



Global Mission Updates



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

Winter/Spring
2020



Dear Friends of Global Mission,

“The natives showed us unusual kindness. Since it had begun to rain and was cold, they kindled a fire and welcomed all of us around it” (Acts 28:2).

The apostle Paul and his disciples left us with many important teachings about life in Christ. We can picture him, and those after him, sharing the stories about Jesus that became the cornerstone for his teaching. Paul, the consummate teacher, preacher and missionary, was totally driven by the spirit of the risen Christ to make Christ’s name known among Jews and Gentiles.

There are, however, a few stories that present Paul as a student. Such a story is found in the final chapters of the book of Acts. Paul is getting in all kinds of trouble. People bring charges against him, and others plot to kill him. In Caesarea he comes before Festus, the Roman governor of Judea, and, as a Roman citizen, appeals to stand before Caesar. Paul is sent from one Roman representative to the next until finally Agrippa sends him toward Rome. During the voyage a storm forces Paul, his fellow prisoners and the centurion guarding them to seek refuge in a small bay. The ship hits a reef and is broken up by the surf. All are brought safely to land, and they find themselves in Malta. It is on this island that Paul is taught a lesson by “the natives.” The writer of Acts captures the moment with exquisite brevity: “The natives showed us unusual kindness. Since it had begun to rain and was cold, they kindled a fire and welcomed all of us around it” (Acts 28:2).

In our work with companion churches, we serve among many whose lives may seem like a shipwreck. Their lives have been turned upside down by events out of their control. Together we have shown compassion, provided shelter and included them in the fellowship of the people of God. To them we have witnessed to God’s extravagant and welcoming love. In the fellowship of the disciples of Christ they have found their Malta.

The image of a shipwreck with survivors coming ashore is powerful. While the stories in this Global Mission Updates report present a glimpse of our collaborative efforts around the globe, I cannot stop thinking about those coming to our shores. What do we have to offer? Fortunately, we offer AMMPARO, we offer sanctuary. Our congregations and synods are showing “unusual kindness,” and we are “kindling” the fire of Christian love among ourselves and others so that we, as a community of Christ’s faithful disciples, will welcome these strangers, will protect them, feed them and clothe them because “it had begun to rain and was cold.” It does not matter whether they have come to our shores recently or are marginalized citizens of our country. In our church and in our full-communication sister churches, they can find their Malta.

Pax,



The Rev. Dr. Rafael Malpica Padilla
Executive Director, Global Mission

Table of Contents

Africa	4
Asia and the Pacific	7
Europe, Middle East and North Africa	9
Latin America and the Caribbean	11
Mission Formation	13
Lutheran Office for World Community	14
Peace Not Walls	16
AMMPARO: Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunity	17
Companion Synod Program	18
International Leaders Program	20
Diakonia	22
Global Service	24
Young Adults in Global Mission	25

Global Mission Updates is a biannual collection of stories and insights that highlight the ministries of our global companions. This resource provides a platform for a diversity of voices and perspectives that seek to honor the unique context from which they come.

Change From Area Desks to an Africa Table

With the departure of the Rev. Dr. Andrea Walker, director for Madagascar, West Africa and Central Africa, the Global Mission administration requested the official formation of the Global Mission Africa Table. The Rev. Benyam Kassahun will serve as director. A specific structure is being studied utilizing the talents of the current staff, including managers and regional representatives.



Ceremony at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Health Department. (Photo: Daudi Msseemmaa)

Female Doctors Serving in Rural Communities in Tanzania

It's not just a graduation. And it's not just a job. When Lightness Gudu finished her medical course and became Lightness Gudu, MD, it was a step toward answering her calling: helping people heal in places where there aren't enough doctors. Her assignment to Iambi Lutheran Hospital in the Central Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) helped fill a great need across rural Tanzania. Most doctors are concentrated in urban areas. Iambi is several hours away from the nearest city, and rural hospitals across the country are struggling to keep their doctors. Lightness' calling is made possible by an ELCA grant that provides scholarships to train doctors and specialists to work in rural Lutheran health facilities across Tanzania. The grant has made a tremendous impact on the ability of rural Lutheran

hospitals to offer the highest quality service. There are currently 12 medical scholarship recipients. The program is administered by the ELCT Health Department.

At the handover ceremony, the ELCT Health Department and the church's secretary general gave speeches about the importance of the work, the faithfulness of God and the devotion of Lightness to complete her education. During the service she was commissioned to the head of Iambi Lutheran Hospital by the general secretary of the Central Diocese, which owns the hospital. After the ceremony and prayers, there was a party to celebrate her achievement: a young woman in a field dominated by men, thriving in the difficult environment of university and ready to serve in even more difficult environments. Following a Tanzanian custom, she cut her cake and fed pieces of it to people in the room, including her future boss and five fellow ELCT medical scholarship recipients. A piece of that cake was for the ELCA – the thousands of people who made her scholarship possible, who support a program that keeps essential medical professionals in rural hospitals.

Success of Rural Lutheran Primary Schools in Malawi

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malawi owns seven primary schools located in rural parts of Malawi where Lutheran congregations also operate. Through grants awarded by the ELCA in the past year, the schools have improved children's access to quality primary education in these remote areas.

Felistus Banda is a female student at Mtakataka Primary School in Monkey Bay. This school is located in the deanery of Southern Lakeshore, which is one of the beneficiaries of the project. Felistus, 15, is currently in the eighth grade, despite having previously dropped out of school in the sixth grade due to the poor learning environment. During that time, the school lacked enough toilets to accommodate both boys and girls, so they were sharing. As Felistus matured, she began her menstrual cycle and felt uncomfortable sharing toilets with the boys. Due to these conditions, Felistus dropped out of primary school.

Thanks to an advocacy campaign throughout the community, Felistus heard about bathrooms newly constructed in all the ELCM primary schools that would provide user- and gender-friendly sanitation facilities. Felistus thought about returning to school, recognizing that the situation that had made her drop out of school in the first place had been solved. She later started encouraging friends who had also dropped out due to poor sanitation facilities to think about rejoining her at school. Her effort to reach out to other girls in the same situation made a large impact, and the number of girls attending school started to increase. Felistus is now working harder at school than ever before because of the good sanitation facilities provided at their school, in part due to this project.

“If it were not for this church to think of providing sanitation that was gender-friendly, I would not be in school today,” says a happy Felistus. “They have given me and my fellow girls a life worth looking forward to.”

Women of the Malagasy Lutheran Church on a Path Toward Ordination

There was a certain joy in the heart of Toromare Mananato on the October morning it was officially acknowledged that the female theologians of the Malagasy Lutheran Church, or Fiangonana Loterana Malagasy (FLM), could wear clerical collars and robes. Nearly 27,000 people were present in Manakara, Madagascar, at the triennial women’s gathering of the FLM, where this hopeful next step toward women’s ordination took place. Toromare, the first female member of the head office of the FLM, is hopeful for the road to come for women in the FLM.

Nearly 27,000 people were present at the triennial women's gathering of the Malagasy Lutheran Church in Manakara, Madagascar.



The Rev. Dusablema Shantal and the Rev. Mukama Eddy Santos of the Lutheran Church of Rwanda. (Photo: Neng'ida Johanness-Lairumbe)

The Lutheran Church of Rwanda Celebrates 25 Years

In October 2019, the Lutheran Church of Rwanda (LCR) celebrated its 25th anniversary with its partners, its friends and guests from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, the Church of Sweden, the Lutheran World Federation and the ELCA's Global Mission unit, as well as 17 people from the Sierra Pacific Synod. From the ELCA, Cynthia Zamora, manager for relationships; the Rev. Dr. Andrea Walker, former director for Madagascar, West Africa and Central Africa; and the Rev. Dr. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director for Global Mission, traveled to Rwanda to accompany the LCR as it prepared to celebrate its Silver Jubilee. The week leading up to the celebration was packed with site visits, community service activities and building dedications. During the visit, two new pastors were ordained into ministry in the LCR: the Rev. Dusablema Shantal and the Rev. Mukama Eddy Santos. The celebration, on Oct. 27, was attended by hundreds of people and comprised a long procession, wonderful speeches, beautiful dancing, music and presentations.

Southern Africa Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum Conducts Training of Trainers in Peace and Conflict Resolution

For over 10 years, the ELCA's Global Mission unit has been supporting the initiatives and work of the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF), which educates trainers in conflict resolution and peace-building in Zimbabwe and more recently expanded this collaboration with other companion churches in southern African countries. In November 2019, 15 member churches of the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) each sent two representatives, one male and one female, who were trained and thereafter authorized and supported by their respective churches to conduct workshops in conflict resolution and peacemaking. Thirty-six people participated, including eight trainers and three LUCSA communion office personnel. There were 18 female and 18 male participants.



The Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF) in Zimbabwe conducts a training through the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA). (Photo: Philip Knutson)



The LUCSA/ECLF training manual Paths to Peace was officially launched on Nov. 8, 2019. (Photo: Philip Knutson)

Asia and the Pacific

Two Conferences in the Asia Pacific Region

Two events highlight accomplishments in the Asia Pacific region. The first was a conference on migration and human trafficking, held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Because the conference included nonchurch groups as well as church companions, ways forward varied. But all representatives committed to networking, information-sharing and examining root causes. A main point, meanwhile, is that while migration and trafficking carry their respective issues, there is an overlap in the context of Asia that concerns us all, and basic human dignity must be addressed.

The other event was a conference on faith, gender and culture, held in Hyderabad, India. One focus was the Lutheran World Federation's gender justice policy. From this, and with the ELCA's attention to gender justice, a call was made to go beyond numbers (such as participatory benchmarks) and achievements (such as women's ordination) to promote true engagement of people together so that all can be agents of change (with regard to gender) in our societies and cultures.

Pastor Temani Pancasila Setia Daeli Forges the Way in Several BNKP Congregations

Temani Pancasila Setia Daeli was the first female pastor at each of the first three congregations she served. "I am the first woman pastor in this congregation, too," she says of what is now her fourth call. "Even after a year and a half here, there are still some men who are not sure."

The Protestant Christian Church (BNKP), one of three Lutheran churches on the island of Nias, Indonesia, has been ordaining women since the early 1980s, though they first started serving congregational calls in 1996. About half of all pastors are now women. "I can do what any man can do, and I am a pastor; no different from others," says Temani. "But, in my experience, there are many members, especially women, who find it easier to come to me to share. And now, I am paving the way for this congregation to understand the ministry of men and women."



Pastor Temani Pancasila Setia Daeli, the first female pastor of the Protestant Christian Church (BNKP) in Indonesia. (Photo: Y. Franklin Ishida)

Most members of her congregation are from poor families: farmers, shop owners and government employees. "But there is solidarity and solidity," Temani comments. "Even though they are poor, when they have a goal, they do it together. For example, to build a new church hall, they worked together. Or, to send their children to school, they sell vegetables in the market and they support each other." There are some similarities between city life and rural life – the sense of solidarity is the same among the people.

Temani began studying medicine, but her father died and she couldn't continue. "I stayed at home and prayed how I could continue my studies," she recalls. "Even as I determined I couldn't be a medical doctor, I thought I could be a doctor to the people." Temani headed to seminary. "I am very glad to have made this choice."

“Serving congregation members by visiting and encouraging them keeps me going,” says Temani. With 1,500 members in 450 families, she hopes to visit every member’s home during her time at the congregation. “That is my joy, to meet with them. And whatever problems members tell me, that gives me encouragement to serve. I believe serving with the people and being with them is my calling.” Reflecting on her own faith, she says, “I know the solution for everything is only in Jesus Christ. As a pastor, I can be a simple person and can give thanks for everything I can do. So, whatever happens, I feel joy.”

Pastors in the BNKP are trained at a small seminary on Nias. ELCA regional representative and missionary Phillip Baker has done some lecturing on Nias, focusing on Lutheran identity. This, in turn, will help future pastors to deepen their knowledge and to preach, teach and lead as Pastor Temani has.



Bishop Ben Chang of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong. (Photo: Y. Franklin Ishida)

What Keeps a Bishop Going in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong

What keeps a bishop going? For Bishop Ben Chang of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong (ELCHK), it’s about celebrating. “It’s not easy to go on,” says the bishop, “but if you are alive, then you celebrate all the things you face – everything – even the troubled person, even the mad things. You come to realize that with everything, you are still alive, and it’s everything you celebrate.”

The ELCHK is a small church, with only 18,500 members. But its reach is broad in Hong Kong, with numerous schools and social services, and beyond, with mission work in several Asian countries.

So why celebrate? “Life is joyful, life is something to celebrate,” says the bishop. He refers to John 15, in which

Jesus talks to his disciples during the Last Supper and sends them out as he himself goes to his crucifixion. “He sends them out with several promises: I will hear your prayer; you will love each other; and ‘I have said these things that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.’ When Jesus is sending his disciples out, he is not placing on them a heavy burden. He says his joy is given to us. That means when we go out, we are to bring Jesus’ joy to others. That’s our mission, and I keep this promise in me.”

Europe, Middle East and North Africa

News From the Europe, Middle East and North Africa (EuMENA) Area Desk

The Rev. Dr. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director for Global Mission, recently said: “With the return of the Rev. Saïd Ailabouni and his expertise and leadership with the Middle East, Global Mission has a unique opportunity to deepen engagement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and Holy Land (ELCJHL), while also expanding Diakonia programming in the region. Therefore, we are grateful Pastor Ailabouni will focus on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and will be based in Jerusalem as area desk director for MENA. In addition, I have now appointed the Rev. Rachel Eskesen, our current country co-coordinator for YAGM Central Europe, to assume the role of area desk director for Europe. We are grateful for Pastor Eskesen to carry forth in her new role for Europe. We are also thankful for the continued dedication of the Rev. Viking Dietrich, our regional representative, who will continue to support the companion engagement in Europe as well as grantee engagement in both Europe and MENA. We are thankful for Mary Rothenbach, in her role as coordinator and her lengthy tenure in Global Mission, who will continue her administrative work supporting both Europe and MENA. Finally, we are thankful for Johanna Olson, manager for relationships, who also will continue to support domestic engagement as it relates to Europe and ELCJHL.”

EuMENA Personnel Transitions

The EuMENA team is thankful for the service and ministry of Deacon Adrainne Gray, who is concluding her work as the ELCJHL communications coordinator to take a communications position with the Lutheran World Federation. We will also miss Ben Gray’s photos. Hannah Johnsrud, a YAGM from 2018-2019, will now serve as the ELCJHL interim communications coordinator. Also, Pastor Zach Courter will become the full-time country coordinator for YAGM Central Europe.

Inaugural Network Gathering of the Companions That Relate to the ELCJHL

From Sept. 30 to Oct. 2, 2019, the churchwide office hosted the inaugural meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) Network. A network meeting is a domestic meeting among synods that accompany either the same companion church or different companion churches in the same country. Attending were bishops and their delegations from the New England Synod, the Southeast Michigan Synod and the Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Other attendees came from Opportunity Palestine, the Lutheran World Federation, the Lutheran Office for World Community, Bright Stars of Bethlehem and Peace Not Walls. Skype conversations involved Dr. Charlie Haddad, the Rev. Ashraf Tannous, the Rev. Imad Haddad and missionary Deacon Adrainne Gray from the ELCJHL. ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director for Global Mission, met with attendees for lunch, and the synods together shared updates, best practices and conversations on such specific topics as Holy Land pilgrimage trips. The group also worshiped and shared daily devotions together.



Gathering of the ELCA Network of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.
(Photo: John Weit)



“Breaking Down Walls: Erasing Hostility” seminar in Wittenberg, Germany. (Photo: Kaleb Sutherland)

“Breaking Down Walls: Erasing Hostility”

In early October 2019, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, Global Mission organized a conference entitled “Breaking Down Walls: Erasing Hostility.” To make this event possible, the Europe, Middle East and North Africa desk worked with the International Leaders Program, AMMPARO and the communications department of Mission Advancement. The event took place in different German cities (Berlin, Leipzig and Wittenberg, home of the Wittenberg Center). Participants came from organizations along the U.S.-Mexico border, including the Mexican

Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest, the Southwestern Texas Synod and the Southwest California Synod; from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL); and from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Germany, the Evangelical Church of Central Germany, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony and Berliner Missionswerk. Participants talked about living in the shadows of walls and what the Germans did to bring down the Berlin Wall.

Meetings Focus on the Central Europe Teacher Program

In November 2019, teachers and administrators from six schools of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Slovak Republic (ECAV) participated in the Central Europe Teacher Program (CET). They came together with ECAV Presiding Bishop Ivan Elko and the two regional bishops and representatives of Global Mission to discuss the longstanding program. It was a constructive meeting where participants affirmed the program, discussed opportunities for improvement and shared devotions and fellowship. EuMENA Regional Representative Viking Dietrich participated along with CET Education Coordinator Naomi Sveholm; the Rev. Kyle Svennungsen, pastor of Bratislava International Church; Central Europe teacher Sue Streckel; and Acting Global Service Director Mike Busbey. The consultation was informed by six surveys administered by Johanna Olson. Outcomes from the surveys and the consultation formed the recommendations for Global Mission leadership. Thanks in part to last year’s work, recruitment efforts are already showing improvement. Please recommend the program to your social networks and congregations. The description and application are available at: elca.atsondemand.com.



Central Europe Teacher Program consultation in Bratislava, Slovakia, in November 2019. (Photo: Kyle Svennungsen)

Latin America and the Caribbean



Participants in the sixth Latin American Congress on Gender and Religion. Photo courtesy of the Rev. Jaime Dubon.

Latinas Attend Congress on Gender and Religion

Women leaders from Lutheran churches in Latin America were able to participate in the sixth Latin American Congress on Gender and Religion, organized by Facultades EST in Brazil. The main topics of the congress were vulnerability, resistance and justice, and the methodologies allowed the participants to work in groups, roundtables and presentations to learn, share their experiences and connect with other leaders from the region.

The participants from the Central American region were motivated by their participation in the congress to organize an event in November

2019 to bring together women from that region to keep engaging churches in gender justice conversations.

As part of the congress, Global Mission supported the publication of a resource created by a theologian from Brazil, Maristela Freiberg, entitled *Portraits for the Process of Formation and Acting of the First Female Pastors of the IECLB*. The book was incorporated into one of the presentations and will be a great tool, not only for the church in Brazil but also for the Latin American and Caribbean region, to promote and visualize theological materials created by women.

Sofia Mamani, Theologian and Teacher in the Bolivian Lutheran Church

In the city of El Alto, Bolivia, home to more than two million people, Sofia Mamani leads a program of the Bolivian Lutheran church to help school-age children with their homework. Sofia not only accompanies their learning processes but also educates them in children's rights and the prevention of violence and abuse. Sofia also stresses the critical role that adults, families, communities, churches, institutions and governments, and children themselves have in protecting and fulfilling those rights.

Sofia teaches that all children have rights emanating from their humanity as children of God. All children have basic universal needs that present adults with specific and universal obligations. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has codified the obligation of governments and other responsible institutions, such as the church, to protect and promote the right of children to have their needs fulfilled.



Sofia Mamani with children in El Alto, Bolivia. (Photo: Gustavo Driau)

The 25th Session of the U.N. Global Summit on Climate Change

The 25th session of the U.N. global summit on climate change (known as COP 25) was held in Madrid, Spain, during the first two weeks of December 2019. Global church bodies and ecumenical organizations, including the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance, were present, vocal and visible in spaces where civil society participation was allowed.

The official ELCA delegation included representatives of global mission companions from the Latin American and Caribbean region, including five church leaders from Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua). Delegates from the Lutheran Costa Rican Church, or Iglesia Luterana Costarricense (ILCO), included Pastor Nehemías Rivera, whose accompaniment of local faith communities has long included a consistent focus on the responsible stewardship of creation. The other ILCO representative was Esmeralda Perez, an indigenous woman (member of the Huetar nation) who is active in her Lutheran faith community and in local initiatives to recover and employ the ancestral practices of indigenous peoples for the care of the earth.

Nehemías and Esmeralda, other ELCA delegates, and leaders from other LWF member churches were disappointed by the timidity of the official governmental commitments produced by COP 25. Nevertheless, COP 25 provided Latin American Lutherans with invaluable opportunities to meet, exchange ideas and strengthen regional networks with climate justice advocates from elsewhere in the region, particularly organized movements of youth and indigenous communities. These connections will enable Lutheran churches to unite with other churches and faith-based organizations who are praying, organizing, mobilizing and advocating for climate justice at a moment in human history when time is running perilously short.



Pastor Nehemías Rivera and Esmeralda Perez in the airport as they travel from Costa Rica to Spain to attend COP 25.

Mission Formation

Regional Gatherings of Glocal Musician Educators

In November 2019, the Mission Formation team collaborated with the Glocal Musician Educators' community to create and articulate a new vision/mission for the Glocal ministry. Gatherings were held in Atlanta, Chicago, Minneapolis and San Francisco, during which attendees listened to and processed concerns and ideas from the Glocal Musician Educators while documenting insight, wisdom and thoughts to carry forward into the new year. The Mission Formation team and the Glocal Musician Educators look forward to partnering with you on your next transformative and experiential learning events!



Glocal Musician Educators at the event "From Partnership to Mission: A Global and Local Journey," hosted by the Saint Paul Area Synod. (Photo: Mary Smith)



West coast regional gathering of the Glocal Musician Educators. (Photo: Aisea Taimani)

Three New Resources for Congregations and Synods

Mission Formation has worked with the Mission Advancement unit to produce two new resources for use in congregations: the **2020 Global Mission Annual Directory** (available for download at [ELCA.org/GMdirectory](https://www.elca.org/GMdirectory)) and the **2020 Global Mission Map** (available for download at [ELCA.org/GMmap](https://www.elca.org/GMmap)). These resources can be ordered together in a packet, which includes a how-to guide, or maps can be ordered separately. Order your print copies at [resources.ELCA.org](https://resources.elca.org). Mission Formation has also produced a new **Glocal event promotional video**. This video can be used by synod leaders as they consider programming multiethnic gatherings or events with women, youth or young adults. Though the video focuses on one event from the Saint Paul Area Synod, it encourages viewers to "think outside the box" and find new ways of engaging the Mission Formation team and Glocal Musician Educators. Watch the video at [ELCA.org/Glocal](https://www.elca.org/Glocal).

Mission Formation Visioning Consultation: A Way Forward

From Dec. 15 to 17, 2019, the Global Mission unit hosted a Mission Formation Visioning Consultation with 30 participants from a wide spectrum of the ELCA and a few international experts. The goal of the consultation was for participants to assess what has changed in the structure and program of Mission Formation since 2008 while evaluating the purpose, structure and planning of current core functions. Attendees looked at the past and present engagement of Mission Formation and arrived at an expansive vision of its future. Final statements and documents were handed over to the Global Mission administrative team so it could review them and make decisions on a way forward.

Lutheran Office for World Community

First Female Judge at the Ecclesiastical Court of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

Scarlet Bishara, the first female judge at the Ecclesiastical Court of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), works on legal cases relating to family law. She is dedicated to championing gender equality and the rights of women in Palestine. Judge Bishara is also a legal adviser to the governor of Bethlehem and leads the Violence Against Women Committee in the governorate of Bethlehem. Her groundbreaking work, influenced by the Lutheran World Federation's Gender Justice Policy, led to a 2015 amendment to the court's "personal status" laws. The amendment increased, from 14 to 18 years old, the minimum age at which a girl can marry.



Scarlet Bishara is the first female judge at the Ecclesiastical Court of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). (Photo: Ben Gray)



LOWC staff joined an estimated 60,000 students, adults and activists at the Global Climate Strike. (Photo: Rebecca Anderson)

Climate Change Strike for Climate Action

On Friday, Sept. 20, 2019, staff from the Lutheran Office for World Community (LOWC) joined an estimated 60,000 students, adults and activists in the Global Climate Strike in New York. Swedish activist Greta Thunberg delivered a speech during the event, stating, "We are doing this to wake the leaders up. We are a wave of change. Together and united, we are unstoppable." It is estimated that more than a million people participated in climate strikes across 125 countries on this day. The U.N. Youth Climate Summit and SDG Action Zone took place the following day (Sept. 21) at the United Nations Headquarters, where Thunberg criticized world leaders for their lack of urgency during the opening

session. Young entrepreneurs from around the world were given the opportunity to take the mic and discuss solutions. Then, on Sept. 22, U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres convened the Climate Action Summit 2019, where leaders were urged to showcase "concrete, realistic plans to enhance their nationally determined contributions by 2020, in line with reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45% over the next decade, and to net zero emissions by 2050." During the event, members of governments, the private sector, civil society and various international organizations came together to develop six action portfolios to curb global greenhouse gas emissions and promote global action.

Never Is Now Summit on Anti-Semitism and Hate

Dennis Frado, director of the Lutheran Office for World Community, joined Kathryn Lohre, ELCA assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations, in attending the annual Never Is Now Summit on Anti-Semitism and Hate. The summit was sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). Featured speakers at the Nov. 21 event included ADL International Leadership Awardee Sacha Baron Cohen and ADL Courage Against Hate Awardee Hamdi Ulukaya, founder and CEO of Chobani. Cohen's serious remarks challenged bigotry and intolerance, highlighting the role of social media in perpetrating such attitudes, and called for holding leaders of social media companies accountable.

Congressional Briefing on the Treatment of Children in Israeli Military Detention



Bishop Thomas Aitken of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod at a congressional briefing on the treatment of children in Israeli military detention. (Photo: Carl Roose)

On Nov. 20, 2019, Bishop Thomas Aitken of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod represented Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton at a congressional briefing on the treatment of children in Israeli military detention. Organized by the Faith Forum on Middle East Policy, Churches for Middle East Peace and the American Friends Service Committee, the briefing featured Rep. Betty McCollum, D-Minn., and several Christian leaders speaking on the importance of holding governments, including Israel, accountable for observing international human rights standards when utilizing U.S. military assistance, as required by U.S. law.

2019 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

The 2019 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples was commemorated Aug. 9, 2019, at the United Nations. The event focused on this year's theme of indigenous languages and their preservation and revitalization at both the national and the international level in order to protect the unique cultures, heritage and identities of the indigenous peoples they sustain. According to the United Nations, although indigenous peoples make up only 5% of the world's population, "they speak 60% of the world's languages," with estimates suggesting that "more than half of the world's languages will become extinct by 2100." The Indigenous Peoples and Development Branch of the U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs held a panel discussion with four indigenous speakers, which was followed by an interactive segment focused on creative initiatives that promote the use of indigenous languages. Recommendations for charting a constructive path forward included committing to an International Decade of Indigenous Languages, creating further legislation that includes incorporating indigenous languages into school curriculum, and stronger dialogue and partnerships.

The Migration and Human Trafficking International Conference

Dennis Frado, director of the Lutheran Office for World Community, traveled to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to deliver a presentation on how the United Nations is addressing the issue of human trafficking. The Migration and Human Trafficking International Conference was held Aug. 21-23, 2019, convened by the ELCA's Global Mission unit and local Cambodian partner Life With Dignity. Four of the 17 U.N. Sustainable Development Goals related to the prevention of human trafficking were shared – SDG 5 (Gender Equality, Target 5.2), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth, Target 8.7), SDG 10 (Reduce Inequalities, Target 10.7) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, Target 16.2) – alongside an extensive list of resources, protocols and initiatives. Dennis also highlighted the Global Compact for Migration, adopted by the U.N. in December 2018. LOWC had monitored the negotiations leading to the compact's adoption.

Advocacy Related to Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) and Detention of Palestinian Children

On Aug. 6, 2019, at the ELCA's 2019 Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee, the assembly approved by a 96% margin four actions related to Israel and Palestine. The assembly actions deal with the human rights social investment screen, the detention of Palestinian children by Israel, funding for Augusta Victoria Hospital and continuing to listen to various perspectives on the conflict. The assembly actions include urgent requests for advocacy related to the Lutheran World Federation's Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) and the Israeli military's detention of Palestinian children. Peace Not Walls (PNW) continues to advocate for the U.S. government's immediate release of funds for AVH. In spring 2020, PNW will launch a toolkit on the military detention of Palestinian children that will provide resources for leading conversations on this topic.

Peace Not Walls Gathering June 19-21 in Washington, D.C.

In November 2019, a group of ELCA seminarians joined the second annual Peace Not Walls (PNW) Seminary Challenge, which invites seminarians to develop projects for use in ministry contexts that support the foci of the PNW initiative: accompaniment, advocacy and awareness raising. The accepted submissions are from two groups of students from United Lutheran Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary. One finalist will have the opportunity to present their project at the annual PNW Gathering, June 19-21, 2020, in Washington, D.C.



ELCA young adults attend a Peace Not Walls tour in the Holy Land.
(Photo: Pedro André Lazo Rivera)

Phase Two of the Peace Not Walls Young Adult Initiative

Trained by Peace Not Walls (PNW) and the ELCA's Young Adult ministry, three young-adult ELCA leaders of color – Pedro André Lazo Rivera of the Caribbean Synod, Xavier Thomas of the Greater Milwaukee Synod and Hannah Wright Osborne of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod – led a group of seven young adults of color to the Holy Land from Jan. 2 to 13. This trip is part of the second phase of the PNW Young Adult Initiative. One of the goals of this second phase is “equipping young adults of color to lead trips that specifically focus on the intersection of race, culture, and class by using a global lens that has local implications.” A video from the March 2-12, 2019, trip led by young-adult leaders of color is available. People interested in joining a trip in summer 2020 can learn more at peacenotwalls.wordpress.com.

Church Leaders Visit the Holy Land

At the end of January 2020, six new ELCA bishops (having served two years or less) traveled to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land to meet with Bishop Sani Ibrahim Charlie Azar to learn about the church and its history amid the occupation. Bishop Susan Briner of the Southwestern Texas Synod, Bishop Deborah Hutterer of the Grand Canyon Synod, Bishop Pedro Suárez of the Florida-Bahamas Synod, Bishop Kevin Strickland of the Southeastern Synod, Bishop Yehiel Curry of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and Bishop Laurie Larson Caesar of the Oregon Synod were delegate members. Bishop James Gonia of the Rocky Mountain Synod, chair of the Global Mission Committee for the Conference of Bishops, also participated. The Rev. Saïd Ailabouni, EuMENA area desk director, accompanied the delegation.

AMMPARO: Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunity

Update From AMMPARO

The AMMPARO network continues to grow, with 51 synods now connected to AMMPARO either through welcoming or sanctuary congregations or through interfaith committees or task forces. This incredibly important work being done in our synods and congregations helps to counteract the intense fear being experienced by migrant and ethnic communities across the nation. There are now 11 Guardian Angel programs through which church people accompany migrant children and families during their court process. In late January, the ELCA director for migration policy was invited to participate in a side church-related event at the Global Forum on Migration and Development in Quito, Ecuador.

Latest Caravan From Honduras

A caravan of 1,500 migrants left Honduras on Jan. 15 as a result of violence, the threat of violence and the failure of the Honduran government to respond to these conditions. The government tried to keep these migrants in the country, especially the minors, but most were able to leave and enter Guatemala and the south of Mexico. Some came back from Mexico as a result of the violence they experienced there. Some in Guatemala decided not to move further. About 800 are in Mexico with plans to either seek asylum in Mexico or proceed to the United States. AMMPARO companions are working hard in each country to help protect and foster government respect for migrants' human rights.

Sanctuary

One of the actions of the sanctuary memorial adopted at the Churchwide Assembly was a request that the ELCA Church Council provide guidance around sanctuary for all three expressions of the ELCA. A process has been developed to enter into a listening period in which ELCA congregations, synods and members can provide suggestions about the guidance that would be most helpful from each of the three expressions of the ELCA. There may also be an opportunity to comment at synod assemblies and other ELCA churchwide events this summer. To get the process underway, 30 people representing ELCA sanctuary synods, hosting congregations and churchwide staff gathered in Burlingame, Calif., in mid-January to offer input.



A sanctuary consultation in the Metropolitan New York Synod. (Photo: Campo de Trabajo de Políticas Migratorias)

Collaboration on Remote Refugee Placement With Church World Service

Church World Service has asked the ELCA and other denominations to endorse a project to provide remote training to congregations interested in receiving and accompanying refugees in 2020. This exciting proposal opens up new possibilities for congregations to participate in refugee resettlement far from the agencies traditionally involved in it.

Companion Synod Program

Gathering of the South Sudan Network

The East and Southern Africa manager for relationships has been working closely with the ELCA African National Ministries steering committee, specifically the representatives from the South Sudanese ELCA community, to strengthen the South Sudan network across the church. “I enjoyed working with each and every one of you,” says Joseph Bocko, director for African National Ministries. “I want you to know of my continual appreciation for your leadership, but specifically I want to say thank you for your holistic outreach approach – the commitment to making Christ known by word and deed. Second, your presence, participation and contributions to the abovementioned committee blessed our common pilgrimage. We are all gifted and have something to share. No one comes to the table empty-handed.”



The South Sudan Network Gathering met in Rochester, Minn. (Photo: Kathy Chatelaine)

Telescope to Tanzania From the Greater Milwaukee Synod

Chuck and Sue Ruehle of the Greater Milwaukee Synod began their delivery of telescopes and their efforts to improve science education in Tanzania in 2010. Five years later, Chuck was no longer able to travel, so Kai Staats traveled to Tanzania to assist the local ambassador team in designing an observatory. The observatory was completed in 2019 on the campus of the Ailanga Lutheran Junior Seminary in Usa River. A refurbished telescope, donated by the Racine Astronomical Society, made its way first to Arizona for some technical work and then, crated and shipped, from the Staats' home to Tanzania. Directing the program, Kai went to Tanzania to supervise the telescope's installation in July and August. The local astronomy ambassadors, representing about seven schools in Tanzania, continue the work of caring for the science center and conducting classes with students and visitors.

Visit to St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Mahtomedi

In the fall, Johanna Olson, manager for relationships for Europe, Middle East and North Africa, met with St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi, Minn., to talk about their 22-year relationship with the Lutheran congregation in Martin, Slovakia, a member of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Slovak Republic (ECAV). St. Andrew's supports the Center for Christian Education (CCE), the school of the Martin congregation. Other congregations that partner with CCE are Our Saviour's Lutheran in Naperville, Ill.; Grace Lutheran in River Forest, Ill. and Roseville Lutheran in Roseville, Minn. Their ministries complement the companion-synod engagement from the Slovak Zion Synod and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod.

Concluding and Emerging Companion Relationships

The New Jersey Synod has concluded its long-dormant relationship with the Evangelical Church in the Republic of Croatia. A relationship is emerging between the Southwest California Synod and the Helsinki Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. The Grand Canyon Synod has concluded its long-dormant relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania.

Companion Synod and District Consultation in Papua New Guinea

In late August, delegates from the four ELCA synods that relate to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (ELC-PNG) traveled to Papua New Guinea. They began their consultation with an orientation in Cairns, Australia. The U.S. delegation included participants from the Virginia, North Carolina, North/West Lower Michigan and Central States synods. From Cairns they moved on to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, where they were joined by the Rev. Franklin Ishida and had some time to rest and hear about the country, its history and the ELC-PNG.

The day after they arrived in Lae, they worshiped at St. Andrews, a local congregation. After worship they transitioned right into the consultation. Representatives of the ELCA synods and the four districts to which they relate (Papua, Niugini, Jabem and Kote), as well as other ELC-PNG leaders, met for two days. The meetings consisted of strategic conversations around accompaniment as it relates to the companion relationship, as well as updates, covenants, future planning and commitments.



Sunday school materials on display at the Papua New Guinea Companion Synod Consultation. (Photo: Cynthia Zamora)



Representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia, the South Carolina Synod (ELCA) and the Synod of Alberta and the Territories (ELCIC) take part in a weaving project and discuss what their joint work has meant to each church. (Photo: Cat Knarr)

The Fifth International Consultation With Synods and Companion Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean

“Weaving Links in Mission” was the theme of the Fifth International Consultation of companion synods in Antigua, Guatemala, which was focused on nourishing, strengthening and reinforcing links; links of accompaniment; and shared service. These accompaniment and service links gave attendees the opportunity to share learnings, wisdom and experience gained, with the aim of supporting, nourishing and strengthening one another. Three main themes were companion relationships, migration and gender justice.

International Leaders Program

Emphases of the International Leaders Program

The International Leaders Program continues to accompany global-companion churches and institutions in creating opportunities for education, training and leadership development for the sake of mission and ministry. By awarding academic scholarships, hosting networking seminars and facilitating leadership exchanges, the International Leaders Program is helping to shape those who will lead the global Lutheran community today and in the future. Gender justice remains an overarching commitment for the International Leaders Program and the entire Global Mission unit. Thanks to this renewed emphasis, as of the end of 2019, two-thirds of active scholarship recipients were women, as compared to less than one-third just six years ago. The International Women Leaders (IWL) program continues to place talented young women from global companions at ELCA colleges and universities and to create networking spaces for women from around the world to share best practices around gender equity in church and society. All of this work happens thanks to the generous support of ELCA members, through Mission Support giving and gifts designated to the IWL program. The need to develop global-minded leaders is ongoing, and we give thanks for the bold commitment of support offered by ELCA members.

Words of Gratitude From Two Scholarship Recipients

Read on for words of gratitude shared by two current scholarship recipients whose lives have been transformed by the ELCA's investment in their leadership potential.

Manyok Deng Bul

Manyok Deng Bul is the recipient of an International Leaders Program in-region scholarship. He comes from the Episcopal Church of South Sudan & Sudan and recently completed a bachelor's degree in development studies at Kampala International University in Kampala, Uganda. In November 2019, he celebrated his graduation and his plans to return to serve his home church and community.

In a recent letter, Manyok shared the following words of thanks:

"I would like to pay a thousand thanks to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Episcopal Church of South Sudan, who have been standing with me during this journey. Indeed no one can succeed alone. Success is a composition of many sources of support. Hence my graduation day is dedicated to all of you. I promise to work for the restoration, rehabilitation and development for the members of my church and of South Sudan as a whole. The help you have given me is a gift to this great nation."



International Leaders Program scholarship recipient Manyok Deng Bul, from the Episcopal Church of South Sudan & Sudan.



International Women Leaders scholarship recipient Rebeca Amaro Treviño, from the Mexican Lutheran Church.
(Photo: Kristen Opalinski)

Rebeca Amaro Treviño

Rebeca Amaro Treviño is the recipient of an International Women Leaders (IWL) scholarship. She comes from the Mexican Lutheran Church and is currently a junior at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa.

In a recent newsletter, Rebeca wrote:

“With all the honesty of my heart, I am truly thankful for this opportunity. Though being a college student can sometimes be very stressful, I have learned so much and lived so many things that I would have never been able to experience if I had never come to the United States. Sometimes when I feel stress, I think about when I was younger and used to complain with my dad, ‘Why do I have to learn English? I am never going to travel. I don’t even own a passport.’ Clearly, six-year-old me had no idea of the experiences I was going to have. I grew up in an area with few chances to experience big opportunities. Therefore, when I got the chance to be part of the International Women Leaders program and looked back to where I was before, it made me feel very emotional. I get to prove that I am capable of accomplishing my dreams. Studying at Wartburg College has brought happiness to my life and honor to my family. Everyone in my family has so much respect for me and even the little ones dream to have the experiences that I have had! This brings so much happiness to me, because I am influencing my family’s new generations to be better and to challenge themselves! Though it has not been easy, I am truly happy for the experience that the ELCA and God have brought to me.”

New Manager for the Diakonia Team

This past year, the Diakonia team has had the honor of working alongside our churchwide colleagues and global companions to seek justice, transformation and liberation. The team had the opportunity to engage in a number of conferences that brought together companions to share learnings around different topics, including gender justice in India, human trafficking in Cambodia and work with and among Roma communities in Serbia. In 2019, Diakonia granted more than \$15 million for ELCA World Hunger and malaria- and disaster-response efforts. In December, the Diakonia team welcomed its newest member, Christine Moolo, who is serving as manager for Diakonia. In 2019, companion churches and global partners were supported in their transformative programming.



Women living with HIV create jewelry in a workshop in Masaya, Nicaragua. This is part of the women's empowerment project of the Nicaraguan Lutheran Church of Faith and Hope (ILFE).

Income-generation Groups in Masaya, Nicaragua

A jewelry workshop with women living with HIV was held in Masaya as part of the women's empowerment project of the Nicaraguan Lutheran Church of Faith and Hope (ILFE) that is funded by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Between theory, manual work and many laughs, the attendees were motivated to put into practice entrepreneurship as a means of subsistence.

In Nicaragua, the vulnerability of women is an everyday reality. "The situation becomes even more critical when you are a woman and you also live with HIV. The stigmatization and discrimination can be severe," says the Rev. Katia Cortez, director of the pastoral area of the ILFE. "In the city of Masaya, 99% of the women who participate in ILFE are HIV-positive. Many of them remain silent for lack of information and empowerment."

ILFE has made it a priority to strengthen the capacity of women in Masaya by training them in income-generating tools. "I liked this workshop, because it motivated myself and the other participants to develop a tool that will

help us to be self-sustaining," says M. Martinez, one of the participants. "This will help us to become future entrepreneurs and have an income in the midst of unemployment. Also, it is an enjoyable activity that helps clear the mind."

God created people in God's image and likeness. Women are strong leaders in the church! ILFE is proud to be part of the effort to work alongside women to restore their rights.

Severe Flooding in South Sudan

In partnership with ACT Alliance, the ELCA is responding to the flooding in South Sudan. Communities are building resilience in flood-affected areas of Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile, Northern Bahr el Gazal, Warrap and Eastern Equatoria. The response has specifically been tailored to assess urgent needs and support medium- and long-term recovery. Safe drinking water and sanitation and hygiene infrastructure, along with provision of safe shelter, basic nonfood items, health services and education, will meet the most immediate needs of the most vulnerable.

Child Rights Protection in Jerusalem and the West Bank

Through Defense for Children International Palestine (DCIP), the ELCA is advocating for and empowering partner organizations throughout the Middle East to actively protect child rights. Mapping and planning workshops are organized to articulate vision and build capacity through trainings and subgranting. DCIP also coordinates joint efforts to advocate for the advancement of child rights with the Arab League and other national and international bodies.

Rohingya Refugees Forced to Flee Into Bangladesh

Forced to flee genocide in Myanmar, more than 900,000 members of the Rohingya community now live in what has become the world's largest refugee settlement, in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Conditions in the congested camps are challenging, and people are largely dependent on essential humanitarian assistance to meet basic needs. With ACT Alliance, companions are providing humanitarian services while promoting longer-term sustainable solutions. This includes constructing transitional shelters and improving water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and provision of health services. Community resilience and peace-building initiatives are being integrated into livelihood programs with Rohingya refugees and host communities, including income-generation opportunities and intentional strategy to improve social cohesion.

Transition for Director for Mission Personnel and Leadership Formation

After 14 years of service with the Global Mission unit in a variety of roles, the Rev. Heidi Torgerson resigned her position as director for mission personnel and leadership formation in October 2019. We are so thankful for the courage, passion, love and commitment she embodied during her time as a missionary and on the Global Service team. Michael Busbey is now acting director for mission personnel and leadership formation. Mike has been with the Global Service team for five years, and he continues to be an instrumental part of the care our team gives to all of our mission personnel.

Team Introduction

Venis (pronounced “vin-neece”) Hamb is manager for Global Service projects and deployment, working directly with candidates in their deployment, hiring, and in-service and end-of-service processes. Venis previously served in the Mission Advancement unit with the former Global Church Sponsorship team.

Samantha Ea is coordinator for Global Service and point person for all event logistics for Global Service and YAGM events, and supports the YAGM candidate-selection process. An alumna of the YAGM program in Jerusalem and the West Bank, Samantha has also taken on the role of providing direct support to our active volunteers who identify as persons of color.

Lastly, Dan Beirne (pronounced “burn”) is program director for YAGM leadership development and alumni engagement. He oversees the training, worship and content for our events, and oversees the care and support for all active volunteers and alumni. This is done in collaboration with our country coordinator team.

New Mission Personnel Orientation

During the first week of February, we hosted the New Mission Personnel Orientation for six new missionaries who will be deploying in the upcoming months.

1. The Rev. Andrea Roske-Metcalf and the Rev. Luke Roske-Metcalf – YAGM country coordinators in Nepal
2. The Rev. Amanda Applehans and the Rev. Grant Applehans – YAGM country coordinators in Madagascar
3. Hannah Johnsrud – Interim communications consultant with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land
4. Alison Gomulka – English teacher in Tanzania, being sent as shared personnel between the Metropolitan New York Synod and the ELCA’s Global Mission unit



Six new missionaries with Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton (center) at the New Mission Personnel Orientation in February 2020.

As we look forward to global service, we hope to fill approximately 35 missionary positions in 2020. We continue to recruit for a variety of Global Mission positions for deployment in July, including: communications consultant – Kenya; coordinator for the Evangelical Lutheran Church Africa Mission – South Sudan; English-language educator positions; and seminary professor positions at various locations. An updated list of positions can be found at elca.atsondemand.com.

Young Adults in Global Mission



Former Young Adults in Global Mission share experiences with new country coordinators at winter orientation. (Photo: Dan Beirne)

New Country Program—Nepal and New Country Coordinators in Nepal and Madagascar

Young Adults in Global Mission has a new country program! Starting in the 2020-2021 year, Nepal is YAGM's newest country of service. The country coordinators are the Rev. Andrea Roske-Metcalf and the Rev. Luke Roske-Metcalf. The YAGM program in Nepal will work with several existing partners – Lutheran World Federation–Nepal, Lutheran World Relief–Nepal, and the Nepal Evangelical Lutheran Church (through LWF-Nepal) – with LWF-Nepal as the primary partner. In Madagascar we are also welcoming two new country coordinators, the Rev. Amanda Applehans and the Rev. Grant Applehans. They will continue the close collaboration between

Global Mission and the Malagasy Lutheran Church. We thank the Rev. Kirsten Laderach for her years of service with the YAGM program in Madagascar.

YAGM 20th Anniversary Celebration

We are actively planning the YAGM 20th Anniversary Celebration, scheduled for May 29-31, 2020, here in the Chicago area. Registration opened at the beginning of February, and we expect to have 250 of our over 1,000 alumni attend the event. We hope that the event will be a space of gathering and celebration and a place where alumni can learn how they can continue to be more involved in our church and society. For more information and possible ways to be involved in promotion of this event, contact Dan Beirne, program director for YAGM leadership formation and alumni engagement, at Dan.Beirne@elca.org.

Current Status for 2020-2021

For the 2020-2021 YAGM year, we expect to send 75 volunteers across 10 different country programs: Argentina/Uruguay, Australia, Central Europe, Jerusalem and the West Bank, Madagascar, Mexico, Nepal, Rwanda, Senegal and the United Kingdom. We've made significant changes to YAGM events over the last year as we received constructive feedback from current volunteers and alumni of the program. This had led us over the last year to hire consultants for gender & sexuality and racial sensitivity to be present at our YAGM events, to train our country coordinators and to consult on our recruitment and application processes throughout 2019. The 2020 budget has been restructured to prioritize funds to support the current presence of YAGM alumni in racially and ethnically diverse communities. Additionally, Global Mission staff are prioritizing the hiring of YAGM event staff who identify as people of the LGBTQIA+ community and/or people of color.

Reflection From One YAGM

Finally, we leave you with a small reflection on water by Charlie Williams, a YAGM in Senegal who hails from “where the suburbs meet the rolling foothills of California’s Central Valley” and who has experienced water shortages and rationing over the past decade due to the droughts in California. In her latest newsletter, Charlie writes: “I arrived in Senegal and I was in for a rude awakening. Water is a huge privilege. In Senegal, like much of the developing world, the majority of the population does not have reliable access to water, let alone clean water. I was told going into my site that Foundiougne [a Senegalese “department” or administrative district] often went several days without the resource. Initially, I believed it would be an easy transition due to my experience with wells, but this turned out not to be the case at all. Getting water in my home here has been a wake-up call to my privilege back in the States, one that more people need to be aware of. In my community specifically, there are two main challenges: the overall quality of the water and getting it in the first place.” Through her newsletter, Charlie invites us to look deeper into our own privileges here in the United States and ways to be better stewards of natural resources.

Diegane Ndong (left), Mbam community project gardens leader, with Charlie Williams, a Young Adults in Global Mission volunteer in Senegal.



Contact Us

For more information about Global Mission please contact any manager for relationships.

Africa

Kevin Jacobson
East and Southern Africa
Kevin.Jacobson@elca.org

Cynthia Zamora
Madagascar, West and Central Africa
Cynthia.Zamora@elca.org

Asia and the Pacific

Cynthia Zamora
Cynthia.Zamora@elca.org

Europe, Middle East and North Africa

Johanna Olson
Johanna.Olson@elca.org

Latin America and the Caribbean

Paulina Dasse
Paulina.Dasse@elca.org

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Global Mission unit

1-800-638-3522
8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631-4101

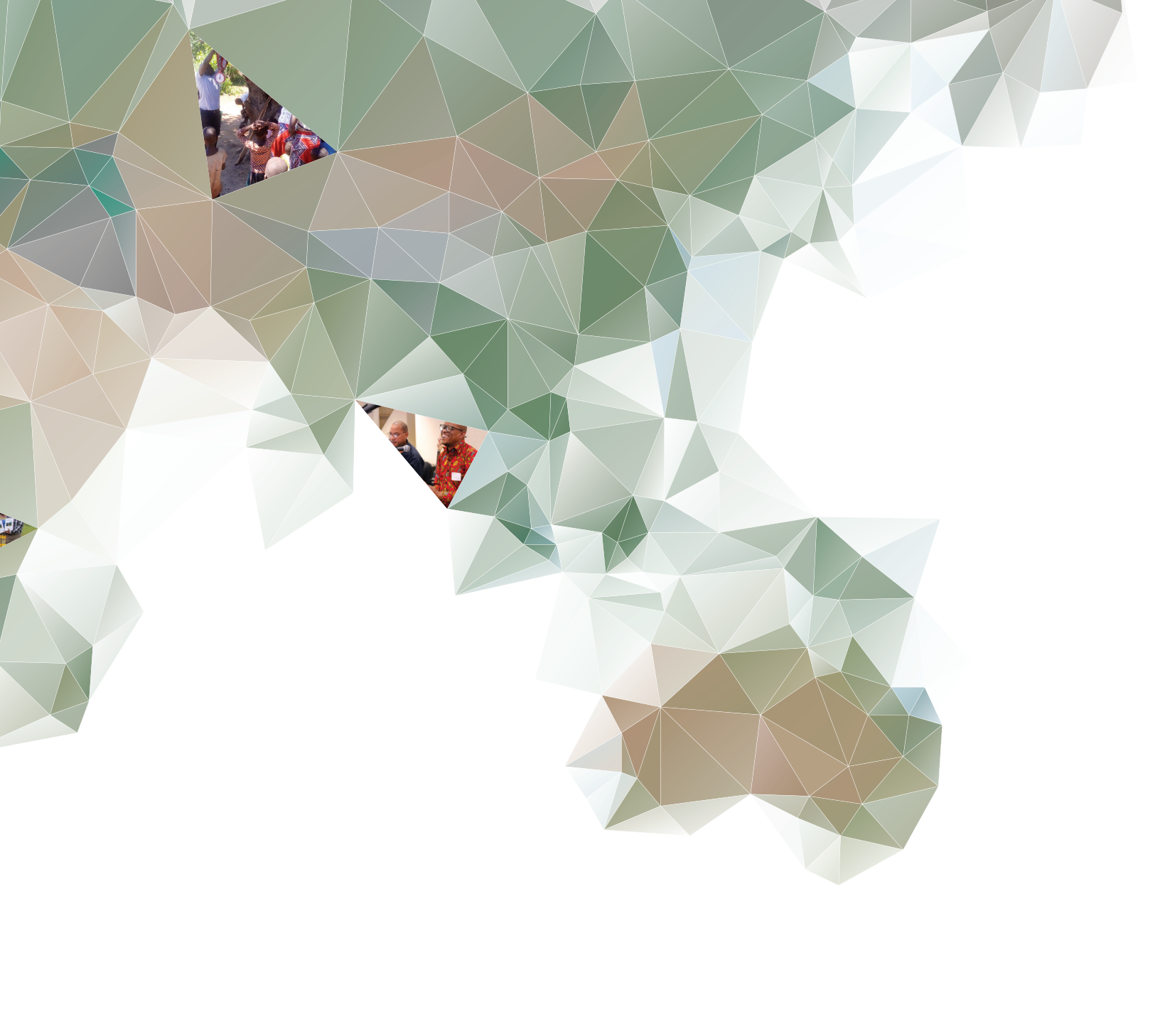
Credits

Content Managers: Kevin Jacobson, Johanna Olson, Paulina Dasse, Cynthia Zamora (Global Mission)

Project Manager: Cat Knarr (Mission Advancement)

Design and Layout: Karen Dersnah (Mission Advancement)

Copy Editor: James Jones (Mission Advancement)



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