

NOVEMBER 2021

Trinity Lutheran Church

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Nicholas Freimark's Faith Statement

2021, Trinity Lutheran Church, Cass Lake, MN

I was baptized on April 4, 2007 at Aurora Lutheran Church in Owatonna, MN. I was born on September 27th 2006 so I don't remember anything about being baptized. Pa-pa said I lived in Bloomington, MN with my dad and mother at the time. We lived there until my dad and mother broke up and then my mother, brother and me went to live with pa-pa and EMA in Walker. We lived with them for about a year and then my mother found another place to live in Walker.

My mother married. He is a nice guy and we live in a house on Leech Lake that his mother and dad owned. We also have a dog and cat.

I started attending church on Sunday mornings with pa-pa at Trinity. When I got older my brother and I went to Sunday school at Trinity. I liked Sunday school because we always went out after church to Bemidji to eat and did something fun like bowling, or a movie. I did not like the Christmas programs we had to do each year, but they made me do it.

Then I started confirmation classes with Pastor Amanda. That I liked because she taught me about the Bible, and what it means to be a Christian. It was hard at times trying to understand what she was saying but she always answered my questions.

I know it is important to follow God. I do not do some things because I know God would not approve. I like helping people who need help. I have worked at the food shelf in Cass Lake and do other things like pick up trash from the ditches that other people throw out. I also record church

services, help with ushering and passing the collection plate. I like helping other people.

I believe what I want in the future is to join the military for the benefits and after that will hopefully get into Texas Tech, because it has the best engineering school in the country. If I can't get into that college I will either try a different college or reenlist.

God means a lot to me. He got me through COVID. He is like a light in a dark room always showing where to go. God will continue to be part of my life. I'll keep reading the bible and praying. I'll keep trying to go to church. If I get into a college I'll go to church every Sunday. I'll make sure to live by god's word. I want this to be my future.



Our Neighborhood

I don't know about you, but I cannot say that I am super familiar with the needs in our (Trinity's) neighborhood. Feeling nudged by the Spirit to learn more, a seed that started out as a simple conversation with Iris Sherer, the food shelf director, blossomed into a great opportunity! A handful of Cass Lake Community Leaders will share with us and others what those needs are, and possibly, potential ways we, various organizations in Cass Lake, can collaborate *together* to build relationships with and serve our neighbors. I don't know what will happen, but of this I have no doubts: the Spirit is moving and breathing. So please come, listen, and see where God might be leading us, together with others, on **Tues Nov 9 @ 2:30 pm in the Star Island Room at Cedar Lakes Casino.**

Thriving Beyond Covid

Tired? Wondering what's next? You're not alone. Come join us **Wed Oct 27, Nov 3, 10, & 17 at 2 pm** as we spend time together digging into scripture and exploring how God, our rock and refuge, is leading us to *Thrive Beyond Covid*. We will be using a bible study put together by Pr Jeff Linman.



**IT'S THAT
WONDERFUL
TIME OF THE
YEAR AGAIN**

**"NO", IT'S NOT
CHRISTMAS**

"IT'S TIME TO MAKE LEFSE"

We are making lefse on November 1st starting at 9 AM at Trinity Lutheran Church. This invitation goes out to everyone, those that "don't" know how, and those that "do" know how to make lefse. If you are inexperienced at making lefse, we have teachers that will show you the art of making award winning lefse. This is always a fun event, spending time with each other, sharing stories and memories. We have formed a new partnership with the Bemidji Sunrise Rotary club. They will sell our lefse at various establishments throughout the Bemidji area. 100% of the proceeds goes towards scholarships and youth organization in the greater Bemidji area. Everyone who participates in making lefse will get to take one package home with them. If you plan on attending this event please contact one of the two points of contacts to ensure we have enough lefse stations ready.

Connie Miller: cmmiller@paulbunyan.net 218-987-2711 or

OJ: mjensen@arvig.net 218-547-4823

Financials for Trinity

September	Month	YTD
Giving	\$ 6,686	\$ 87,637
Actual Expenses	\$ 9,565	\$ 96,568
Budgeted Expenses	\$10,031	\$102,057



**WELCA Meeting
Nov 8 at 12 Noon
Planning for the
Thankoffering Service**

November Service Groups

Date	Reader	Communion	Recorder
11/7	Joanna Withers	Joanna Withers	Open
11/14	Roy Blackwood	Laurie Buehler	Bev Larson
11/21 Thankoffering Service	WELCA	WELCA	Connie Miller
11/28	Patti Horazuk	Lauretta Jacobson	Howard Hirdler

Ushers for November: Jane & Lon Christianson

Advent

Where has the time gone?! As of the writing of this newsletter, we can't give you an exact time or what specifically the study will be, but as is tradition we will have opportunities on Wed evenings to gather together to learn and worship. We can tell you that we will be partnering with Aardahl again. We sincerely pray that you will carve out some time to nurture your relationship with God and fellow disciples. See upcoming bulletins for further information.

Advent wreath candle lighting and reading

1st Sun in Advent is Nov 28

Every year as part of our worship on Sundays in the season of Advent we invite folks to read a brief scripture text, pray and light the candles during a hymn. If interested, please let Pr Amanda know. Thank you!

Available in the Narthex

ADVENT CALENDAR

Celebrate the excitement, anticipation and wonder of Christ's birth with the 2021 ELCA World Hunger Advent calendar. Each day is a reminder of the Christ child for whom we wait and work, with hymns, prayers, Bible verses and information about how ELCA Good Gifts make a difference in the world.



love of Christ one goat, water well or school uniform at a time. We're introducing several new gifts this year, including:

**One month of internet connectivity
for students \$100**

\$105 Environmentally friendly cookstove



Living out our baptismal covenant...

During the **council retreat** we spent time thinking and talking about our call to: live among God's faithful people; hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper; proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed; serve all people, following the example of Jesus; and strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Sound familiar? They should as they are the faith practices of our baptismal covenant that we affirm, typically as adolescents. Even though we are adults and confirmation was long ago, it is good to be reminded not only of that which we have committed to, but also, and perhaps more importantly, the promises God has made, not just to us as individuals but as the church. We will continue to ask ourselves questions and explore what the Lord might be inviting us to do, all the while leaning into the Spirit who persistently breathes into and upon us. Thanks be to God.

ELCA Good Gifts

The gifts shown are just some of the gifts available. Catalogs are available in the church office with an



order form to complete. If you prefer to make the check out to Trinity, you may do so, but be sure to indicate "Good Gifts" in the memo section and what you want to purchase. Trinity will then send in the order.

New gifts added!

Even in a year when the needs can seem overwhelming, ELCA Good Gifts provide an easy way to make a real impact. Your gifts share the

Stewardship article

Impact Investing and Endowments by Mark Elsdon

(This article was first published on Mar 9, 2021
on <https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/?s=Impact+Investing+and+Endowments>)

What if the church had billions of dollars to put to work serving the needs of our communities and addressing the problems facing our world? What if we could engage people who have found the church irrelevant with the good news of Christ through new expressions of mission and ministry? We could improve disparities in health and educational outcomes between racial and ethnic communities by providing stable living environments in affordable housing. We could shift the trajectory of climate change by investing in a social enterprise that saves more rainforest trees as the business grows. We could eliminate food deserts in our most struggling neighborhoods by offering a resident owned grocery co-op. If only we had enough money in the church to do this sort of work! How amazing would that be?!

It turns out that we do. And we can.

As a pastor and nonprofit leader I know that many Christian churches and related organizations are facing an imminent crisis or are at least struggling. Attendance is down. Funding is harder to come by. Churches are closing, and buildings are being sold. Climate change, wealth inequality, and racial tension are massive problems facing our communities that the church is struggling to respond to. People are no longer drawn to traditional church services and programming in the ways they once were. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated most of these issues. We often feel broke and powerless to do much about it all. We continually try to do more with less. Fewer people. Fewer dollars. Fewer churches.

But the church is not broke. In the mainline church ecosystem, and in many parts of the wider big C “Church,” we have a lot of assets. A lot of capital. Incredibly valuable property in A-plus locations. Buildings. And massive endowments. We are not broke. In fact, the member organizations of the [Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#) (ICCR) have more than \$400 billion of invested assets under management (that is billion, with a capital B). It is simply not true that there is no money in the church. It is just that most of our

capital is invested in big corporations like Facebook, Apple, Amazon and others.

We give the bulk of our capital to those companies. They use it to grow their business. And they pay us a percentage back with dividends and increasing stock value. Sometimes we give those earnings away for mission. More often we use it to keep our churches and institutions open. Sometimes we just put it back into our endowments and foundations like the rich fool in Jesus’ parable who builds larger and larger barns to save up for a future that never comes.

For the most part we have invested our endowments to earn the highest rate of financial return with the lowest risk—building bigger and bigger barns. But is that really the highest and best use of church capital? **Isn’t the money we have been entrusted to by God meant to be used for redemptive and restorative work and not just to make the most money at the lowest risk?**

There is another way.

Our investment capital (the full 100% of what we own, not just the 5% financial return) could be used within the church and the communities our churches serve to change lives in the form of impact investments.

Impact investing has come to mean a particular kind of investing where money is proactively invested to produce social impact as well as financial returns. Companies and social enterprises using impact investment return a blended value to investors in the form of both financial returns *and* social and environmental impact.

Impact investing is more than just negatively screening out investments that are deemed harmful. And it is not giving money away, as in philanthropy. Impact investing is somewhere in the middle—it is both/and. It is both an investment that generates financial return *and* an attempt to make an intentional, positive impact in the world with capital. It is putting our billions of dollars to work building affordable housing, investing in the future of our planet, and creating grocery co-ops.

Individuals and organizations looking to get into impact investing can do so in a variety of ways:

1. **Ask investment advisors to seek positive impact investments in sectors that you are**

committed to supporting such as clean energy or wellness. Go beyond simply screening out companies and look to make intentional investments where you want to make a difference.

2. **Diversify some portion of an endowment into a different type of fund outside the traditional stock and bond investments.** One example is [Working Capital for Community Needs](#), an impact investing fund started by churches 30 years ago to provide microfinance funding to the working poor in Latin America. Funds like WCCN allow organizations to get into impact investing without having to do all the due diligence and research themselves directly.

3. **Make a very targeted investment in a church-affiliated social enterprise such as affordable housing, co-working, or some other venture.** I have been intimately involved in just such a project for the past sixteen years at [Pres House](#) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We built a seven story, \$17 million [student housing facility](#) for 240 students right in the heart of the University of Wisconsin-Madison on church-owned land. The PCUSA Synod of Lakes and Prairies provided some of the financing for the project by moving one quarter of their \$10 million endowment out of traditional investments and into an impact investment in Pres House. Their investment provides us with stable capital, while we provide them with a return on their investment that they in turn use for their programming. And [thousands of students at the University of Wisconsin have been served by the church](#). It has been a win-win-win. Their impact investment produces a triple-bottom-line return.

4. **Create an investment or loan fund to support local entrepreneurs in your community or further a cause for justice that is meaningful to you.** One example would be to set aside 10% of an endowment to invest solely in businesses or enterprises owned or led by people of color. For organizations whose endowments are connected to slavery or the theft of indigenous land, a decision like this could serve as a limited form of reparations.

This last suggestion brings forth an important point. Impact investing and traditional investing are not mutually exclusive. You can do both. Many organizations begin their foray into impact investing by starting with a percentage of their total portfolio, such as 10% (but take note, many endowments that start down this road end up eventually moving 100% of their capital into impact investments!). What is most important is that we start somewhere.

Yes, this use of our capital will require thinking differently. It may involve taking greater risks with our endowments. But it has the potential to radically transform our communities. There is no better time for us to dream big and take some risks. The needs are great, the opportunities, even greater. And the resources are there.



Tip

According to the U.S. Geological Society, some 19 million tons of salt (mainly

sodium chloride) are spread on U.S. roads and other impervious surfaces, causing long-term environmental hazards. Salt leaches heavy metals from roads, both of which infiltrate soil and water, killing plants and aquatic life. Sodium chloride also corrodes bridges, disrupts the migration of aquatic organisms, and benefits invasive species that are adaptable to higher salinity levels. A 2017 study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found that keeping lakes free of salt is critically important for drinking water, fisheries, recreation, irrigation and aquatic habitat. On land, salt from car sprays and snowplows can cause forest mortality up to 300 feet from the road by injuring foliage or tree root systems. **YOU CAN HELP** by shoveling sidewalks early and often so snow and ice won't become packed, applying salt strategically (only on steps and key pathways), using more eco-friendly de-icers such as beet juice or alfalfa meal, and encouraging your local government to reduce road salt application.

Mental Health Corner

Suicide, Mental Health, and the Church *(From <https://suicidepreventionministry.org/>)*

In 2018, over 46,000 people took their own life in the United States, a mortality rate of 14.2 for every 100,000 people. According to the 2018 General Social Survey, about 40% of American adults claim to go to some religious service at least once per month, or around 100 million people. Including children and youth, the total is 130 million. Though no formal studies have been conducted on the prevalence of suicide in faith communities, we could extrapolate that 14,200 people within faith communities complete suicide every year, based on the above figures and assuming little deviation from the general population.

Indeed, not even clergy are immune to worldly ills. An alarming number of pastors have taken their own lives in recent years. An examination of deaths by profession of the National Occupational Mortality Surveillance database reveals that the prevalence of suicide among black clergy and white female clergy members is greater than the average of all occupations. The reasons are numerous and multifaceted. But despite the increase in suicides nationally, and the fact that religious beliefs alone often cannot resolve mental health concerns, many churches remain silent on the issues of suicide and mental health. Additionally, only 41% of pastors nationwide have received training to assist someone dealing with suicidal thoughts.

Suicide is one the most stigmatized of all human activities – perhaps even more stigmatized than murder or slavery. Stigma can be defined as a combination of fear and ignorance. Without knowing what to say or how to be present to those who are in distress, we act against our instincts out of fear and uncertainty. We might ignore warning signs or avoid overt appeals for help.

Traditionally, the church taught that taking one's own life is a grave sin. Where the afterlife is concerned, many have believed that the result of suicide is an eternity separated from God. Moreover, mental illness is often seen as a sign of weak faith, and that a person simply needs to "get right with God." Such views divide the body of Christ and border on idolatry because they glorify individual righteousness, further compounding the stigma of mental illness in faith communities. More recently, such views have been challenged on theological grounds, yielding unique opportunities for spiritual healing and religious education.

Clearly, it is critical that religious leaders and laity alike receive proper training on how to handle individual conversations about mental health and suicide, as well as how religion and spirituality can enhance our mutual care and support in an age where mental illnesses are accepted as legitimate medical issues.



Rebuilding Bethany for Future Generations - LSS-MN

Lutheran Social Service in Duluth has a long and proud history of serving kids. We trace our history to Bethany Children's Home in Duluth in 1916—which opened in partnership with local congregations. For over 100 years, Lutheran Social Service has provided safe shelter for children when a parent's life has been disrupted by a crisis – including unforeseen events, such as a job or home loss, divorce, illness, or death.

To build on this important work, LSS is thrilled to be planning a new facility in Duluth by expanding family services to support family resiliency, stability and child well-being. **But we need your help. Could you make a gift to help us build this new resource in our community?**

The new facility will be a tremendous asset to the community—providing safe shelter for children alongside prevention and early intervention support for families. A broad array of services are planned, including:

- Emergency care for children when their parents are unable to provide care
- Prevention and early intervention services for families
- Parent coaching
- Behavioral health
- Family visitation
- Reunification support
- Referral to other helpful community services

The new space will also replace the current LSS Bethany Crisis Shelter in Morgan Park that has been serving children since the 1970s and was originally designed as a split-level, single-family home. After five decades in our current space, new space is greatly needed to provide greater flexibility to effectively address the needs of the youth we serve and meet current building standards.

With your generosity, expanded services for children and families at Bethany will meet the needs of future

generations of northeastern Minnesota's children and families and strengthen our community for years to come.

[Please give now.](https://www.lssmn.org/get-involved/donate/bethany) <https://www.lssmn.org/get-involved/donate/bethany>

Thank you for caring about children and families in our community!

For more information:

Kathryn Tiede

Kathryn.Tiede@lssmn.org

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Our Companion Synod Relationship with the Ingrian Lutheran Church in Russia – “So, what now?”

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR) has a long history, 410 years to be exact! Founded in 1611, the ELCIR flourished and found favor with the Russian government, in part because of its strong diaconal ministries...until the Communist Revolution in 1917 and subsequent decimation of the ELCIR. But, fast forward toward the end of the communist era: the first Ingrian Lutheran congregation allowed to register and function legally occurred in 1970 and the first Bishop, Arri Kugappi, was installed in 1992 — the hard process of rebuilding the ELCIR slowly began.

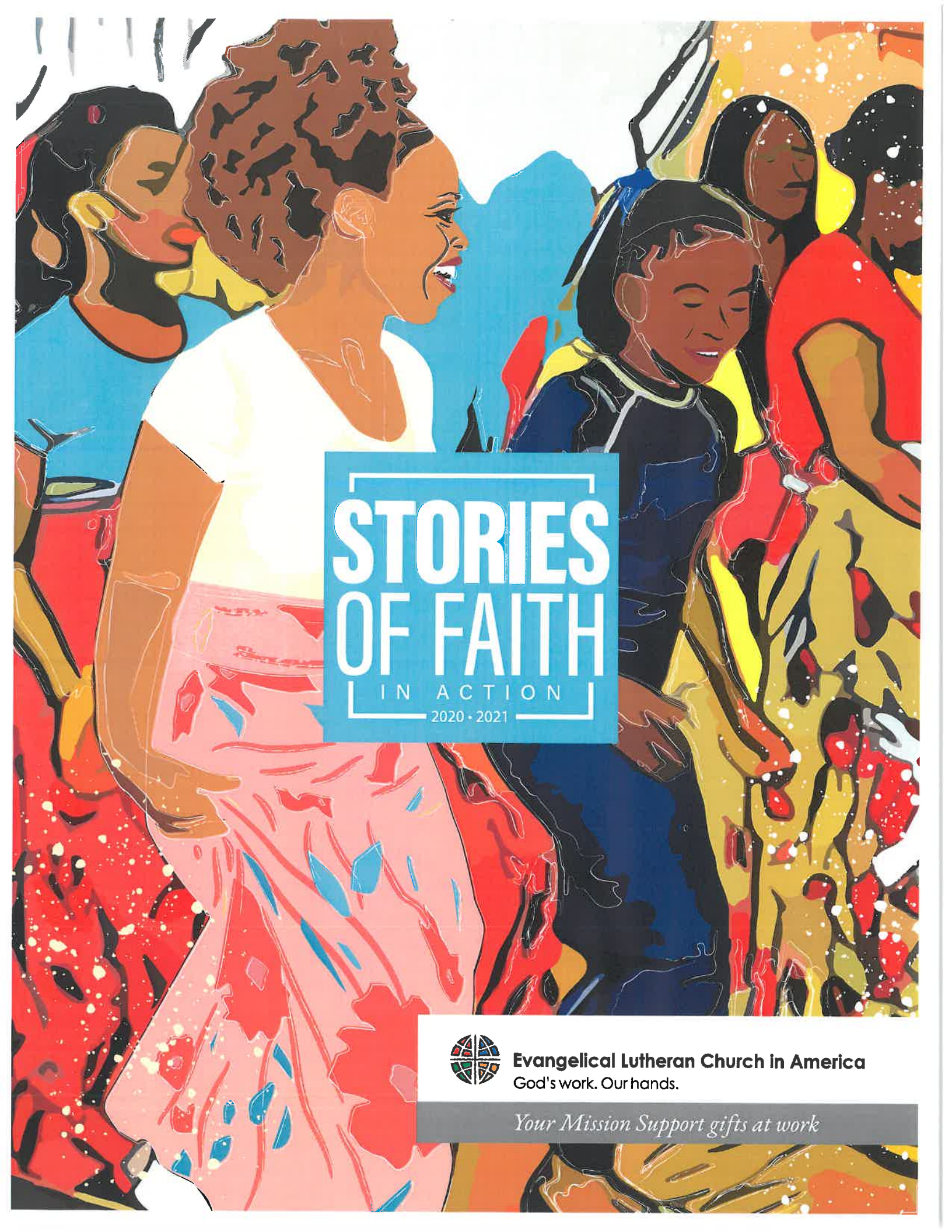
Accompaniment in ministry. Just think of the enormous challenge: very few pastors, minuscule financial resources for staff salary and church rebuilding; absence of trained laity for Sunday School, diaconal outreach, evangelism. But, with support from countries

outside of Russia, the process of the Ingrian Lutheran church becoming a Spirit-filled viable community of faith sharing the Gospel in Word and Deed among the Russian people began to take shape. Our Northeastern Minnesota Synod established a Companion Synod relationship with the ELCIR in 2002 and even prior to that has been privileged to accompany the ELCIR in their ministry of rebuilding in many exciting and challenging ways: e.g., in the past nineteen years ≈ twenty mission groups have participated in Friendship English Language Bible Camps, Vacation Bible School programs, and other ELCIR events in Russia; members of our Synod have hosted relationship-building visits by eight different delegations from the ELCIR; some churches established Friendship Congregation Relationships; three new church buildings have been built in part or as a result of our partnering relationship — in Petrozavodsk and Laskela in the Karelia Deanery and in Birk in the Ural Deanery; and, as a result of exchange visits, wonderful new relationships and deepened faith have been forged. We hear repeatedly: “Please come, it is so helpful and encouraging for us!” These relationships and the faith of our Russian sisters and brothers in Christ have also deeply encouraged members and congregations in our synod.

So, what now? We need to rebuild! This ministry really thrives on a steady stream of exchange visits and interactions — the pandemic has not been helpful! But we are planning and praying about post-pandemic initiatives. For example: Would you be interested in providing leadership as a member of the ELCIR Companion Synod Task Force -- an infusion of new members with energy and new ideas would be terrific? Are you interested in joining a group headed to the ELCIR in Russia for a relationship-building, encouraging, and learning visit? Would you like to set up a writing/texting/video faith- and life-sharing relationship? Might your church be interested in encouraging the opportunity to contribute funding for Vision Petrozavodsk, or a church building project in Cheboksary, or the project of rebuilding the St. Ann's church in St. Petersburg? There are many ways to be creatively involved—the Spirit will guide, helping to bring the Good News to many in Russia who are searching for hope and who find our Lutheran expression of faith meaningful.

For more detailed information see <http://www.nemnsynod.org/ingria-russia.html> or contact the Synod office at 218-724-4424

Paul Anderson and the Northeastern Minnesota Synod/ELCIR Companion Synod Task Force



**STORIES
OF FAITH**
IN ACTION
2020 • 2021



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

Your Mission Support gifts at work



MANY LANGUAGES, ONE GROWING CHURCH

When God spoke to Jean Paul Kisuku, Kisuku knew he had to listen.

While living in the Congo, Kisuku spread the gospel through prayer groups with fellow Congolese and neighbors in nearby Uganda. After immigrating to the United States and settling in Maryland, he stepped away from ministry to focus on secular work to support his family.

God had other plans.

Asked about his return to ministry, Kisuku said, "God is moving you to do his work, and if you say 'yes' you will be OK."

Kisuku and his family were resettled by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) and Christ Lutheran Church, Baltimore. Seeing how the congregation welcomed newcomers, Kisuku reached out to Christ's associate pastor, Amsalu Geleta, and volunteered to conduct a prayer service there in Swahili, the native language of Congo.

"He gathered five families for the first day in October 2016," said Geleta, who now serves as executive assistant to the bishop and director for evangelical mission in the Delaware-Maryland Synod. "He's a wonderful evangelist, and he reached out to many people who speak Swahili, French, Lingala — new arrivals, most of them."

That prayer service has evolved to become Mountain of God Evangelical International Church, a new congregation bolstered by grants from the ELCA churchwide

organization and the Delaware-Maryland Synod that were funded by Mission Support.

Mountain of God's membership now boasts over 150 people. Geleta believes the growth has been inspiring for the synod.

Much of that growth can be attributed to Kisuku's determination to bring God's word to as many African-descent people as possible. Many prospective members lacked transportation, so Kisuku began driving them to and from church.

"THE PARTICIPATION OF EVERYONE HELPS PLANT AND NURTURE IT TO MAKE IT GROW. AND THE SPIRIT OF EVANGELISM TO THE CHURCH REVIVES US ALL."

"How can one ministry be born or stand by itself?" Geleta said. "The participation of everyone helps plant and nurture it to make it grow. And the spirit of evangelism to the church revives us all."

To watch a video of this ministry, visit ELCA.org/SOFIA.

Thank you for your generous gifts of Mission Support, which made this story of faith in action possible. Mission Support is the portion of your offering your congregation shares with your synod, and your synod shares with the churchwide organization. To learn more, visit ELCA.org/SOFIA.

November 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesd	Wednesd	Thurs	Friday	Satur
	1 9am Lefsa Making 9am Women's Bible Study 10am Crafters Pastor's Day Off	2	3 12:30pm Board of Worship & Education 2pm Thriving Beyond Covid Bible Study	4	5	6
7 In-person Worship 10:30am (Daylight Savings ends) online at TLCcasslake.com & Facebook All Saints Day	8 9am Women's Bible Study 10am Crafters 12 Noon WELCA Meeting Pastor's Day Off	9 2:30pm Cass Lake Community Gathering	10 CLFS 9-3 12:45pm Board of Trustees 2pm Thriving Beyond Covid Bible Study	11 Veterans Day	12	13
14 In-person Worship 10:30am 9:30am Sun School online at TLCcasslake.com & Facebook	15 9am Women's Bible Study 10am Crafters Pastor's Day Off	16	17 CLFS 9-3 2pm Thriving Beyond Covid Bible Study 3:30pm Council	18	19	20 Pastor's Study Day
21 In-person Worship 10:30am Thankoffering Service online at TLCcasslake.com & Facebook	22 9am Women's Bible Study 10am Crafters	23	24 CLFS 9-3 Pastor's Day Off	25 Thanksgiving Day	26 Pastor's Vacation Day	27
28 In-person Worship 10:30am 1st Sunday in Advent online at TLCcasslake.com & Facebook	29 9am Women's Bible Study 10am Crafters Pastor's Day Off 12-3pm Bemidji Food Shelf	30	Pr Amanda is switching her day off the week of Thanksgiving to Wed Nov 24 and is taking a vacation day Fri Nov 26. If, however, you have a pastoral emergency, please contact her: 218-751-2841			