summer/Fall
2019

Greetings from the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director of Global Mission

***“All this is from God, who reconciled us ... through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation ... So we are ambassadors for Christ”
(2 Corinthians 5:18-20).***

For decades the global-mission efforts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have been shaped by the theology of accompaniment: “walking together in solidarity characterized by mutuality and interdependence.” Our walk with companions is sustained by the presence of Christ through the Spirit, as God calls and sends us to participate in God’s mission of restoring community. This mission takes many shapes and forms, from community development work to preparing women and men for leadership roles in church and society, responding to natural and human-made disasters, working for peace and reconciliation in communities ravaged by civil strife and social unrest, and providing primary health care. Through all these ministries, we seek to touch people’s lives for the flourishing of human community. All these efforts are centered on our primary task of witnessing to the love of God in Jesus and making Christ known throughout the globe. People’s lives are being touched by the good news of the gospel as we “hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful” (Hebrews 10:23).

In this triennium, thanks to *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, we have been able to deepen and extend our programs in evangelism and leadership development, particularly Young Adults in Global Mission and International Women Leaders. The outreach ministry in South Sudan continues to grow, as does our work in Cambodia, Malaysia, Gambia, Russia, Costa Rica and 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 initiatives to integrate some of our previous work into a comprehensive response. First, the global migration strategy (titled “God’s Vulnerable People on the Move”) responds to the massive displacement of people created by wars and civil strife, social and economic insecurity, and the effects of climate change on vulnerable communities. Some of those vulnerable people are assisted by the ELCA’s response to the humanitarian crisis in Central America’s Northern Triangle, Accompanying Migrant Minors With Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO). Second, the ELCA’s gender justice initiative 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.”

As you review this summary of our work together, I encourage you to ***pray for, participate in 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).

Thank you for your companionship in mission!

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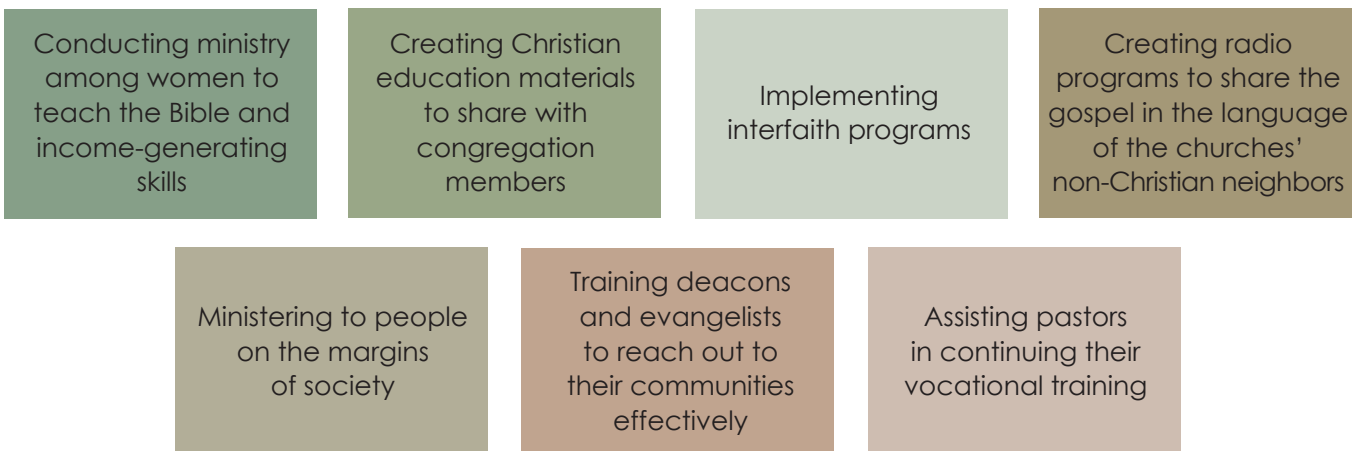
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Reaching out to our neighborhoods and making God's word known

Because the ELCA is a church that accompanies other churches, relationships are the means through which Global Mission engages with companions around the world. These relationships lie at the center of our engagement and become the channels through which evangelism ministries are supported and gifts of global witness to God's reconciling love are received. Although outreach and evangelism look different in different contexts and are expressed through various programs and venues, these programs have enabled the ELCA to touch thousands of lives over this three-year period.

- Sixty-four ELCA synods and four synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada participated in stewarding over 126 companion-synod relationships.
- Eleven international consultations were conducted with ELCA members and international partners, enabling over 600 participants to pray, learn and experience fellowship together.
- Twenty-eight gatherings gave ELCA church members, synods, congregations, colleges, universities and seminaries a chance to deepen their international relationships.

Between 2016 and 2019, \$6,601,184 was shared with companions around the world to engage in outreach work. These efforts have three main components: evangelism, communication efforts, and interfaith relations programming in contexts where other faiths predominate. Evangelism can take a variety of forms and is contextualized for each ministry. Outreach projects include but are not limited to:

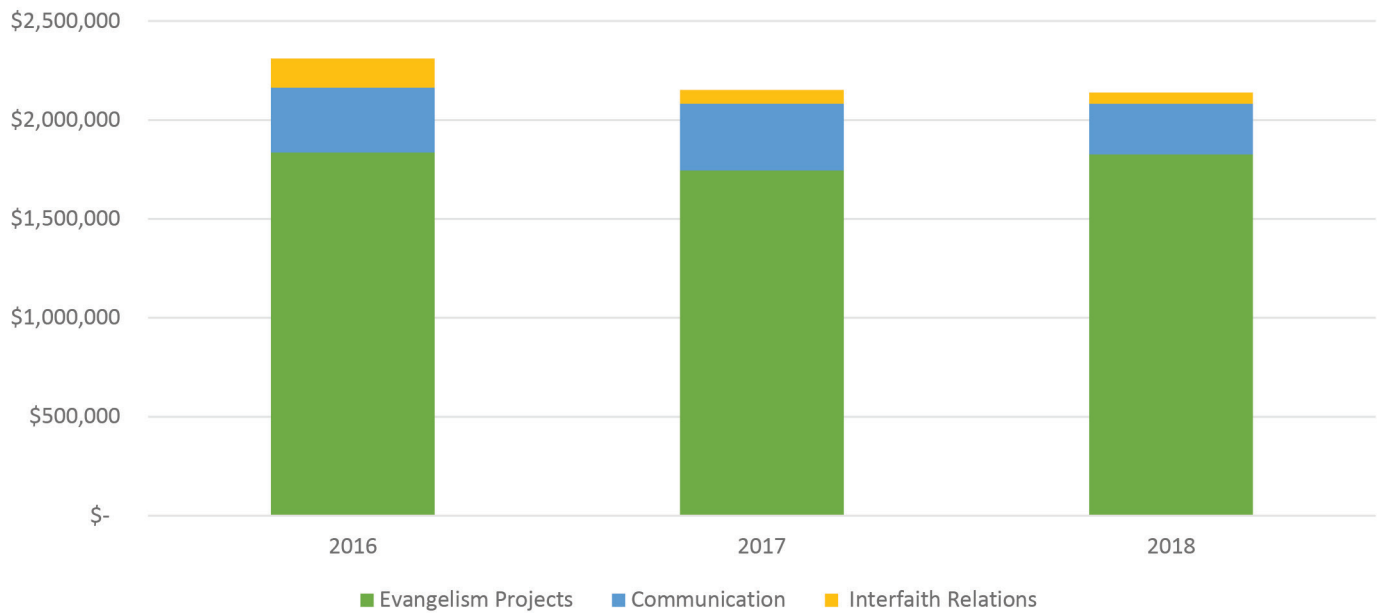


Examples of this type of outreach programming from the Latin America and Caribbean region:

- Each year, 58 percent of projects in Latin America and the Caribbean focus on theological education and leadership formation. These projects help churches strengthen their impact on their communities.
- Thanks to these programs, a record-setting 14 new pastors were ordained in El Salvador in 2019 alone.

The graph below shows the spending patterns from 2016 to 2018 on evangelism and outreach-related programming conducted by companion churches.

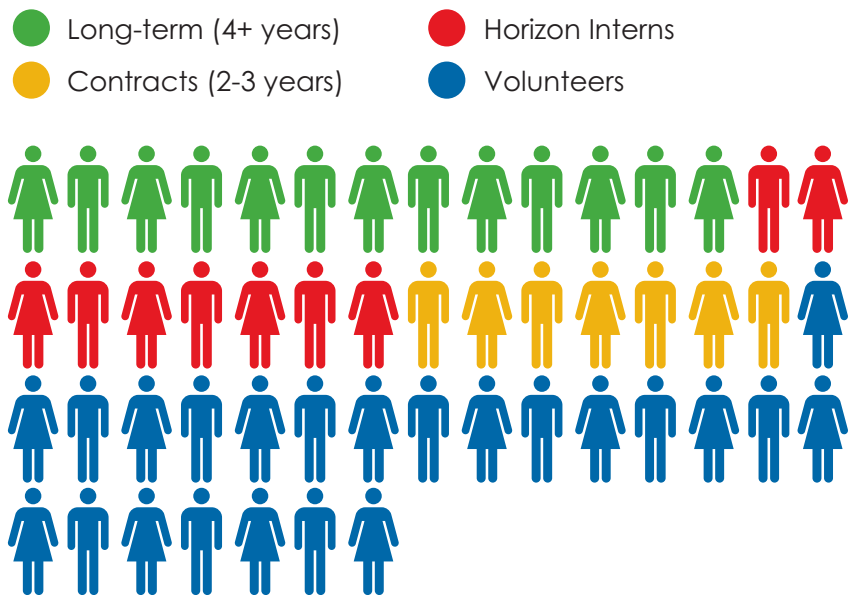
Total Outreach Spending



Evangelism around the world

The ELCA supports more than 220 missionaries serving in more than 40 countries around the world. These leaders are globally formed through partnerships with our companion churches and return to the U.S. well prepared to serve in critically important callings within and beyond the church.

Missionaries walk alongside and support evangelism programs led by dozens of companion churches. Evangelism programs have strengthened the ELCA's relationships with other churches around the world and have resulted in new partnerships with the Lutheran Church in Cambodia, Bodo Evangelical Lutheran Church (India), Manipur Evangelical Lutheran Church (India), United Evangelical Church in Cuba Lutheran Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela and Evangelical Lutheran Church in The Gambia.



Healing a broken world through peace-building and gender justice

Genesis tells about humankind's fall and the great chasm that opened up between humans and God. Through Christ, God has both reconciled the world to God and given the church a ministry of reconciliation with all humankind. With its strong commitment to gender justice and peace-building, our church works to apply the power of God's reconciling love to the world's brokenness.

Peace-building efforts around the world

- From 2017 to 2019, 21 projects promoting **peace and reconciliation** were implemented in 14 countries, the result of **\$2,820,000** in funding from ELCA World Hunger.
- **Through Lutheran Disaster Response, \$458,000** supported **peace and reconciliation** projects in six countries.
- From 2016 to 2019, national peace and reconciliation programs were implemented in Zimbabwe, Kenya and South Sudan. **Over 500 training sessions** were conducted, **engaging over 10,000 people**.

During the past three years, one of the **peace and reconciliation initiatives** of the ELCA in East Africa and Southern Africa has been through the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum in Zimbabwe. Using a community-based approach, ECLF worked in seven districts in Zimbabwe with a new peace and reconciliation leadership and capacity-building initiative. The initiative was a coordinated effort by the ecumenical community, with more than 10,000 church and community leaders learning to resolve conflicts through nonviolent means while facilitating behavioral, institutional and social transformation trainings in other communities. Because of the program's effectiveness, the participants' high regard for it, and the program's impact in the communities, the program expanded in 2017 to the neighboring countries of Lesotho and Zambia. ECLF has also been invited to train leaders in South Sudan (through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Africa Mission in South Sudan) and South Africa (through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa).

Gender justice efforts around the world

The ELCA continues to walk with companions around the world to address complex gender issues within their contexts. This common journey to make the world more just toward women weakens patriarchy in all its forms.



78 people from the ELCA and around the world participated in United Nations events focusing on gender justice.



Scholarships to women increased from 32% of the total number awarded in 2014 to 58% in 2019.



27 young women have received full scholarships to pursue bachelor's degrees in partnership with 11 ELCA colleges and universities.



52 projects implemented in 29 countries from 2017 to 2019 have focused on gender justice.

Promoting human dignity through sustainable development

The word “diakonia” is used within the church to communicate how the church serves all people, particularly the economically marginalized and oppressed. Through a range of programs, from providing health care to restoring sustainable livelihoods, the ELCA seeks to confront poverty, remedy injustice and promote human dignity in ways that allow each person and community to experience more fully what it means to be beloved by God and made in God's image.

In 2017, with the most funds on record, the church was able to provide \$16,851,656 for projects and programs related to diakonia. The church supported this work with \$16,518,997 in 2018, and it plans to provide \$13,904,955 in funding in 2019. **Over three years, support for this work will total \$47,275,608.** The graph below and map on the next page show the types of work and global reach of these efforts, which span more than 60 countries.

Figure 1. 2018 ELCA World Hunger Spending by Geographic Region

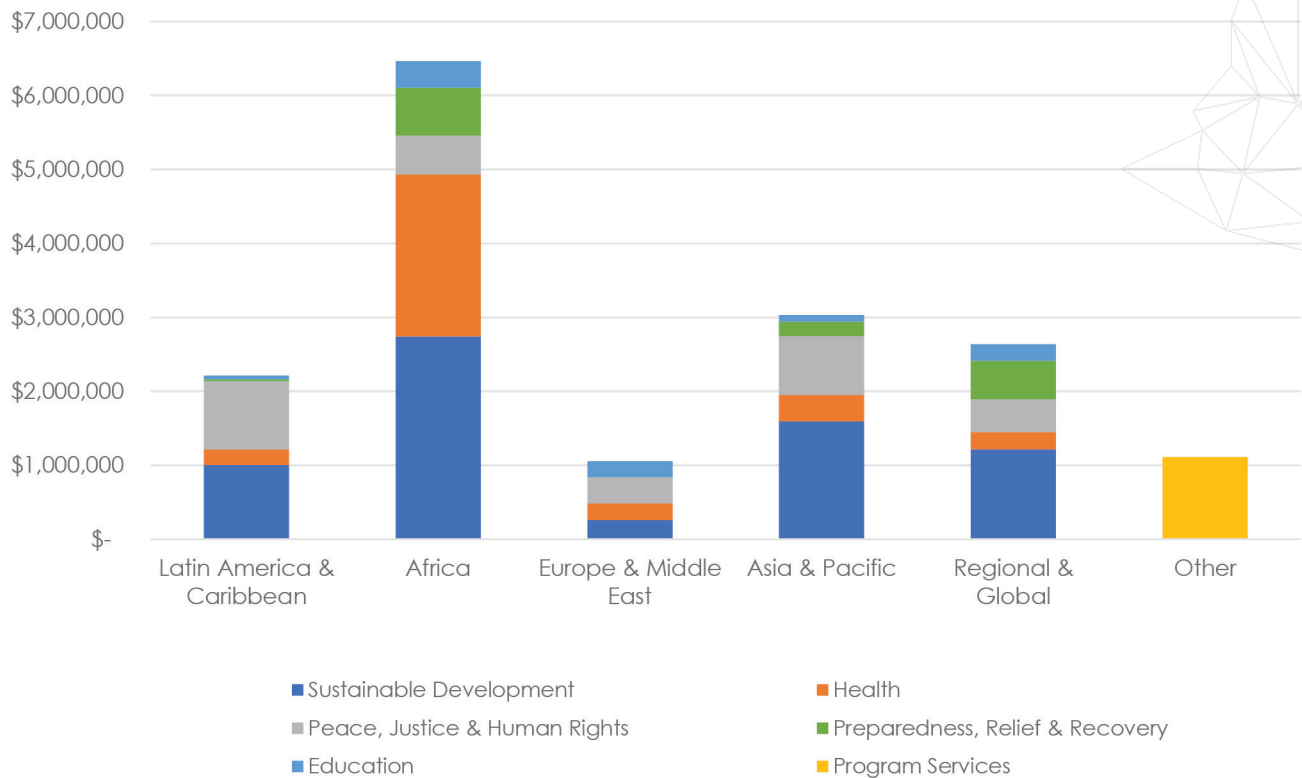
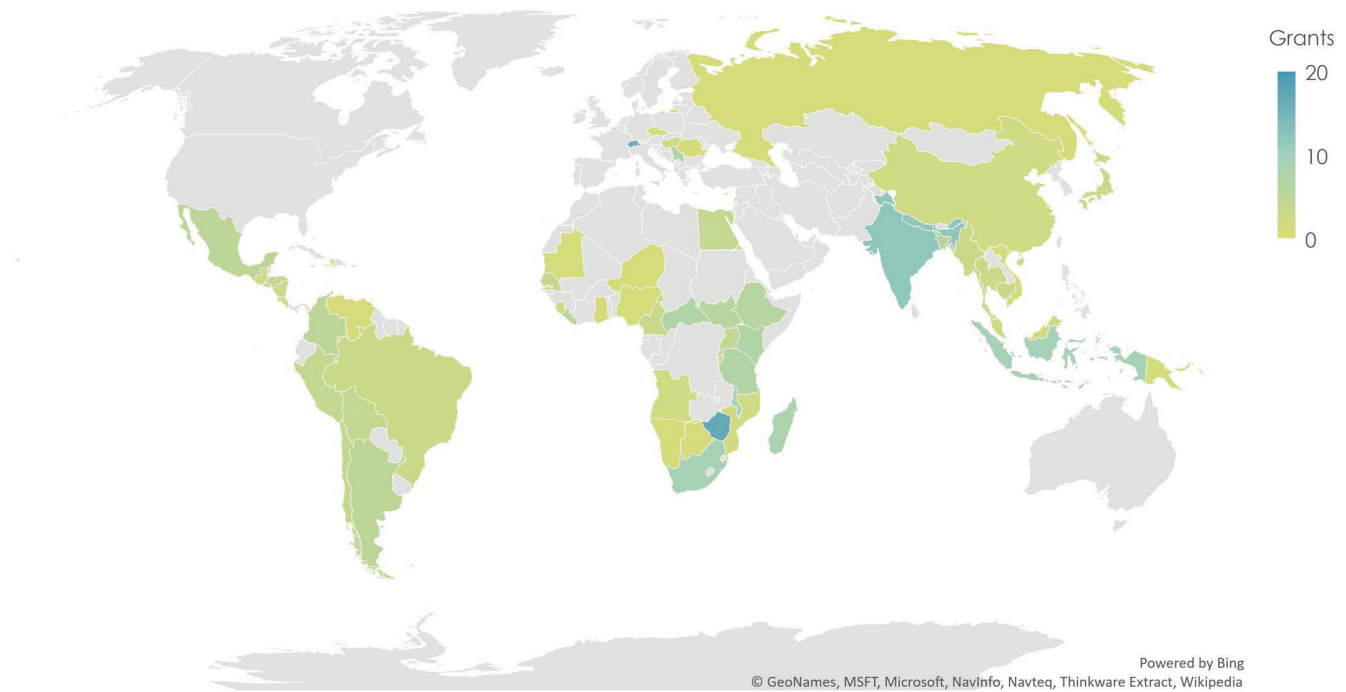


Figure 2. Number of ELCA World Hunger Grants by Country, 2018



Human dignity is promoted through projects related to diakonia and sustainable development, which encompass many different sectors of work and are contextualized for location and community priorities. These projects are often integrated across multiple sectors; they can include but are not limited to:



The church's long-standing HIV/AIDS programming is about promoting human dignity. From 2016 to 2018, **\$3,610,574** was stewarded toward 30 HIV and AIDS projects in 15 countries as well as programs implemented globally.

Strengthening the rights of women through fair trade and solidarity

Facing unemployment and struggling to feed her family, Isabel, who lives in Brazil, chose to look for opportunities rather than sit still.

Isabel saw her opportunity when her children's school, the Good Samaritan Child Nursery (linked to the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil), expressed concern about the number of families suffering as a result of the political and financial crisis in Brazil. The nursery proposed that the parents form a business cooperative, and she and her husband immediately decided to get involved.

Forming the cooperative took work – a lot of work. But Isabel persisted, learning, working and caring for her family. Today, the cooperative is called Cooperbom. The challenges continue, especially in bringing together the various groups involved in the co-op and navigating competition from larger bakeries and food production businesses. To assist the parents in overcoming these challenges, Cooperbom decided to join the Fair and Supportive Trade Network project, launched by the Lutheran Foundation of Diakonia in 2012 with support from ELCA World Hunger. The network brings together enterprises such as Cooperbom, focusing on food production, handicrafts, manufacturing and recycling.



“I think of my history, the problems and opportunities that have brought me here, and I see how much the Cooperbom has grown and developed after joining the Fair and Supportive Trade Network,” Isabel says. “As a result of this support, we have improved the quality of our products. We are able to continually invest in improving our enterprise, and we have gained new consumers. The improvement of the income of Cooperbom’s associates and their quality of life is a direct result of working with the Fair and Supportive Trade Network.”

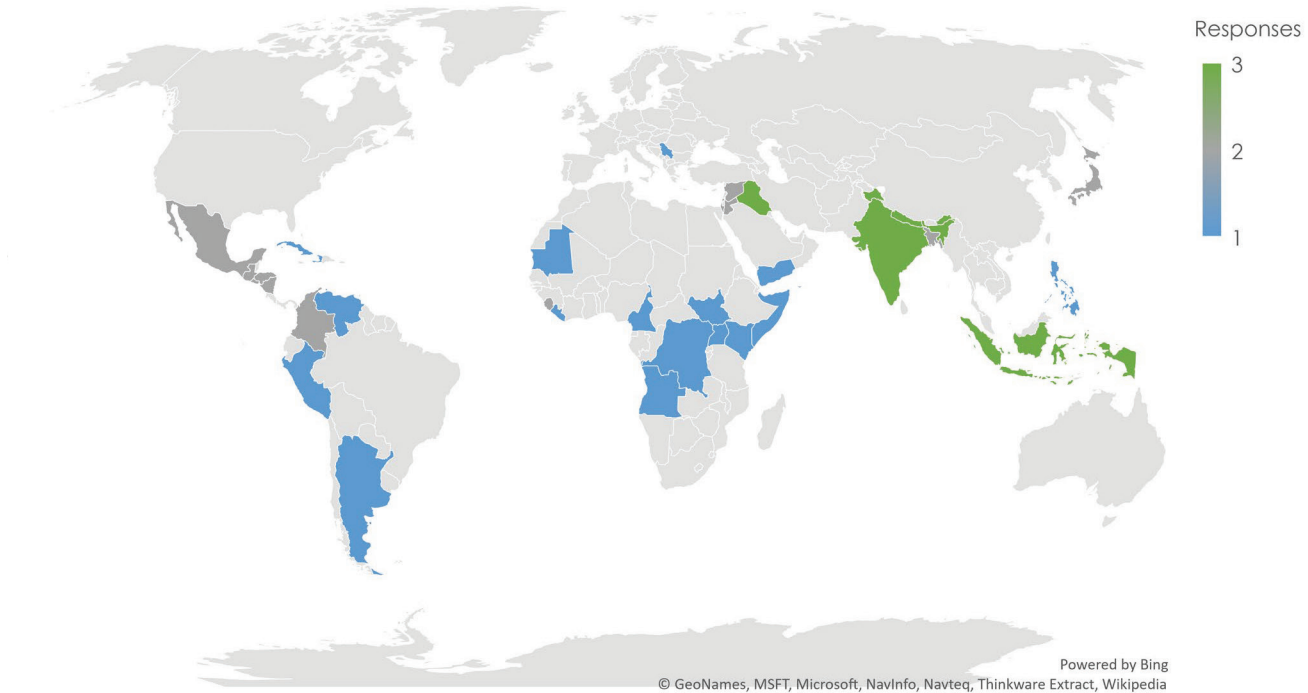
Responding when tragedy strikes and staying put to rebuild

We actively support companion churches and partners around the world as they build capacity in disaster preparedness, respond during disasters and stay after the disaster is over to restore communities.

Through Lutheran Disaster Response, the church assists families and communities affected by disasters internationally, both natural and human-made. The ELCA supports companion churches and ecumenical partners as they respond to major catastrophes such as tsunamis, earthquakes and flooding; help host communities provide newly arrived refugees with basic needs, psychosocial care and livelihood support; promote migrant rights; and combat racism. The church supports innovative concepts, such as early-warning systems, as communities around the world adapt to climate change.

From 2017 to 2018, more than \$5.3 million was provided through Lutheran Disaster Response to support international responses to natural disasters, including hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, flooding, drought and Ebola outbreaks, as well as military conflict and other humanitarian crises. In 2018, these responses took place in over 30 countries, as shown on the map below.

Figure 3. 2018 Lutheran Disaster Response International Responses



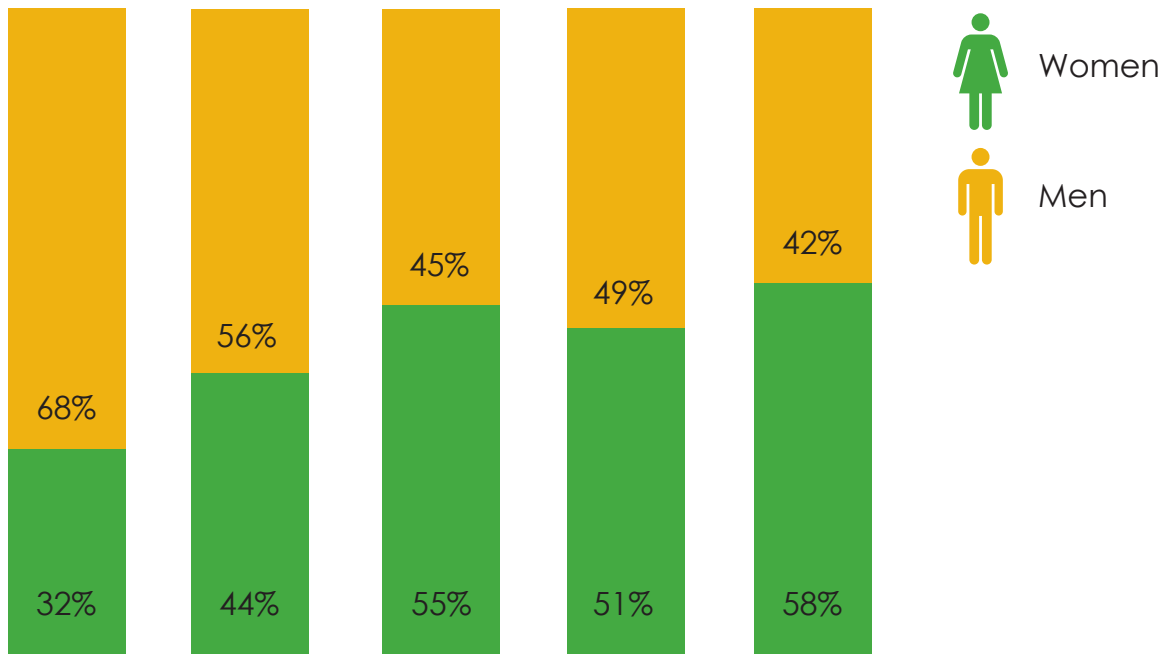
5 ways leaders are formed to serve God's church around the world

Vital churches and thriving ministries are dependent upon good leadership. The ELCA continues to be engaged in creating and sustaining leaders in various vocations and calls. The current and future leaders that the ELCA and our global companions need study and serve in many ways around the globe. A sampling is found below.

- 1 From 2016 to 2019, the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program sent **253 young adults** into the world for a transformative, year-long journey in international service.

2 **Three hundred and thirty-nine individuals** benefited from **leadership training** or received **scholarships** from the ELCA through our 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.

Figure 4. International Leaders Program by Gender, 2014-19



3 The ELCA partners with the Asian Rural Institute, a leadership training institute in Japan, to teach leadership skills to rural community leaders. Partnering with companion churches around the world, students from Africa, Asia and Latin America participate in community-based learning activities to master new farming techniques that will help them succeed – and teach others – in their local contexts.

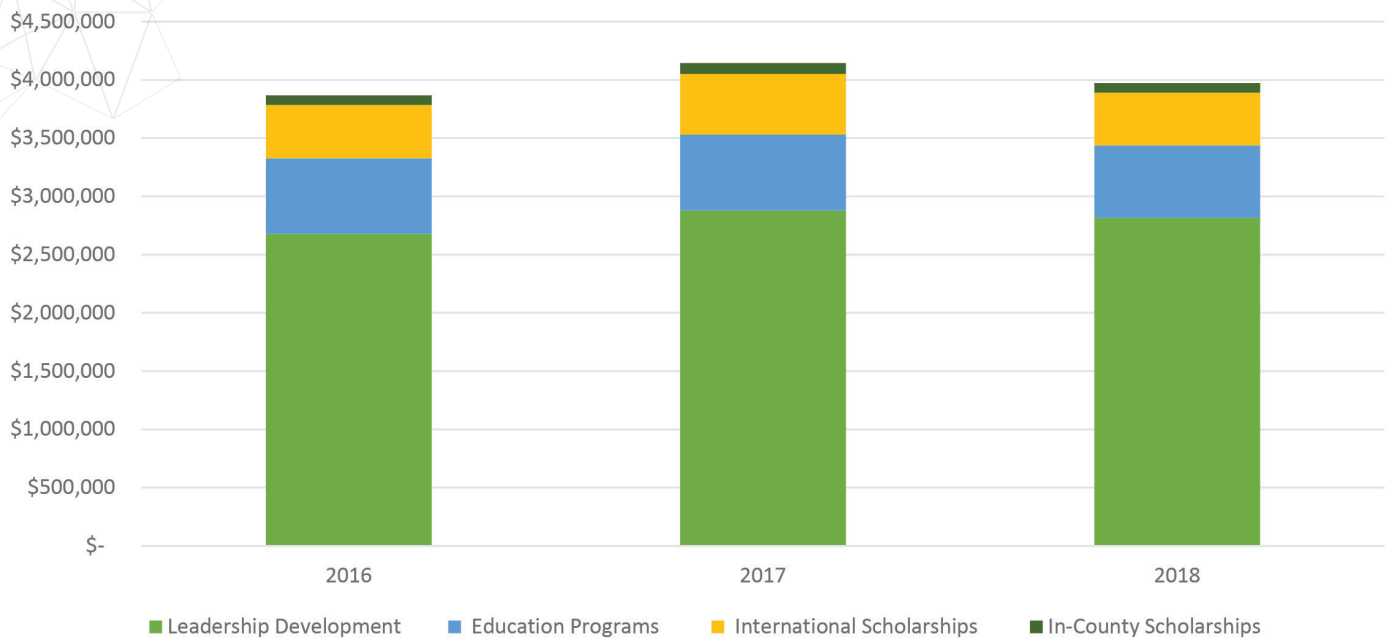
4 From 2016 to April 2019, the ELCA hosted over 110 events to equip members to worship and engage with others about their faith in our global-local (“glocal”) contexts. These events reached approximately 32,000 people across the United States, the Caribbean, Peru, Suriname, Guyana, Tanzania, Thailand and India.

5 In 2018, four global exchanges enabled companions to increase the impact of their programs through sharing of knowledge and best practices. This mutual sharing helped participants become better leaders of their own programs related to community health, refugee services, education and disaster response.

Global Mission consistently prioritizes **leadership development** within its funding patterns and annually allocates 62 to 65 percent of its budget for these activities. From 2016 to 2018, **\$11,984,085** was shared with our global companions to fund **leadership development programs** in various forms. Some examples of leadership development programs include:

- supporting women to receive theological training in contextualized ministries;
- training church leaders on how to develop sustainable churches;
- providing scholarships for theological training;
- equipping deacons to serve in the church; and
- ensuring that seminaries are equipped to serve the widest range of student populations.

Figure 5. Leadership Development Programming, 2016-18



God's vulnerable people on the move: Providing durable solutions to migrants and refugees



Our church is actively responding to the world's refugee and migration crises. With companions around the world, the church provides humanitarian assistance, extends a welcome to the stranger and encourages those in power to work for peace with justice.

Migrant and refugee programs around the world

- Due to increased demand, St. Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS) in Egypt has **expanded the services it offers to migrants and refugees**. StARS now serves 35,000 people, a 900% increase over a three-year period.
- In May 2018, Global Mission staff, in conjunction with the United Nations Global Compact on Migration, convened the event "Grassroots Perspectives on Migrants' Lived Realities in Different Contexts," with partners from the Lutheran World Federation, Serbia, Guatemala and Colombia.

In 2018, Lutheran Disaster Response devoted **more than half** of its international expenditures to the huge number of people on the move globally over the last three years. Almost \$2 million was allocated to support **migrants, refugees and/or IDPs** in Venezuela, South Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Bangladesh and elsewhere.

A refugee finds healing in Egypt

At only 17, Dawit (name changed) has already faced a harrowing journey. He was born in Eritrea, and in 2017, he and his brother escaped lifelong military service by crossing into neighboring Sudan. On the border, they were intercepted by a group of traffickers. His brother escaped, but Dawit was held by the traffickers for almost nine months and regularly threatened and beaten.

Eventually Sudanese police raided the traffickers' camp and took Dawit to a hospital in Khartoum, where he found his brother. During their initial journey, Dawit had broken his leg while jumping out of a car; he had surgery on the leg in Khartoum, but it was too late to fully repair the damage, and he can no longer put any weight on the leg.

In 2018, Dawit arrived in Cairo, Egypt, and connected with StARS, which is supported in part by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger. StARS assigned Dawit a caseworker and assisted him with food and hygiene boxes, a sleeping bag, clothes and medical care. StARS also referred him to Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), which now provides him with ongoing psychological care. Dawit continues to use the StARS medical access program for his physical health needs. Thanks to your support, he was able to access critical services that will help him build a brighter and safer future.



- Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) has sent nearly \$1.8 million for four projects that support migrants along their journey and for reintegration initiatives, including livelihood and psychosocial support for those who have returned to Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Mexico.
- A few of AMMPARO's actions include:



5,000 advocacy cards
for child protection
delivered to Congress



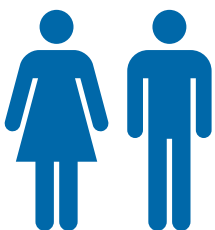
**1,875 advocacy
messages** for Dreamers



1,028 messages on the
budget bill



**128 welcoming and
sanctuary** congregations



1,000 Lutheran pledges to
stand with asylum-seekers



Task forces in
35 ELCA synods

Concluding remarks from the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla

The Global Mission unit is preparing to expand its work in the Middle East and to engage more older adults in global mission. We are working with the Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief and others to broaden our Middle East efforts to Syria, Iraq and Yemen. In addition, we are positioning the unit to harvest the skills, experiences and expertise of this church's retired members for many critical areas of the ministries we support. 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.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has also decided to renew its sponsorship of a Global Mission event in 2021. We will renew, refresh and experience God's call in hope of empowering 2,000 participants to look into the future and participate in God's mission and the church's ministries.

Thank you for your companionship in mission!

Pax,

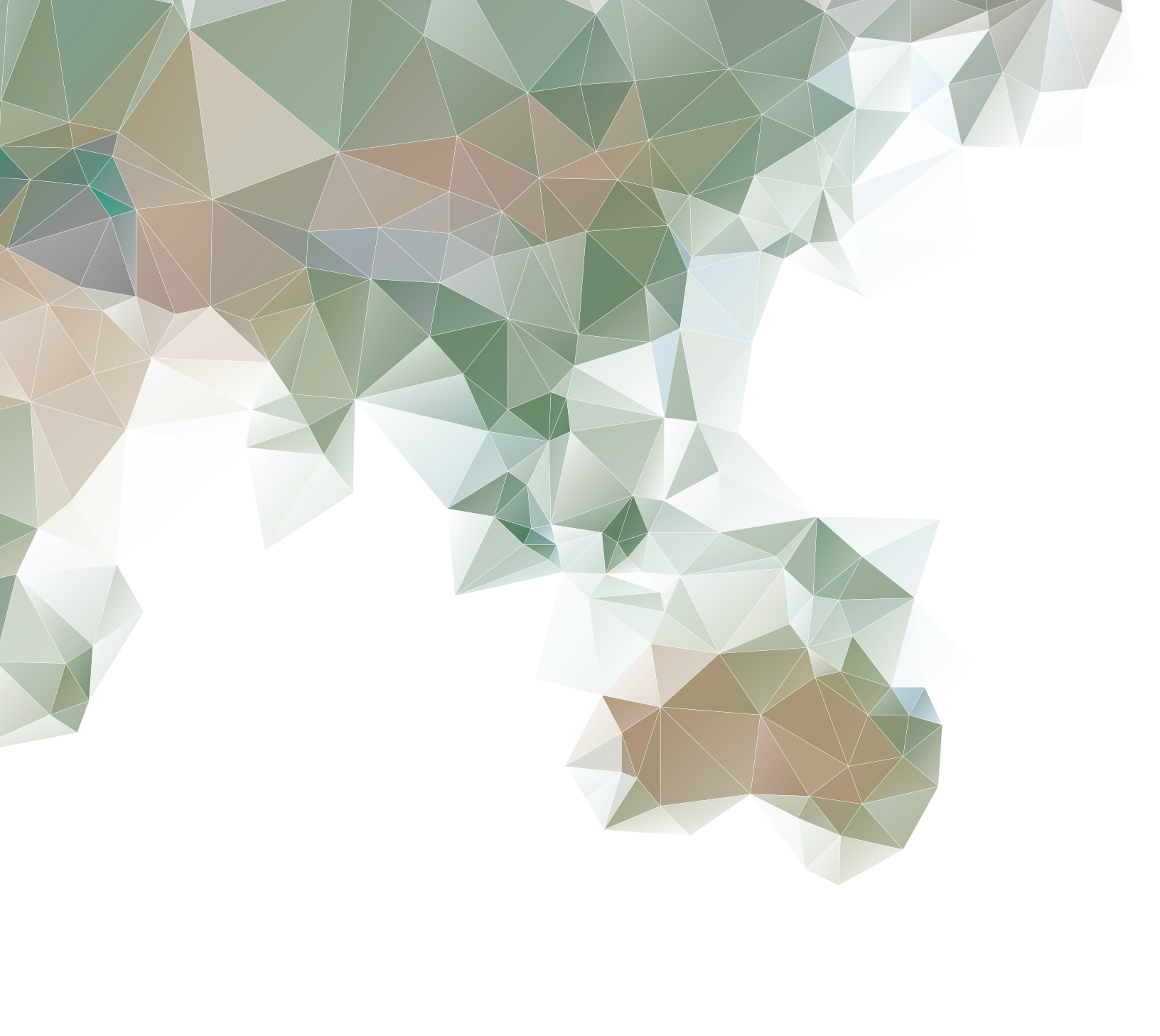


A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rafael Malpica Padilla". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla
Executive Director for Global Mission

Notes





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