

seeds for the parish

Summer 2014

Resource Paper for Leaders of ELCA Congregations

www.ELCA.org



Shaping ministry in a changing culture and society.

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New MIF service helps congregations with capital campaigns.

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Working together to fight malaria

“Before the coming of this project we used to bury so many people, especially children, due to malaria,” recalls Onyait Michael. Onyait is a village health team member serving in the Katakwi District of Eastern Uganda.

The tragedy that Onyait describes is not unusual in today’s world. A child dies every 60 seconds from malaria, a disease that claims the lives of about 627,000 people per year in Africa, mostly children.

Malaria is preventable. It can even be eliminated by our working together as Christ’s church in the world.

It’s difficult to wrap our minds around the mosquito-borne disease, since it was eradicated in the United States in 1951. Malaria seems like a distant disease from another time and place.

But that’s not the case for many people in the world. Malaria remains widespread

in about 100 countries throughout tropical and subtropical parts of the world. About 3.4 billion people live in areas where they are at risk of contracting malaria.

The health crisis of malaria is changing. Hope is beginning to displace despair.

Lives are being saved

Since 2010, members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have been supporting the malaria programs of our Lutheran partners in Africa, and this church has set a goal of raising \$15 million by 2015 through the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

About \$12.5 million has been raised so far and, through the ELCA Malaria Campaign, congregations are helping to make a significant impact.

“With this project, we are at the forefront of activities that are seeing malaria cases in our communities

reducing. These days we hardly hear of a child die due to malaria, or those that are rushed to the hospital as a result of severe malaria,” says Onyait. “With this support, I and other village health team members are very determined to ensure that malaria is completely eliminated from our communities.”

Program results from our partners are quite consistent — fewer deaths from malaria are being reported, training and treatment are becoming more accessible, malaria awareness activities and education are reaching more people, and prevention practices are being used by increasing numbers of households.

Join in this life-giving and community-changing work. Discover what you can do to support and promote the ELCA Malaria Campaign at www.ELCA.org/malaria.



Planning service experiences with a lasting impact.

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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Developing leaders among young people

By Catherine Anderson

You've heard the statistics about young people and the church:

- Engagement in our faith communities is decreasing.
- The number of those not affiliated with any religion is at 20 percent and growing (Barna Group and Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project).
- Our culture has adopted a watered down belief system of Christianity, where the goal of life is to be happy and God is a benign backdrop who only gets involved in our life when we need something (The National Study of Youth and Religion).
- Our culture is changing, and simply updating the Sunday school curriculum or worship style is not enough.

How do we shape ministry that will help people learn the practice of being Christian and of living a vital faith? The Practice Discipleship Initiative offers a larger frame to explore new ways of ministry. The initiative has created training sessions that help leaders to think critically about effective faith formation practices. Each synod has a Practice Discipleship Coach that leads training events in his or

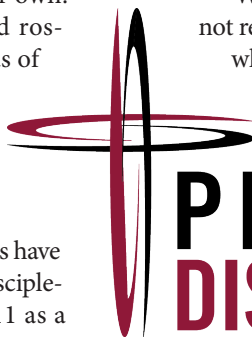
her synod. Online webinars are offered live and are recorded for download later. Curriculum is available for church leaders to present on their own. Volunteers, paid staff and rostered leaders from all areas of ministry are invited to participate. The Initiative's resources are free and available at www.practicediscipleship.org.

More than 25,000 leaders have participated in Practice Discipleship since it began in 2011 as a partnership between the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering and the ELCA Youth Ministry Network.

Don Marsh, the Practice Discipleship Coach for the ELCA St. Paul Area Synod, describes well the purpose of the Practice Discipleship Initiative: "Practice Discipleship is intended to spark the conversation about the way forward and to lift up the notion of following Jesus as a way of living. Practice Discipleship is one tool available to church leaders as we encourage the church to adapt to our changing culture. Practice Discipleship is calling the church into a new reality. As we adapt and be-

come more authentic in our faith we will begin to realize the huge opportunities for growth that lie ahead for God's church."

While Practice Discipleship alone will not reverse current trends, it is one way in which we can engage in a conversation about how we shape ministry in



PRACTICE DISCIPLESHIP

our changing culture. And it is in these vital conversations that the Holy Spirit transforms leaders and congregations as the Spirit breathes new life and vision into Christ's church.

Learn more at www.practicediscipleship.org.

Catherine Anderson is director for the Practice Discipleship Initiative of the ELCA Youth Ministry Network, <http://elcaymnet.org>.

It's not too late to serve!

It's not too late to plan your congregation's participation in and registration for "God's work. Our hands." Sunday, Sept. 7, 2014 — a day of service in which the nearly 10,000 congregations of the ELCA will take seriously Christ's call to action to serve neighbors and share God's love. While congregations work to make their communities a better place every day, "God's work. Our hands." Sunday offers ELCA members a dedicated day to do this work together.

New for 2014 are T-shirts available in Spanish and Arabic, in addition to English. Personalize T-shirts with the name of your congregation. Visit www.elca.org/dayofservice to place your order and to register your congregation's participation in the day of service. This site also offers downloadable resources, such as bulletin inserts and a

toolkit designed to plan your day from start to finish. The toolkit also features a section on how to pitch your congregation's story to the media.



"It feels good to know we are a people willing to listen and serve," says the Rev. Steven Bond, pastor of Advent Lutheran Church in Mentor, Ohio. About 180 members of Advent participated in the first "God's work. Our hands." Sunday in

2013, and they used their day to do yard work for senior citizens, repair tables for the local homeless shelter, bake and deliver cookies to firefighters and police officers, and much more. A teen-

age member of Advent told Bond, "Pastor, we should be doing way more of this kind of stuff."

Members of Advent "used the day to not only serve but also to invite others to become part of our particular community of faith," says Bond. "The yellow T-shirts reminded us that we are 'always being made new' and that it is 'God's work. Our hands.' The yellow T-shirts also had printed on the back: Advent — Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We wore those shirts with pride."

For more information, visit www.ELCA.org/dayofservice.

seeds for the parish

ELCA.org/seeds
LivingLutheran.com/seeds

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Note: Not all resources and program ideas listed in **Seeds for the Parish** have received official ELCA review or endorsement.

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Conducting capital campaigns now a service of ELCA Mission Investment Fund

Commitment Sunday. You know your capital campaign is a success when members joyously share their gifts and pledges, and when the children's "noisy offering" shakes, rattles and rolls.

The fundraising experts of the ELCA's Stewardship Key Leader ministry have been guiding congregations on conducting successful capital campaigns for building projects for more than 30 years — before the ELCA was formed. Now, the services of Stewardship Key Leader have transitioned to the Mission Investment Fund, the financial ministry of the ELCA.

Stewardship Key Leader and the ELCA Mission Investment Fund share great synergies. MIF makes low-interest loans to congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building projects, including the construction of church buildings as well as renovations, additions and upgrades to environmentally sound, sustainable features. To move forward with the building projects that MIF finances, congregations and ministries often need to raise funds through capital campaigns.

It starts with discernment

Stewardship Key Leader consultants start by working with a congregation's pastor and finance or stewardship committees to help discern how a building project will advance their mission and ministry. Consultants provide members with informational material about the proposed building project, and they set the stage for giving and growing a congregation's stewardship efforts. Each capital campaign leads to Commitment Sunday, when members make pledges and give gifts.

"I preach to the congregation about all that God has given us," says Pastor John Sabatelli, a Baltimore-based Stewardship Key Leader consultant. "Then I ask: What can you give in return for God's gifts?"

John recently directed a successful capital campaign at Oceanside Lutheran Church in Oceanside, New York. "Oceanside is a highly welcoming congregation — they proclaim it, they live it," he says. It seems fitting that the



congregation was energized to make its 1930s church building more welcoming by replacing opaque stained glass windows with clear glass, replacing heavy doors, and adding sustainable design elements and systems. Members were quick to embrace this effort to make their worship space more inviting, and the response on Commitment Sunday was so positive

that the congregation raised its initial campaign goal.

Supporting creative solutions

In Southlake, Texas, a newly formed ministry worshipping in a Montessori school was anticipating putting down roots. Members decided to raise funds to purchase a worship space whenever the right opportunity presented itself. Abiding Grace Lutheran Church chose Stewardship Key Leader to manage a successful capital campaign.

When the Montessori school went up for sale, Abiding Grace made the decision to buy the property. The congregation used a portion of its capital campaign funds for the down payment on the property, and the balance was earmarked toward renovations of the existing buildings. The school's gym was beautifully transformed into the congregation's sanctuary.

"Stewardship Key Leader consultants understand the unique needs of a (congregation). Each Stewardship Key Leader team member has development experience with non-profits," says Pastor Kathy Hauelsen, Stewardship Key Leader director.

The Mission Investment Fund and Stewardship Key Leader work to keep these services affordable. "Our fee is based on the size of the congregation, the number of current baptized members," explains Kathy.

For more information on the capital campaign services of Mission Investment Fund's Stewardship Key Leader consultants, contact Pastor Kathy Hauelsen, Stewardship Key Leader director, at kathy.hauelsen@elca.org or call 773-796-3855. Read more about Stewardship Key Leaders at MIF's website: mif.elca.org/fundraisingservices.



Connecting faith & finances for good.™



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Life insurance can help protect your family, your dreams and your lifestyle today. As your needs change, it can also offer tax advantages and a source of potential income for you in retirement.

Contact a financial representative about an insurance checkup, or visit Thrivent.com/makelifework today.



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Table and font: Who is welcome? *An invitation to join the conversation*

By Scott Weidler

All members and congregations of the ELCA are invited and encouraged to engage an important study and conversation about the practice of word and sacrament, scheduled to begin this fall. Now is the time to build this into your planning for education and formation.

For many centuries, Christians have considered Holy Baptism as the sacrament of initiation or entrance into the church, while Holy Communion is the sacrament that nourishes and sustains Christians week by week. This remains the recommended practice in the ELCA. The ELCA's statement on the practice of Word and sacrament, "The Use of the Means of Grace" (www.ELCA.org/Resources/Worship), states:

Principle 37

"Admission to the Sacrament is by invitation of the Lord, presented through the Church to those who are baptized."

Who is welcome?

For many congregations of this church and among our ecumenical partners, the invitation to receive Holy Communion is for everyone, not just for those who have been baptized. For some, it is a simple matter of hospitality. If this is Christ's table, then all are welcome — period. For others, the initiatory nature of baptism into the body of Christ is critical. Becoming a baptized and communing Christian involves serious commitment and even risk. The invitation, therefore, must be gracious yet clear: Holy Communion is for the baptized; the call to Holy Baptism is for all. Still others find some middle ground in this important conversation.

A generation or two ago, the question was about whether other Christians were welcome to receive Holy Communion

in Lutheran congregations. There was also serious concern over the implications if a non-baptized person received Holy Communion. These questions have long since received consensus in this church and are not a part of the current conversations. "The Use of the Means of Grace" states:

Principle 49

"Believing in the real presence of Christ, this church practices eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcomed to Communion when they are visiting in the congregations of this church."

Application 37G

"When an unbaptized person comes to the table seeking Christ's presence and is inadvertently communed, neither that person nor the ministers of Communion need be ashamed. Rather, Christ's gift of love and mercy to all is praised. That person is invited to learn the faith of the Church, be baptized, and thereafter faithfully receive Holy Communion."

Studying the relationship between Holy Communion and Baptism

The conversation and study that our church is about to engage is about the *invitation* to Communion. Especially important is the relationship between Communion and Baptism, as well as the relation between the sacraments and the proclamation of God's word, the worship space, music, prayers and the whole of



the liturgy. Congregations are encouraged to make this an opportunity to once again discover the richness of "The Use of the Means of Grace" and its value for a congregation. The document is not prescriptive. Rather, it describes normative practices; practices rich in diversity and open to varied interpretation in various contexts. Studying and discussing it together can be a renewing experience. It might result in the consideration of changing some current practices in a congregation's worship life. Such considerations should always be done carefully and with pastoral sensitivity, valuing important and treasured traditions of a congregation.

To assist these conversations, a collection of resources will be available at www.ELCA.org/worship by mid-August 2014, in time for your fall programming. Any-

one who engages this study is encouraged to offer feedback. We are interested to learn the thoughts, ideas and concerns of all. The website will include suggestions on how to offer your feedback.

For Lutherans, the church is defined as "the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel" (Augsburg Confession, Article VII). Therefore, this is an important conversation for our church. We hope you will engage it seriously with gracious and open hearts and minds.

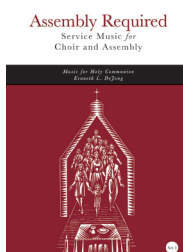
Scott Weidler is program director for Worship and Music, of the ELCA church-wide organization.

New music setting for communion

"Assembly Required: Service Music for Choir and Assembly, Set 3" is a setting of new music for Holy Communion by Kenneth L. DeJong, published by Augsburg Fortress.

"Assembly Required" is a series of collections for worship, calling for the participation of the choir as well as the

worshiping assembly. The music in this third set is a new and very accessible setting of the musical sections of the Holy Communion service, with accompaniment for organ or other keyboard instrument. Reproducible parts for



the assembly are included in the publication.

This series lifts up an important but often neglected role for the choir, leading the ritual song of the whole assembly. Leadership is provided by choir or cantor with

the end of enabling all worshipers to join the song.

Learn more at augsburgfortress.org or call Sales and Service at 800-328-4648.

Service: More than projects and trips

As summer youth mission trips end and fall service projects begin, it's difficult to ignore the buzz of excitement they generate. Stories are shared of houses painted, meals served, parks cleaned, food collected and more. However, it's important to remember that service is about more than projects and trips.

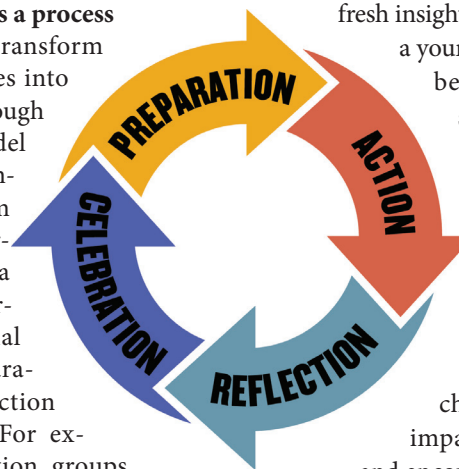
Beyond an event

The key to avoiding "mountain top" experiences, where inspiration and commitment can quickly fade, is to emphasize that service is not an event but a lifelong practice of living out one's faith in Jesus Christ. It's also important to consider that service isn't only about projects where youth get their hands dirty. Conversations with senior citizens, listening to stories of experiences different than our own, or examining ways a community might respond to a local issue also demonstrate the spiritual practice of service.

Service learning as a process

Leaders can transform service experiences into lasting impact through adopting a model called "service learning." Distinct from "volunteering," service learning is a process that incorporates intentional elements of preparation, action, reflection and celebration. For example, in preparation, groups are encouraged to work with community partners to determine priorities so projects are decided together (not chosen based on assumptions of what's needed).

Service learning also incorporates reflection, a time to debrief the experience through conversation, journaling or creative expression. Reflection can produce



fresh insights and inspire changes in a young person's attitudes and behaviors, emphasizing service as a continual process of learning and growing as followers of Jesus.

Where to start

These resources can help plan service experiences that are life-changing, have a lasting impact for the community and encourage lifelong service:

- Service And Learning Leadership Training (SALLT) Project offers free resources based on the service learning process, including videos, phone app, planning guide, reflection exercises and training materials. Access resources at www.sallt.org/store.

- "Digging In: A Leader's Guide to Service Learning" is a comprehensive planning guide for youth-oriented service related to food, hunger and poverty issues, including a project planning worksheet. Download a free copy at resources.ELCA.org (search "Digging In").
- Locate a service experience for youth at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries' Servant Journeys' page at www.journeysfor-youth.com.
- "God's work. Our hands." Sunday Toolkit can assist leaders in planning, carrying out and celebrating successful service experiences for "God's work. Our hands." Sunday (Sept. 7), or any other time through the year. Access a free copy at www.ELCA.org/dayofservice.

Mark Jackson is professor of children, youth and family studies at Trinity Lutheran College in Everett, Wash.

Sharing stories of faith in action

"Brands work not because they have clever logos or taglines, not because they run a lot of ads, but because something about their story and their promise resonates with deeply held cultural beliefs. 'People like us do things like this' is the mark of a brand." — Seth Godin, author, entrepreneur and marketer.

Have you thought about the brand of our church that spans from the lives of our individual members through their congregations, and congregations together through synods and our churchwide organization? What are our stories, and what work does God have us engaged in as a church?

For many of us, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is extremely important to our faith and daily life. As members of the ELCA, we believe that we are freed in

Christ to serve and love our neighbor. How we serve and love our neighbor is the story of how we are church together.

One of the challenges of being a leader in a congregation or synod is lifting up these powerful stories of how God is at work through the ELCA, and helping people realize their offerings of time, talent and finances contribute to this work and ministry. What are the stories of individual generosity that were inspired by the preaching and teaching of your congregation? What are the stories of your congregation acting as a community to make ministry happen? What are the stories of congregations uniting as synods and as a church that touch lives throughout the world?

Stories of Faith in Action

"Stories of Faith in Action," an annual ELCA publication, shows how members,

congregations and synods come together to make a difference in the world, and how that work is funded by your weekly offering. This free publication is a colorful resource that shares how important your weekly offering in your congregation is for sustaining and growing God's mission. The portion of your offerings that support the ELCA's synodical and churchwide ministries is called Mission Support.

This publication, plus a variety of other resources, help explain and answer questions about Mission Support. Other resources include: "Where Your Offering



Goes," themed bulletin inserts, and print and electronic design materials for annual congregational meeting folders including a message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. These resources will be available in fall 2014 at www.ELCA.org/resources in the Stewardship and Stories of Faith and Action sections.

For more information or to download resources, visit www.ELCA.org/resources.

"So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another." (Romans 12:5) This is our story as we continue to be church together.

"Sundays and Seasons Year B 2015" — Available now!

"Sundays and Seasons: Guide to Worship Planning" supports comprehensive week-by-week planning with content and ideas for liturgy and music, preaching and visuals, shaped by the Revised Common Lectionary, the church year and the assembly gathered around word and sacrament.

Worship planners and leaders, preachers, presiding ministers, worship committees, musicians, visual artists, sacristans and altar guilds, and those who create congregational worship folders, will find an indispensable companion in Sundays and Seasons as they prepare for worship each week.

A diverse group of more than 40 contributors from across this church has provided weekly helps, seasonal helps and more. Use Sundays and Seasons print edition together with [Sundays and Seasons.com](http://SundaysandSeasons.com) for effective and efficient planning, preparation and production of all your worship needs.

Learn more at augsborgfortress.org/sundaysandseasons or call Sales and Service at 800-328-4648.

Inter-religious resource for the 500th observance of the Reformation

Twenty years have passed since the 1994 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted the “Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the Jewish Community,” which rejected Luther’s anti-Judaic writings and reached out in relationship to the Jewish community. This important act of addressing a difficult part of our legacy remains foundational to our work in Jewish-Christian relations and in inter-religious relations, as well.

A new resource seeks to explore the question: As we look toward the 500th observance of the Reformation, what of Luther’s legacy is instructive with regard to inter-religious relations? Titled, “Why Follow Luther Past 2017? A Contemporary Lutheran Approach to Inter-Religious Relations,” the resource lifts up four underlying principles of Luther’s theology.

The development of the resource by the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations modeled one of the key learnings, namely that “the common experience of individuals



who have engaged in inter-religious dialogue is that their understanding and appreciation of their own tradition is enhanced in the process.” Jewish partners were invited to review and offer input as part of the revision process, which strengthened the content and demonstrated an ongoing commitment to mutually accountable relations.

The hope is that the resource will be used by Lutherans to better understand our legacy, and to “equip Christians to engage Jews and others in positive, constructive and honest ways.” The resource is available for download under the “Inter-Religious” tab on the ELCA resource page at www.ELCA.org/Resources/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations.

‘Miss Representation’ film study guide

The 2011 documentary film “Miss Representation,” featured at the Sundance Film Festival, stirred conversation about the media’s depiction of women and women in leadership, with special attention to its effect on young women and men as they grow up.

In the hope to further this discussion among people of faith, the ELCA Women and Justice: One in Christ Task Force has a study guide on the documentary. Recently updated for use by a wider variety of groups, there are now three formats available online: 1-session, 3-sessions or 4-sessions. Each includes a leader’s guide, provides questions to help explore and discuss the film’s



content from the perspective of the Christian faith and includes prayers and Scripture passages.

A social statement process on women and justice was approved at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, and the task force began meeting in 2012. The entire ELCA is encouraged to participate in conversations on women and justice. The task force will submit a proposed social statement to be considered at the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The study resource, information on the task force and the social statement process can be found at www.ELCA.org/womenandjustice.

Rethinking traditions of gift-giving with ELCA Good Gifts



The average U.S. citizen spends more than \$700 on Christmas gifts each year. And when we think about the best gifts we have given or received, it is often not the gift itself but the meaning behind the gift that makes it significant.

ELCA Good Gifts offers a unique way to put some meaning back in Christmas shopping. With more than 50 different gift-giving options at your fingertips, changing the world has never been easier.

Each gift counts twice -- once for your loved one and once for someone you may never meet who is supported by an ELCA churchwide ministry. That someone could be Margaret.

With the gift of a goat added to her yard, Margaret is one step closer to escaping hunger and poverty — for good. “My goat has given birth to 12 kids,” she says. “With so many goats to sell, I can pay for my children to go to school. I can even afford to hire someone to help me work on the farm!”

The ELCA Good Gifts catalog is also a great resource for congregations ready to rethink the tradition of Christmas gift-giving. Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders, pastors and other leaders have embraced the catalog as a way to teach stewardship and the joy of giving at Christmas.

St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Tarpon Springs, Fla., hosts an annual alternative giving fair at their congregation. “We shift our attention from the chaos of shopping to Christ and his love,” says Patti DeVarti, a member of St. Timothy. “It fills you up with so much joy to give this way.”

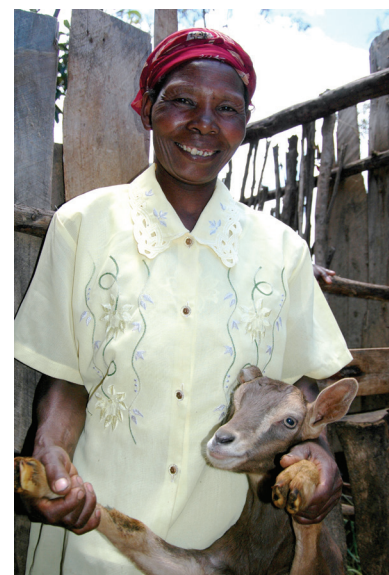
The **ELCA Good Gifts Fair Planning Guide** includes step-by-step instructions and resources to help you plan an alternative giving fair in your congregation.

Other congregations set annual fundraising goals and “shop” the ELCA Good Gifts catalog together. The Sunday school children at Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church in Urbana, Ohio, set a goal to raise \$715 — enough to provide a “family farm” to a family in need. They ordered free coin banks, stickers, posters and additional materials to get started.

(Order yours at resources.ELCA.org.) Within several months, they not only met their goal, but exceeded it by \$528 — adding water jugs, mosquito nets, blankets and more to their list.

“Our church family grew closer by coming together as a community to work toward this worthwhile goal. The outreach using ELCA Good Gifts has changed many hearts and lives at Messiah, and we will never be the same.” said Vicki Henderson, a member of Messiah. “We would like to encourage any congregation to walk this worthwhile, life-changing path.”

Get started with your own ELCA Good Gifts Fair by ordering resources at resources.ELCA.org.



Plan engaging worship with Sundays and Seasons.com

Sundays and Seasons follows the three-year lectionary cycle and provides everything you need to support your worship ministry in one convenient location, always accessible online.

Plan services and easily produce worship support materials

Sundays and Seasons brings together online all the content you need to digitally assemble worship support materials like a bulletin or a set of projection slides, in just a few simple steps:

- Select a service date and base liturgy.
- Move, modify, add and edit worship plan content.
- Review and download your worship plan content.
- Format your finished bulletin or projection in your own application (like Microsoft Word or PowerPoint).

Once you create a worship plan that works well for your congregation, you can save it for reuse. Updating a saved worship plan can be done in a matter of minutes and is convenient for planning multiple services.

Find hymns, songs, NRSV Bible texts and more

With several advanced search options, you can find specific texts in the Sundays and Seasons database in just seconds. Enjoy fully searchable versions of the complete NRSV Bible, plus thousands of hymns and songs. Hymn collections include Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Lutheran Book of Worship, With One Voice, This Far by Faith, and Libro de Liturgia y Cántico.

Comments invited on gender-based violence message

This fall ELCA members are invited to comment and offer their suggestions to the draft of an ELCA social message on gender-based violence, written in consultation with experts in the field. Member participation in this writing project is strongly encouraged and welcomed through an online forum from Sept. 15 to Nov. 15, 2014. The ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice requested a message on gender-based violence, a process authorized by the ELCA Church Council in October 2013.

sundaysandseasons.com



Browse the library of liturgical resources for ideas and inspiration

Discover inspiration in the expansive Sundays and Seasons online library. Content is curated from a diverse base of contributors including pastors, musicians, seminary professors and visual artists from North America and abroad. Explore categories that include lectionary readings, seasonal rites and essays, children's bulletins, ideas for the day, music suggestions and visual images.

Reflect on resources for this Sunday, or for an entire season

Sundays and Seasons automatically assigns the correct lectionary readings for any day you select, making it easy to quickly plan for this week or look ahead to the coming season. Create worship plans with confidence when you have access to the depth and breadth of supporting content, including introductions to the readings, full reading texts, lectionary notes and preaching helps.

Access content for special services and celebrations

Sundays and Seasons isn't just helpful for regular weekly worship — it provides the freedom and flexibility to plan for special services and occasions, including weddings, funerals, morning or evening prayer, and midweek Lenten services.

Worship planning made easy

Complement your Sundays and Seasons online subscription with the print edition for effective and efficient planning, preparation and production of all your worship needs. Learn more at sundaysandseasons.com.

It is possible to share questions and concerns about this work at any time. Emails can be addressed to womenandjustice@elca.org and regular mail to "Gender-Based Violence Writing Team" c/o Office of the Presiding Bishop, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. All communications will be kept, read and considered. Find more information online at www.ELCA.org/en/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Gender-Violence.

A new preaching resource from Sundays and Seasons

"Sundays and Seasons: Preaching" is a new, annual resource in the Sundays and Seasons family that considers the sermon in the context of the assembly gathered around word and sacrament on a particular day and within a particular season of the church year.

For 20 years, Sundays and Seasons has reliably been helping church leaders plan and guide worship. The new "Sundays and Seasons: Preaching" is very much a part of the family, bringing some of the same approaches and expanded helps to the fore.

Susan Briehl, associate director of the Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People of Faith, one of the many contributors to the new 2015 edition, writes, 'Sundays and Seasons: Preaching' invites those who preach to



attend to the word of God in the whole of worship, as the assembly hears and shares, tastes and sees, encounters and embodies Christ crucified and risen."

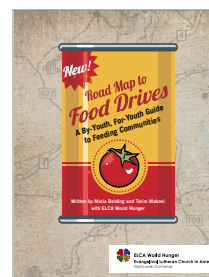
Writers for this first edition, drawn mostly from seminaries and congregations of the ELCA, encompass 13 contributors writing from a scholar's perspective, and 64

different pastors and bishops of varied backgrounds adding their helps for crafting compelling sermons.

Give new life to the preaching task with "Sundays and Seasons: Preaching," available October 2014. For more information, to request a free four-week sampler, or to pre-order the Year B 2015 edition, visit augzburgfortress.org/sundaysandseasons or call Sales and Service at 800-328-4648.

New ELCA World Hunger resources for youth, intergenerational use

"Road Map to Food Drives: A By-Youth, For-Youth Guide to Feeding Communities" is a new resource from ELCA World Hunger. Written by youth with input from community service providers, this resource is a step-by-step guide to planning, promoting and coordinating a successful, youth-led food drive for local pantries. You will find instructions for planning a drive, handouts for youth to lead the drive, information on best practices and much more. Download this new resource for free at www.ELCA.org/hunger/resources.



ELCA World Hunger has a new toolkit on the way. The "Race, Class and Hunger" toolkit, designed by a team of ministers, activists and educators in the ELCA, is a great way to start conversations about the many ways that race and class intersect with hunger and poverty. This intergenerational resource provides engaging activities appropriate for a vari-

ety of settings. It will be available soon at www.ELCA.org/hunger/resources. Click on the "Toolkits" tab for other great activity ideas for all ages.

An updated youth lock-in program is coming your way. In 2014, ELCA World Hun-

ger launched its new youth lock-in program, "Act 2Day 4 Tomorrow!" This program has been a huge success and is being updated for 2015. The program will include the familiar faith practices and service learning focus with all-new activities, games and reflections. Look for this in January 2015.





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Building photograph: Benjamin Benschneider
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