



**YOUR
MISSION SUPPORT
GIFTS AT WORK**

DECEMBER 2023 Mission Support Memo

STORYTELLING ENGAGEMENT

Cultivating Generosity

A story from our ELCA churchwide organization

As you read this story, what connects with you?

How does your congregation create a culture of generosity?

Throughout the fall our congregations are often focused on stewardship and gratitude for the generosity of members. Folks provide stewardship talks, members complete commitment cards, and sermons are proclaimed to encourage generosity of time, talent and finances. But did you know that our ELCA Congregation and Synod Support Team offers training and recommendations on cultivating generosity?

This past fall, in partnership with the [Lake Institute on Faith and Giving](#), stewardship leaders from eight congregations, representing four ELCA synods, came together for a training series called “Cultivating Generous Congregations” (CGC). Over seven weeks leaders from these eight congregations gathered online as a cohort with the Lake Institute’s trained faculty and each other. Cultivating Generous Congregations maps the new landscape of religious giving and provides congregational teams with tools to build a culture of generosity unique to each congregation’s needs, challenges and opportunities. CGC explores theology, the role of adaptive leadership, fiscal transparency and the importance of giver care, with action steps to impact the exploration of generosity and energize congregational generosity to take the significant and necessary steps to creating lasting cultural change.

Following the final session, the eight congregations received a year of access to the Lake Institute’s numerous stewardship resources, as well as optional coaching to assist in the implementation of these practices.

Mission Support funds the opportunity for congregations and leaders to learn from stewardship experts and one another and to grow together so that their local mission, and how God is growing generosity, can be told in more effective ways in today’s culture. Watch for our next CGC to be offered in spring 2024. The date and registration information will be in the next “Where Your Heart Is” newsletter. Or you can contact the Rev. [Larry Strenge](#) or the Rev. [Tim Brown](#).

ENGAGE WITH US

FOR SYNOD TREASURERS AND BOOKKEEPERS: Your churchwide colleagues in the Office of the Treasurer are aware that there have been many synod staffing changes over the past few years (both in terms of people and places of work). In addition, there have been revisions to the Synod Remittance Process to update the form and ministry fund codes, along with an explosion of software options for bookkeeping from which many synods are now choosing.

So let's get together for a "[Refresher Webinar on the Synod Remittance Process.](#)" Details are here:

- **Date:** Wednesday, Jan. 10
- **Time:** 1-2 p.m. Central time
 - *Plus an optional half hour beginning at 2 p.m. for questions related to using specific accounting software to assist in completing the synod remittance form.
- **Zoom:** <https://elcafoundation.zoom.us/j/83340781291?pwd=US9OQIE2VHcyZElvTVBbWdWWEI1Zz09>
 - Meeting ID: 833 4078 1291
 - Passcode: 311926

Topics to be covered:

- A demonstration of the Synod Remittance Process – including how it is accessed and how the forms are designed to be completed.
- A review of recent revisions to the process.
- An overview of how the data shared by synods is used and why this process is important.
- Monitored chat to capture all questions and answers either during the webinar or follow-up time.

PLEASE plan to attend this webinar in person. The first hour of the webinar will be recorded, with the link provided after the event, but it will be far more helpful and interactive in person. Do share this with others in your synod who would benefit from attending. Questions? Contact your churchwide Congregation and Synod Support Team – either Victoria Flood (Victoria.Flood@elca.org) or Nick Kiger (Nick.Kiger@elca.org).

GRATEFUL

Blessed New Year! In this time of Epiphany, a season of light, we celebrate the great light of almost 3 million baptized members, over 8,600 congregations, across 65 synods, and their faithful generosity. Through each offering, the light of Christ is extended beyond us and magnified in amazing ways. We are grateful for the commitment from across our church to tend and grow ministries near and far through Mission Support.

As we move toward the fiscal year-end in January, we appreciate your continued financial generosity through your congregation. This allows your congregation to join with the others in your synod to support ministry within your synod that no one congregation could do alone. And, with the Mission Support shared by all synods, you are supporting churchwide ministries that only together we can make happen. We thank you for your continued commitment to this work of spreading Jesus' light and love.

In deep gratitude,
Victoria Flood, Senior Director for Congregation and Synod Support
Nick Kiger, Director for Mission Support
Karen Kretschmann, Coordinator for Storytelling Engagement

