

2018

Bulletin of Reports

Part 2



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Bulletin of Reports

The Bulletin of Reports is being electronically presented in two parts: Part 1 contains all those documents that voting members will need to have in front of them as they conduct the assembly's business, such as the agenda, resolutions and memorials, nominations, the proposed budget, etc. In an effort to go green and be good stewards of the gifts God has given us, the Bulletin of Reports is available on the synod's website, www.demdsynod.org, as of May 1, 2018. Part 2 of the Bulletin of Reports contains important information that the assembly needs for background information and to hold the officers, Synod Council and related ministries accountable. It is not information, however, that the assembly will act upon. If you plan to access information electronically, please know that high speed internet access is available in the assembly hall. We are working hard to make sure to have reliable Wi-Fi access throughout our meeting space. However, we have run into problems in the past and cannot guarantee service.

Office of the Bishop

Executive Assistant to the Bishop/DEM, The Rev. Dr. Amsalu T. Geleta

“Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! For He has done marvelous things” (Psalm 98: 1)

It has been privilege to serve as an Executive Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission for our synod. This past year I have had opportunity to preach and teach throughout our synod and walk with new and renewing congregations. God is actively mobilizing our Synod to do new things, to change lives, to transform communities, and to renew the church for the sake of the world. Few highlights from the year includes:

I. NEW STARTS—in the last few years we have started three new congregations. Global Peace Multicultural Fellowship served by the Rev. Dr. Surekha Nelavala, the Slate project an online and face to face community that meets in the Episcopal Cathedral and currently served by Presbyterian clergy Rev. Jennifer De Francisco, and the church on the Square, a joint mission start with the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland and served by Father James Hamilton. This past year our synod boldly moved to start five new ministries:

A. Mountain of God International Church-- an African National Ministry that meets at Christ Inner Harbor and served by Jean Paul Makano Kisuku.

B. Beloved Community Multicultural Church—an a Asian Ministry that meets at First Ellicott Lutheran and served by the Rev. Dr. Surekha Nelavala

C. The Lauraville Mission (Rise Up)- a mission exploration in the Lauraville neighborhood of Baltimore City. This mission exploration is done by the Rev. Emily Scott.

D. Mara Evangelical– An exploration to build relationship with the Mara Evangelical Church that meets at Christ Lutheran Church in Catonsville serve by Pastor Cho U.

E. A possible mission start exploration in Crisfield, Somerset County. Building on our Lutheran witness through disaster response we are exploring what God is calling us to do next. This part time mission exploration is done by the Rev. Paula Cumby.

II. REDEVELOPMENT – I have been working with the following congregations that are engaged in intentional redevelopment process: New Light Dundalk, Salem South Baltimore, All Saints, Peoples Community Church, the Community of St Dysmas, Christ Lutheran Catonsville, and Lord of Life Edgewood.

III. CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY AND PARTNERSHIP—God is up to something in our Synod. Doing church the way we have been doing before needs tweaking. This past year several partnership conversations took place—Twice among Westminster Conference Congregations and twice in Southern Shore, once in Cumberland at St Luke, and twice in northern Baltimore (between St Andrew and St Luke). Congregations are exploring ways in which they can collaborate to do ministry.

IV. MINISTRY CONSULTATION, REVIEWS AND AFFIRMATION—in collaboration with the churchwide and synodical review teams we have done seven congregational ministry consultations and three ministry (affirmation) reviews.

V. LEADERSHIP SUPPORT – I provide an ongoing support to new and renewing congregation pastors, mission developers. This past year seven person attended ELCA Mission Developers training. Together with our ecumenical partner the Rev. Scott Slater, Canon for Ordinary Episcopal Diocese of Maryland we support our join mission pastor to streamline reporting requirements and maximize ministry capacity.

VI. DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM—I also assisted in organizing our Synodical Discipleship Table. The assembly will get an opportunity to hear the work of the team. I also assist congregation as an evangelism resource person.

VII. CANDIDACY – I provide support to candidate discerning a call and to Candidacy Committee of our Synod.

My gratitude to our bishop for this incredible opportunity to serve alongside him. I thank God for synod staff, our mission developers, discipleship team, synod council, and for all of you gifted leaders of our synod for an incredible ministry year we had and look forward to together.

Assistant to the Bishop, The Rev. Robin Simpson-Litton

“Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.”

Mark 16:6-7

This has most certainly been the year of “Go, tell!” I have witnessed our Easter call being lived out this past year all throughout the Western Cluster of our synod (Westminster, Frederick, Washington and Allegany Conferences). There is an energy and an enthusiasm for ministry and mission that has been expressed in a mountain of ways.

Our first cooperative, the Washington County Cooperative Lutheran Ministry was formed through the congregations of Mount Zion- Rohrsersville, St. Matthew-Beaver Creek and St Peter-Keedysville and called their first pastor, Regina Beard. At the time of this writing, there are 7 separate shared-ministry consultations occurring with nearly 20 churches participating. These conversations are certainly Holy Spirit-inspired and are bringing hope and energy back to many of our smaller congregations. These congregations have a lot of “Go-tell” in them as they proclaim the Gospel in their particular setting.

There were four other new calls in the western cluster: St. John’s – Cumberland called Rev. Vicki Hamel, Trinity – Boonsboro called Rev. Robert Lewis, St. Paul’s – Funkstown called Rev. Lee Brumback, and Trinity – Deer Park called Melissa Helfer to be their pastor. Melissa will be ordained at an upcoming date. I placed 13 pastors in some form of interim/term call positions.

I was the sponsoring pastor for Matt Zemanick from Holy Spirit LC. His ordination was a celebration from a community that raised up their first leader for Word and Sacrament ministry.

It looks like a “go-tell” type of year ahead! Me, with the help of my little blue Prius also heard the word “go” as we currently have 31 congregations in some form of transition. And I assisted the bishop in several misconduct cases.

I am loving the opportunity to visit so many churches in the western cluster. I thank the pastors, deacons and lay leaders who have provided support and assistance as I have traveled from Sykesville to Frostburg; Gettysburg to Brunswick...and all parts in between. May God continue to bless us as we “go-tell” the story of Christ’ love!

Assistant to the Bishop, The Rev. Bettye Wolinski

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be obvious to everyone. The Lord is near...." Philippians 4: 4-5

The position of Assistant to the Bishop for the Easter Cluster of our Synod has certainly given me a reason to rejoice. Over the past 10 months the good people of God's church have been involved with a number of transitions within congregations. I take this time now in my report to share those "God moments".

Spirit of Life Lutheran church in Wilmington and Zion Lutheran Church are in the

process of consolidating their ministries to form new life for all of God's people in the form of Unity Lutheran Church.

In October Faith In Salisbury welcomed the Rev Gary Steigler as interim pastor for one year. We give thanks to the retired Eastern shore pastors who offered faithful pastoral care to the people of Faith for one year prior to Rev. Steigler's appointment.

The Rev Barry Laird has been serving as interim pastor at Salem in Jarrettsville since last September as they continue to seek God's will for their ministry.

Rev. Greg Johnson has been appointed to serve Tree of Life in Odessa Delaware as interim pastor for the next one to two years. Pastor Greg was instrumental in the formation of and care of this congregation when it began over twenty years ago.

Grace of God in Millsboro Delaware has been receiving pastoral care and guidance from Rev. Harry "Skip" McComas since November of 2017.

St. Paul's in Cordova is in the process of discerning an interim pastor.

St. Philip's in Wilmington will be welcoming Vicar John Nelson to a newly created part time associate pastor position. He will be working along side senior pastor Rev. Patrick Downes. John's ordination will be on May 12th.

Rev. Kathy Ierien and the folks at Good Shepherd in Wilmington welcomed the Rev. Sue Loney into the role of part time associate pastor in January.

St. Peter's in Ocean City will be welcoming the Rev Frank Harpster as the new full time senior pastor as of May.

Last but not least it is important to note the work of four southern shore churches - Faith in Salisbury, Grace of God, Community Lutheran and St. Peter's in Ocean City. These congregation have been gathering together to prayerfully commit themselves to discern how their ministries intersect now and how they will be able to share the gospel message and ministry intentionally in the future.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4: 6-8

**Assistant to the Bishop for Communications, Youth + Family Ministry,
Deacon Julie Stecker**

First, I'll put on my Communications hat: I am so delighted to have a Communications Team in place! Deacon Cindy Ranker is a thoughtful and diligent team leader, and has helped us focus our goals so that we can keep you up to date on what is happening in our synod, and continue to improve our ability to connect you with the resources we offer. We are currently working with a web design company to overhaul our website, making it more user-friendly and responsive to the needs of our synod. We are also still seeking Congregational Connectors for many of our congregations, to help facilitate communication between the synod office and congregations. If you aren't sure whether or not your congregation has a Connector, please email me at jstecker@demdsynod.org.

Now for Youth + Family Ministry! This year, our Lutheran Youth Organization had a record 67 members. These incredible young people (and their adult mentors) devote countless hours to our work as the LYO, learning leadership skills to be used in their churches and in other communities, and preparing to lead at our annual youth events: FreeRide, RoadTrip, Transformers, and the High School Leadership Event. I have always had hopes and dreams for what the church could be, but I have never witnessed them being lived out in the way I do among the young people in our synod. The opportunity I have had to work with this outstanding team over the past year has reminded me over and over again that young people are not the future of the church, they are the now, and they are leading us where the church must go to be a place of hope, grace, and love for the world around us.

As Bishop Gohl stated early in his call as our Bishop, our synod has a long history of doing excellent ministry among middle and high school youth - and it is important to expand our age range. I am so grateful for our synod's Practice Discipleship community, which has flourished over the past several years to offer resources, events, and fellowship for young adults (ages 18-30ish). The PD team has facilitated excellent retreats and social gatherings for young adults who are out of high school, and helps them think about what discipleship looks like in the 21st century. Now, our synod will also be offering faith formation opportunities for those in grades 3-5 through the work of our LYO Elementary Team. This newly-created team will work together to host two events: an Advent family event hosted on one day in three locations across our synod, and an overnight retreat at Mar-Lu-Ridge in the spring. Look for more information about these events in the coming months, and encourage your high school students with gifts for working with young children to apply for the LYO Elementary Team!

In the coming year, I am also looking forward to connecting more with our synodical youth workers, so that we can network and learn with one another, share joys, concerns, and best practices, and strengthen ministry among young people in Delaware and Maryland. If your congregation has someone working with young people, please have them send me an email at jstecker@demdsynod.org so I can include them in our conversations.

And, of course, I can't forget to mention the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston this summer! Our synod will have nearly 600 people present at the Gathering, including youth participants, adult leaders, volunteers, and event staff. Please pray for everyone taking part in the Gathering, and remember that you can follow along at home on social media!

Associate for Generosity, Karen Johnson Kretschmann

I write to you with joy, hope, and anticipation for our continued work together. Since I started my part-time position almost a year ago as the Delaware-Maryland Synod Associate for Generosity, I have had the honor to travel and connect with so many of our congregations and I am regularly astonished by the generosity and faithfulness of the people of our synod. My position allows me to live out and celebrate gratitude, talents, abundance, blessings, gifts, and opportunities that grow our faith together.

First, I want to thank each congregation for their 2017 Mission Support. These funds continue to support over 65 youth leaders through our Lutheran Youth Organization and host incredible middle school and high school retreats annually, assist in serving over 700 youth and leaders at Mar-lu-Ridge, assure faith formation at our five campus ministries and support future leaders in our church through candidacy and our seminaries. Additionally, we have been able to begin five new mission starts including three ethnic specific ministries touching new communities from Asia and West Africa, collaborate with conferences to bring congregations together in missional conversations to discern partnership ministry, and offer guidance and insight into issues of race, hunger, care for creation, incarceration, health, inclusion and community empowerment. Your support also allows your synod staff to work along side our congregations to support transitions and communicate stories and best practices in ministry, and of course collaborate with the ELCA to make Jesus known throughout our world. Let me also say how much I appreciate the 2018 Intents of Mission Support we have received; every commitment makes a difference in planning the work we do together.

Much of this year has been a time of visioning, planning and experimenting. Our synod

Generosity Team has added new engaged members and together we completed a 18-month Strategic Plan guided by the vision: “As interrelated communities of faith called to Christ centered living, we celebrate God’s grace by abundantly sharing our blessings and gifts locally and globally.” Our plan has nine ambitious strategic initiatives focused on; 1. Connect with congregations to build connections, provide thanks and improve communication; 2. Gather and share successful stewardship practices from throughout our synod and church; 3. Customize a Call to Offering devotion; 4. Create multi-media generosity workshops; 5. Offer an annual gathering for councils, treasurers, and stewardship leaders; 6. Develop a synod Generosity Resource Mentor team; 7. Promote inter-generational avenues for growing generosity; 8. Develop an interactive synod generosity webpage; and 9. Accompany, equip and support our congregations in living out generosity in giving, pledging and mission support. Please pray for us in this work we have set forth to accomplish with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, let me share a few specifics what I’ve been doing with my time. I have had Generosity conversations with over 25 congregations including facilitating leadership retreats, attending stewardship team meetings, preaching for services, providing synod greeting at worship, meeting with Pastors and Stewardship Chairs or Council Presidents, facilitating generosity workshops. I have also been writing articles and letters to thank and share best practices and attending a number of conference meetings and synod leadership events so I can connect with more of our leaders across our synod. I am excited to share that this spring we partnered with LEAD and the Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod to submit a stewardship grant to create a variety of stewardship modules both face-to-face and online to empower First Call Pastors, LEAD congregations and Strategic Stewardship Leaders across our congregations; we are hopeful we will be funded! Almost weekly I work closely working with Financial Secretary, Synod Treasurer and staff to monitor giving trends, pledge variance and research alternate giving methods. Through this partnership I too work closely with our Forward in Faith Team to stay on top of status of our campaign. I am also honored to serve on our ELCA Mission Support and Stewardship Table and have gotten opportunities to take leadership in initiatives and take many of our Generosity Team to national generosity conferences. In closing, for anyone who has met with me about stewardship, you have heard me proclaim the importance of understanding our purpose in God’s mission and telling our faith stories. One of the ways I encourage this is to have a Narrative Spending Plan. I’ve been working on one for our synod grounded in the ways of Discipleship, Connectedness, Communication and Leadership that strengthen our work as we are Called Forward Together. Stop by the Generosity Team table at assembly to get our first attempt at a synod plan and talk with us about how you as a congregation can introduce this faith practice into your work! Thank you for offering me this

opportunity to partner with you, honoring my experiences, challenging me to seek new learning, and walking along with me in this journey with Jesus Christ!

Audit

Gary Kulik, Chair of the Finance Committee

Over the past several months, we have focused on strengthening the Finance Committee to make it more responsive to the long-term needs of the synod. We have added members with a greater range of financial and real estate expertise. We have chosen to take a larger role in budget preparation and we are proposing a change in the Synod's Constitution to make the Budget Development Committee a sub-committee of the Finance Committee.

We have remained focused on our core responsibilities to 1) manage the Synod's investments; 2) oversee the office of the treasurer; 3) review the Synod's insurance; and 4) ensure a proper yearly audit.

We intend to be an occasional presence at Synod Council meetings to advise and assist on all matters financial, including the sale of churches, grants and loans, and the Synod budget. We are working more closely with the treasurer's office to monitor cash balances, and we continue to work closely with the bishop and Synod Council leadership.

After several years of faithful work as the chair of the committee, Caroline Brocato has chosen to step down while remaining a member of the committee. We thank her for her service.

**Delaware – Maryland Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Inc.**

**Report on Examination of Financial Statements – Modified Cash Basis
For the Fiscal Years Ended January 31, 2018 and 2017**

KLOSTERMAN & ASSOCIATES
Certified Public Accountants

To the Synod Council
Delaware – Maryland Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Inc.
Baltimore, Maryland

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Delaware – Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Inc. (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of assets, liabilities, and net assets – modified cash basis as of January 31, 2018 and 2017, and the related statements of support, revenue, expenses and changes in net asset balances – modified cash basis, statement of functional expenses – modified cash basis, and cash flows – modified cash basis for the fiscal years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting as described in Note 1; this includes determining that the modified cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of the financial statements in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

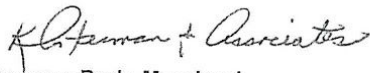
We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the assets, liabilities and net assets – modified cash basis of the Delaware – Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Inc. as of January 31, 2018 and 2017, and its statement of support, revenue, expenses and changes in net asset balances – modified cash basis, statement of functional expenses – modified cash basis, and its statement of cash flows – modified cash basis for the fiscal years then ended, in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting as described in note 1.

Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.



Severna Park, Maryland
April 22, 2018

**DELAWARE - MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS -
MODIFIED CASH BASIS
January 31, 2018 and 2017**

| | <u>2018</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| <u>ASSETS</u> | | |
| Current Assets | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents (Note 2) | \$ 383,611 | \$ 243,383 |
| Total current assets | <u>383,611</u> | <u>243,383</u> |
| Long-term investments, at market value | | |
| Schwab Managed Account (Note 10) | 2,553,813 | 2,191,855 |
| Mission Investment Fund | <u>150,526</u> | <u>301,037</u> |
| Total long-term investments (Note 1) | <u>2,704,339</u> | <u>2,492,892</u> |
| Property and equipment at cost, less accumulated depreciation (Notes 1 & 3) | <u>70,253</u> | <u>83,940</u> |
| Other assets | | |
| Other assets | 14,985 | 14,974 |
| Mission Fund Loans | <u>43,543</u> | <u>90,370</u> |
| Total other assets | <u>58,528</u> | <u>105,344</u> |
| Total assets | <u>\$ 3,216,731</u> | <u>\$ 2,925,559</u> |
| COMMITMENTS (Note 8) | | |
| <u>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</u> | | |
| <u>NET ASSETS</u> | | |
| Unrestricted assets | \$ 3,142,203 | \$ 2,840,902 |
| Temporarily restricted assets | <u>74,528</u> | <u>84,657</u> |
| Total net assets | <u>3,216,731</u> | <u>2,925,559</u> |
| Total liabilities and net assets | <u>\$ 3,216,731</u> | <u>\$ 2,925,559</u> |

See accompanying notes.

**DELAWARE - MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
STATEMENT OF SUPPORT, REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND
CHANGES IN NET ASSET BALANCES - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
For the Fiscal Years Ended January 31, 2018 and 2017**

| | <u>2018</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS | | |
| Unrestricted revenues and gains | | |
| Contributions - proportionate share | \$ 1,859,871 | \$ 1,907,795 |
| Contributions - other | 12,911 | 46,363 |
| Contributions - grants & subsidies | 19,500 | 22,704 |
| Contributions - designated giving | 307,679 | 115,247 |
| Contributions - designated funds | 90,329 | 88,228 |
| Special fundraising receipts | 561,202 | 89,742 |
| Event receipts | 103,502 | 136,269 |
| Youth event receipts | 65,964 | 118,102 |
| Investment income | 56,209 | 52,603 |
| Realized gain on investments | 47,623 | 48,590 |
| Unrealized gain on investments | <u>200,456</u> | <u>187,697</u> |
| Total unrestricted revenues and gains | 3,325,246 | 2,813,340 |
| Net assets released from restrictions | <u>9,450</u> | <u>23,519</u> |
| Total unrestricted revenues, gains/other support | 3,334,696 | 2,836,859 |
| Expenses | <u>(3,033,395)</u> | <u>(2,732,623)</u> |
| Increase in unrestricted assets | <u>301,301</u> | <u>104,236</u> |
| TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED ASSETS | | |
| Contributions - pass-thru receipts | 187,087 | 182,729 |
| Contributions - restricted use receipts | 9,561 | 19,920 |
| Investment income | 810 | - |
| Net assets released from restrictions | | |
| Pass through payments | (187,087) | (182,729) |
| Restrictions satisfied by payments | (11,050) | (189,810) |
| Released from restriction | <u>(9,450)</u> | <u>(23,519)</u> |
| Decrease in temporary restricted net assets | <u>(10,129)</u> | <u>(193,409)</u> |
| Increase (decrease) in total net assets | 291,172 | (89,173) |
| Net assets, beginning of year | <u>2,925,559</u> | <u>3,014,732</u> |
| Net assets, end of year | <u>\$ 3,216,731</u> | <u>\$ 2,925,559</u> |

See accompanying notes.

DELAWARE - MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
For the Fiscal Years Ended January 31, 2018 and 2017

| | <u>2018</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATIONS | | |
| Contributions - proportionate share | \$ 1,859,871 | \$ 1,907,795 |
| Contributions - other | 12,794 | 50,069 |
| Contributions - grants & subsidies | 19,500 | 22,704 |
| Contributions - designated giving | 307,679 | 115,247 |
| Contributions - designated funds | 90,329 | 91,998 |
| Special fundraising receipts | 561,202 | 89,742 |
| Event receipts | 103,502 | 136,269 |
| Youth Event receipts | 65,964 | 118,102 |
| Restricted use receipts | 196,648 | 202,649 |
| Partnership with ELCA | (929,934) | (953,898) |
| Discipleship | (62,680) | (66,190) |
| Connectedness | (146,645) | (167,160) |
| Communications | (24,932) | (10,424) |
| Leadership | (89,551) | (91,659) |
| Youth Events expense | (86,559) | (131,733) |
| Designated Fund disbursements | (72,420) | (76,380) |
| Designated Giving disbursements | (320,992) | (196,823) |
| Fundraising disbursements | (238,849) | (63,588) |
| Event expenses | (96,051) | (114,300) |
| Staff expenses | (609,333) | (570,131) |
| Synod operations | (326,071) | (260,361) |
| Restricted use payments | (198,137) | (372,539) |
| Net cash from operations | <u>15,335</u> | <u>(340,611)</u> |
| CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Mission fund loans made | (7,000) | (24,000) |
| Mission fund loans repaid | 53,827 | 35,370 |
| Investment return | 103,585 | 96,080 |
| Proceeds - sale of auto | - | 8,000 |
| Investments purchased | (326,556) | - |
| Investments sold | 301,037 | - |
| Purchase of fixed assets | - | (24,668) |
| Net cash from investing | <u>124,893</u> | <u>90,782</u> |
| Net increase (decrease) in cash | 140,228 | (249,829) |
| Cash balance - beginning of year | <u>243,383</u> | <u>493,212</u> |
| Cash balance - end of year | <u>\$ 383,611</u> | <u>\$ 243,383</u> |

See accompanying notes.

DELAWARE-MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
For the Years Ended January 31, 2018 and 2017

| <u>1/31/2018</u> | | | <u>1/31/2017</u> | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Program</u> <u>Services</u> | <u>Mgmt &</u> <u>General</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>Program</u> <u>Services</u> | <u>Mgmt &</u> <u>General</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| \$ 929,934 | \$ - | \$ 929,934 | \$ 953,898 | \$ - | \$ 953,898 |
| 62,680 | - | 62,680 | 66,190 | - | 66,190 |
| 146,645 | - | 146,645 | 167,160 | - | 167,160 |
| 24,932 | - | 24,932 | 10,424 | - | 10,424 |
| 89,551 | - | 89,551 | 91,659 | - | 91,659 |
| 86,559 | - | 86,559 | 131,733 | - | 131,733 |
| 72,420 | - | 72,420 | 76,380 | - | 76,380 |
| 320,992 | - | 320,992 | 196,823 | - | 196,823 |
| 238,849 | - | 238,849 | 63,588 | - | 63,588 |
| 96,051 | - | 96,051 | 114,300 | - | 114,300 |
| - | 609,333 | 609,333 | - | 570,131 | 570,131 |
| - | 341,762 | 341,762 | - | 275,282 | 275,282 |
| - | 13,687 | 13,687 | - | 15,055 | 15,055 |
| <u>\$ 2,068,613</u> | <u>\$ 964,782</u> | <u>\$ 3,033,395</u> | <u>\$ 1,872,155</u> | <u>\$ 860,468</u> | <u>\$ 2,732,623</u> |

nts
ents

have been changed to conform with 2018 classifications

See accompanying notes.

**DELAWARE-MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
January 31, 2018 and 2017**

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Nature of Activities

The Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Inc. ("Synod") is one of 65 Synods within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ("ELCA"). Each Synod serves the ELCA congregations within a specified geographic area assigned by the constitution of the ELCA. The congregations within each Synod are the principal financial supporters of their respective Synods, and through the Synods, to the ELCA organization. The congregations served by the Synod are in the states of Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania.

Financial Statement Presentation

The Organization has adopted the Statement of Financial Accounting Standards (SFAS) No. 117, "Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Organizations." Under SFAS No. 117, the Organization is required to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets, and permanently restricted net assets.

Cash Basis of Accounting

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. Under that basis, certain revenues and the related assets are recognized when received rather than when earned and certain expenses are recognized when paid rather than when the obligations are incurred. Consequently, the Synod has not recognized pledges receivable from donors or member churches or accounts payable to vendors, and their related effects on the change in net assets in the accompanying financial statements. The modified cash basis falls under the Special Purpose Framework standards of the Financial Accounting Standards Board.

Property and Equipment

It is the Organization's policy to capitalize property and equipment over \$1,000. Lesser amounts are expensed. Purchased property and equipment is capitalized at cost. Vehicles and equipment are being depreciated over estimated useful lives of three to ten years using the straight-line method. Donations of property and equipment are recorded as contributions at their estimated fair value. Such donations are reported as unrestricted contributions unless the donor has restricted the donated asset to a specific purpose.

**DELAWARE-MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, continued
January 31, 2018 and 2017**

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Cash and Cash Equivalents

For the purposes of the statements of cash flows, the Organization considers all highly liquid investments available for current use with an initial maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

Donated Services

The Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Inc. is the beneficiary of the services of many volunteers, without which the Synod would not be able to carry on its many functions and services. No amounts have been recognized in the statement of activities because the criteria for recognition under SFAS No. 116, "Accounting for Contributions Received and Contributions Made" have not been satisfied. While no value is specifically assigned to any of these services, the loss of volunteers could have a material negative financial impact on the Synod. All of the officers (except The Bishop), all Synod Council members, and all Division and Commission chairs are volunteers.

Contributions

The Organization has adopted SFAS No. 116, "Accounting for Contributions Received and Contributions Made." Contributions received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support depending on the existence or nature of any donor restrictions.

Income Taxes

The Organization is a not-for-profit organization that is exempt from income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Investments

The organization has adopted SFAS No. 124, Accounting for Certain Investments Held by Not-for-Profit Organizations. Under SFAS No. 124, investments in marketable securities with readily determinable fair values and all investments in debt securities are reported at their fair values in the statement of financial position. Unrealized gains and losses are included in the change in net assets. Investment income and gains restricted by a donor are reported as increases in unrestricted net assets if the restrictions are met (either by passage of time or by use) in the reporting period in which the income and gains are recognized.

**DELAWARE-MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, continued
January 31, 2018 and 2017**

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Support and Revenue

All contributions are considered to be available for unrestricted use unless specifically restricted by the donor. Amounts received that are designated for future periods or restricted by the donor for specific purposes, are reported as temporarily restricted or permanently restricted support that increases those net assets.

Contributions of donated non-cash assets are recorded at their fair values in the period received. Contributions of donated services that create or enhance non-financial assets or that require specialized skills, are provided by individuals possessing those skills, and would typically need to be purchased if not provided by donation, are recorded at their fair values in the period received.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

NOTE 2 – CASH

The Synod had deposits for the year ended January 31, 2018 at one financial institution that exceeded federally insured limits by approximately \$133,611. The year ended January 31, 2017 was within the insured amount. The Synod has not experienced any losses in such accounts and believes it is not exposed to any significant credit risks on cash.

NOTE 3 – PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

| | <u>2018</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Vehicles | \$ 24,668 | \$ 24,668 |
| Leasehold improvements | 74,684 | 74,684 |
| Furniture & equipment | 37,744 | 37,744 |
| Computer equipment | <u>35,419</u> | <u>35,419</u> |
| Total | 172,515 | 172,515 |
| Accumulated depreciation | <u>102,262</u> | <u>88,575</u> |
| | \$ <u>70,253</u> | \$ <u>83,940</u> |
| Depreciation expense | \$ <u>13,687</u> | \$ <u>15,055</u> |

**DELAWARE-MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, continued
January 31, 2018 and 2017**

Note 4 – DISTRIBUTION OF ASSETS - CONGREGATIONS

Under the rules of the denomination, all property is owned by the individual congregations. In the event that a congregation closes the denomination or certain other events were to occur, control of the property and the satisfaction of related debts would become the responsibility of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Inc. or one of its regional (Delaware-Maryland Synod of the ELCA, Inc) governing bodies.

In May 2017, the Synod received a check from Second English Lutheran Church in the amount of \$650,000 from the distribution of its assets. The funds are considered to be available for unrestricted use and have been recorded in the accompanying financial statements as unrestricted contributions. The contribution will be used by the Synod to fund programs and support its congregations in accordance with its mission.

NOTE 5 – PENSION PLAN

Many employees of the Synod are participants in the ELCA Pension Plan, a qualified Defined Contribution Plan under ERISA definitions. For the years ended January 31, 2018 and 2017, the Synod contributed \$44,645 and \$36,058 respectively to the pension plan on behalf of its employees.

NOTE 6 – SHARING OF SUPPORT

In accordance with an affiliation agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Inc. for the fiscal years ended January 31, 2018 and 2017, 50% of total unrestricted support received from the ELCA congregations is shared with National as determined by the Synod Assembly. Such amounts are used as directed by the Church-Wide Assembly for church-wide and international programs of research, education and community services and for supporting, management and general, and stewardship expenses.

NOTE 7 – EVALUATION OF SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

The Organization has evaluated subsequent events through April 22, 2018, the date which the financial statements were available to be issued.

**DELAWARE-MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, continued
January 31, 2018 and 2017**

NOTE 8 – COMMITMENTS

Operating Leases

Office Lease

Effective May 2017, the Synod entered into a new five-year lease for office space in Baltimore, MD known as Harbor Court, 575 South Charles Street at a monthly rental of \$5,177 per month. The lease contains renewal options and requires the organization to pay additional expenses over base period amounts. Effective May 2017, the storage space lease was renewed through April 2022 at a rate of \$285 per month. Occupancy expense for the year 2018 and 2017 was \$68,184 and \$74,141 respectively. The following is a schedule by year of future minimum rental payments:

| <u>January 31,</u> | <u>2018</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 2018 | \$ --- | \$ 66,995 |
| 2019 | 69,005 | 69,005 |
| 2020 | 71,075 | 71,075 |
| 2021 | 73,207 | 73,207 |
| 2022 | <u>75,403</u> | <u>75,403</u> |
| | \$ <u>288,690</u> | \$ <u>355,685</u> |

Equipment Leases

The organization leases office equipment under operating leases expiring in various years through 2020. Minimum future rental payments under non-cancelable leases having remaining terms in excess of one year as of January 31, 2018 and 2017 for each of the next five years are as follows:

| <u>January 31,</u> | <u>2018</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2018 | --- | \$ 3,856 |
| 2019 | 2,659 | 2,659 |
| 2020 | <u>1,995</u> | <u>1,995</u> |
| | \$ <u>4,654</u> | \$ <u>8,510</u> |

NOTE 9 – RECLASSIFICATION

For comparison purposes, the fiscal year 2017 amounts have been reclassified to conform with the fiscal year 2018 financial reporting format.

MARYLAND SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, INC.
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, continued
January 31, 2018 and 2017

ted at fair value on a recurring basis determined by reference to
relevant information generated by market transactions.
naged using a balanced allocation consisting of cash and cash
ments, and equities. A portion of the Synod's investments
n Investment Fund. Fair values and unrealized appreciation
8 and 2017 are summarized as follows:

| <u>January 31, 2018</u> | | | <u>January 31, 2017</u> | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Cost | Fair Value | Unrealized Apprec (Deprec) | Cost | Fair Value | Unrealized Apprec (Deprec) |
| 2,081,777 | \$ 2,669,994 | \$ 588,217 | \$ 2,070,787 | \$ 2,468,234 | \$ 397,447 |
| 2,647 | 34,345 | 31,698 | 2,647 | 24,658 | 22,011 |
| <u>2,084,424</u> | <u>\$ 2,704,339</u> | <u>\$ 619,915</u> | <u>\$ 2,073,434</u> | <u>\$ 2,492,892</u> | <u>\$ 419,458</u> |

Vision Teams

Communications Team

Deacon Cindy Ranker, Team Leader

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ... Ephesians 4:11-12

The current Communications Team was formed as a result of the implementation of the Synod's Vision 2018 initiative and began meeting in November 2017. We are tasked with making communications a defining characteristic of our synod. Highlights of our work so far include:

- Implementing a redesign of the synod logo and website
- Working to form a network of sound (and possibly video) technology consultants in order to advance a grant program for congregations to assess technology needs (grant money will come from Forward In Faith funds)
- Developing a short survey for the synod regarding communications needs
- Continuing to encourage each congregation to have a Congregation Connector
- Developing workshops that can be offered around the synod
- Continuing to build the team

In August I also attended the ELCA's Mission Interpreter's Conference held in Washington, DC.

As a rather newly-formed team, we continue to assess and develop our focus and ways to provide communication tools and resources for those in our synod.

I would like to thank those who have participated in the work of the Communications Team: Bruce Amrein, John Auger, the Rev. Paula Canby, Deacon Melissa Helfer, Renee Kalu, and Deacon Julie Stecker.

Connectedness Team

Linda Chinnia, Team Leader

The Connectedness Team was reorganized in May following the appointment of a new team leader. The team held its initial meeting on May 5, 2018 to establish its operation and identify its goals for the remainder of this year. The Connectedness Team looks

forward to facilitating communication and cooperation between and among the various ministries and programs in the Delaware-Maryland Synod.

Discipleship Team

Ron Fairchild, Team Leader

Our Synod's newly formed Discipleship Vision Team began meeting in November 2017. Our team works to empower and support congregations in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their communities. We have four primary objectives for 2018:

1. Learning – We are working to gain a better understanding of what congregations in our Synod are already doing to empower discipleship. We have developed a set of survey questions and are gathering practical examples of how congregations are equipping members to follow Jesus Christ by loving God and loving our neighbors.
2. Awareness – We are working to raise awareness about our Synod's most significant efforts to strengthen discipleship. At Synod Assembly, we will share videos about the LYO (Lutheran Youth Organization), LEAD (Living Every Day as Disciples), and the five new ministry starts that our Synod is supporting this year. Our goal is to use these videos as a starting point for sharing more stories about discipleship across our Synod.
3. Growth – We have set a goal of adding at least 10 congregations to LEAD in 2018 bringing the total number in all cohorts to 26. For more information about how your congregation can participate, please contact Cindy VanVliet in our Synod's office. We are also actively investing in five new starts this year - Mountain of God Evangelical International Church, Lauraville Mission, Beloved Community Multicultural Congregation, Mara Evangelical Lutheran Church, and a ministry exploration in Crisfield, MD.
4. Innovation – We are launching a new grants program for congregations in our Synod using *Forward in Faith* funds. These new Discipleship Catalyst Grants are designed to help congregations jumpstart new action plans and/or test innovative ideas for sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We anticipate providing grants to approximately 6-10 congregations in our Synod this year. We will share guidelines and more information about this process at Synod Assembly.

Many thanks to everyone who has participated in the work of the Discipleship Team:

Colleen Carpenter-Gonia, Linda Chinnia, The Rev. Beth Clementson, Leanne Elliott, The Rev. Dr. Amsalu Geleta, The Rev. Dr. Ed Kay, The Rev. Kristi King, Cindy VanVliet, and Elaine Wagenfuehr. Please pray for our team as we continue to discern and act on how God is calling us to support discipleship across our Synod.

Leadership Team

The Rev. Michael K. Louia, Team Leader

The Leadership Team (newly chartered as a result of reorganizational efforts within our synod approved at last year's synod assembly) spent 2017-18 following God's call through:

Development of Leadership Development Process(es) and Tools: Undergirded by a leadership development framework that directs the team's efforts on elevating conviction towards, enhancing a culture that supports, and developing constructs that provide tools, our team has been spending much of the year meeting with groups across our synod to listen to needs, address concerns, and provide opportunities for congregational leaders to learn about and begin to practice adaptive leadership skills. These efforts have been led by Candy Maxwell, Lay Leadership Development Director and The Rev. Stuart Luce, Leadership Development Director for our synod. Plans continue for the upcoming year to engage with established communities within our synod (conferences, coalitions, etc.) to continue to our adaptive learning journey.

LEAD (Living Every Day as Disciples): Under the leadership of Cindy VanVliet, Associate for Community, additional congregations have begun the LEAD process in our synod, joining the original six congregations that began the LEAD Listening Process in August, 2016. Those participating in LEAD give witness to the power of listening to God in the congregation and in the neighborhood and to the transformation that has occurred in these communities. In January 2018, oversight for LEAD transitioned to the Discipleship Team. For more information, congregations are encouraged to contact Cindy VanVliet in our synod office.

Financial Support of Seminary Candidates: We completed the initial funding process for the Delaware-Maryland Synod Scholarship available through United Lutheran Seminary, and this scholarship is now available to those discerning calls as rostered ministers from Delaware and Maryland who attend United Lutheran Seminary.

Healthy Leaders: Our synod chaplains presented a session at the 2017 Bishop Leadership Retreat in addition to meeting with rostered ministers across our synod as needs arise. Also, this has been a year of transition for our synodical chaplains, and as of

this report, this program is being reviewed. We anticipate further updates in the coming months, including as part of our report at our synod assembly.

Interim Pastor Network: Again this year, the Rev. George Tuttle provided support and leadership to our Interim Pastor Network, including arranging for meetings and learning opportunities for those involved in this critical ministry.

Practice Discipleship: Our Practice Discipleship ministry continues to grow across our synod including several opportunities for this community to gather to discern how God is calling young adults into ministry for the sake of the world.

Many thanks to those who have participated in the work of our Leadership Team: The Rev. Fred Lehr; Robin Schaefer, OSSD; Colleen Carpenter-Gonia; The Rev. Stuart Luce; John Auger; The Rev. George Tuttle; Cindy VanVliet; Candy Maxwell; and Pam Estes.

Conferences

Allegany and Washington Conferences

The Rev. Linda M Alessandri, Dean

If you haven't visited Washington and Allegany Counties in western Maryland, do it soon. The mountains, rivers, farms, towns, vineyards, cities and parks sing of the bounty, beauty and blessings of our Lord. Adding their voices of praise are the 23 Lutheran churches of the Allegany and Washington County Conference.

Interim-Dean since November 2017, what I know is that I've a lot to learn, especially about the five Lutheran churches doing ministry in Cumberland, Frostburg and LaVale in Allegany County. In reading their newsletters, I see a great deal of important gospel work and outreach. There were also some transitions among the Allegany churches. After 27 years of ministry at Christ Lutheran Church in LaVale, Pastor Church Erzkus retired. Pastor Tormod Svensson became the interim pastor at Christ Lutheran. After years of interim ministry at St. Luke Lutheran Church, Cumberland, Pastor David Wright was called and installed as its pastor. The call committee of St. John Lutheran Church (Cumberland) had progressed to interviewing pastoral candidates.

Washington County saw its own transitions. Farewells to Pastors Bruce Barth (St. Peter's, Clear Spring), Ed Heim (St. John's Lutheran, Hagerstown), and Bettye Wolinski (Trinity Lutheran, Hagerstown) as they shifted ministry elsewhere in the Synod. Welcomes to Pastors Regina Beard (Washington Co. Cooperative Lutheran Ministry), Lee Brumback (St. Paul's, Funkstown), David Eisenhuth (Trinity, Hagerstown), and Robert Lewis (Trinity, Boonsboro) and Richard Shives (St. Peter's, Clear Spring).

During 2017, the Beaver Creek-Keedysville Parish (St. Matthew's Lutheran and St. Peter's Lutheran) and Mt. Zion Lutheran (Rohrersville) entered into discussions about sharing ministries and pastoral leadership. Interim-Pastor Chris Ramsey and Darrell Layman helped the congregations discern the Spirit's calling and imagine what such a cooperative relationship might entail. After joint meetings and prayer, the churches voted to become the Washington County Cooperative Lutheran Ministry and a call committee began its work. Pastor Regina Beard would be called to this new joint venture in faith and Spirit. With many other smaller rural congregations facing similar challenges, this Cooperative Ministry may offer a useful model for others.

We look to the 2018 Synod Assembly. We look to offer an opportunity for the churches of the Allegany-Washington County Deanery to share fellowship and get better

acquainted. From there, we'll look to the Spirit to lead us to meaningful ways to offer mutual support and encouragement to our churches and ministries.

Anne Arundel and Baltimore West Conferences

The Rev. Kati Kluckman-Ault, Dean

Anne Arundel Conference Report

The Anne Arundel Conference met monthly in 2017-2018 at the various churches in this conference. During Lent, the conference met during Holy Week and prayed the Stations of the Cross at Manresa in Annapolis. Earlier in the year the AA Conference also participated in the assembling of the Delaware-Maryland Synod's 100,000 meals distributed to food pantries around our synod. This conference meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 10 AM.

During 2018, the AA Conference was served by Rev. Dave Simpson, Rev. Shawn Brandon, and Rev. Kati Kluckman-Ault as Deans.

Baltimore West Conference Report

The Baltimore West Conference meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month and is ably supported by Secretary the Rev. Carolyn Shank. New to the conference this year is the Rev. Paula Canby as the new pastor of Shepherd of the Glen Lutheran Church in Glenwood MD. Additionally, the Rev. Stacy Brady was also installed as the Chaplain at the Lutheran Village at Miller's Grant in Ellicott City. Some members of the conference have also been meeting to discuss new ways to do church. In May, they will begin reading "Canoeing the Mountains" together.

During 2018, the BW conference was served by Rev. Tim Feaser, Rev. Connie Miller, and Rev. Kati Kluckman-Ault as Deans.

Together, these two conferences hosted Bishop Bill Gohl and VP John Auger for a presentation of the state of our synod on April 18.

Baltimore North and East and Harford Conferences

The Rev. Greg Fetzer, Dean

The Baltimore North and East and Harford Conferences hold joint meetings on the first Thursday of every month at 10 a.m. We are thankful for these occasions of collegiality, support, prayer, and learning. We are also grateful for Pastor Leslie Radius of St. John's, Parkville for being a gracious host.

This past year was spent adjusting to Synod re-organization and getting to know one another more fully. We received several visitors, including folks from United Lutheran Seminary and Mar-Lu-Ridge.

We look forward to continuing our walk together and sharing the joys and challenges of ministry.

Delmarva North and Delmarva South Conferences

The Rev. Barbara Melosh, Dean

Delmarva North: Our rostered ministers meet weekly for pericope study, fellowship, and shared ministry. Thanks to our secretary Pr. Scott Maxwell for his service.

This year we were pleased to welcome two new colleagues. Pastor Susan Loney was ordained and installed as associate pastor at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Wilmington, Del. Pastor John Nelson was ordained and installed as associate pastor at St. Philip, Wilmington, Del.

We celebrated the new life of Unity, a congregation formed from consolidation of Zion and Spirit of Life, all in Wilmington. Unity is led by Pr. Melissa Lemons and Pr. Clarence Pettit.

Pr. Michael Merkel concluded his service as interim at Tree of Life, Odessa, Del., and Pr. Greg Johnson began his service as interim there.

Our commemoration of Reformation 500 included the production and circulation of the Reformation ABCs, short takes on the history and legacy of the Reformation, and a festive service on Reformation Sunday at Trinity Episcopal, that brought together the judicatory heads of our communion partners.

We share ministries in a number of ways, including a Lenten round robin in which several colleagues offered Bible study and worship at one another's congregations. On Passion/Palm Sunday, we held a healing service followed by a Racial Justice walk that included our ecumenical partners.

Delmarva South: Our rostered ministers meet monthly for fellowship and shared ministry. Thanks to Prs. Eric Evers and Karen Larson, who have both served as secretary, and to Pr. Mark Molter who is now assuming that role.

Our conference has undergone a number of pastoral transitions this year, including the departure of pastors at Grace of God, Millsboro, Del. (Pr. Kelly Pensinger), St Paul Cordova, Maryland (Pr Flavia Skilbred) and St Peter Ocean City, Maryland (Pr Gregg Knepp). We are grateful for their faithful ministries and in prayer for congregations in transition. We welcomed Pr. Gary Stiegler and his wife Jan who moved from NJ to Salisbury, Maryland, where Pr. Stiegler is now serving Faith as interim pastor. Pr. Skip McComas serves as interim at Grace of God.

We continue to discern and seek new ways to be church together. Four congregations--the Southern Shore, including Faith, Community, St Peter, and Grace of God--are currently meeting to consider how they might share resources and ministries.

Agencies, Institutions, Organizations and Synod Ministries

Baltimore Lutheran Campus Ministry (BLCM)

The Rev. Laura Sinche

Serving Baltimore area colleges and universities, especially Towson, Morgan State, and UMBC

At *Towson University* (The Table: a Lutheran Episcopal ministry), we:

- Tuesday dinners grew to welcome 15-20 students a week where we've focused on topics such as beauty of the Christian life, the book of Jonah and welcoming refugees
- Continued to be a presence on campus weekly with QuestionThursday- where we met 2 students this year who continue to be a part of our ministry. One of them was introduced to the story of Jesus through us (after first meeting us at QuestionThursday) and will be baptized in the spring before she graduates.
- Continue 2 weekly Bible studies- one for "beginners" in the faith and one for students wanting a deeper study.
- Continued to run FoodShare, the food pantry for staff and students, that had more than 100 visits in 2017. It uses donated food and toiletries from churches and student groups.
- We partnered with Ascension, Towson and the Towson administration to run the move-out collection- collecting and sorting items students get rid of at the end of the year. We gave away 120 boxes of food to the local food pantry, 10 boxes of school supplies to teachers, 3 carloads of items for a transitional housing program and raised \$800 through a yard sale to benefit previously incarcerated persons re-entering the community

At *Morgan State* we:

- We continued what we do best- serving weekly at Helping Up Mission and Baltimore Station, a recovery community, Baltimore Outreach Services (a shelter housed at Christ Lutheran, Inner Harbor), Esther's Place senior living community, and Tench-Tilghman Elementary School.

- Welcomed representatives from Young Adults in Global Mission and Lutheran camps to give students an opportunity to be involved in the life of the wider church after graduation.
- Moved to All Saints for our Thursday Bible studies and our monthly dinners. We have received a warm welcome from our friends there and our Bible study has grown as a result.
- Deacon Reggie continued one-on-one mentoring of several students who have become student leaders.

At *University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)*, a Lutheran-Episcopal Campus Ministry, we:

- Gathered for weekly dinner and discussion around topics like: how to be faithful in the political sphere, how we see the face of God in others, and the book of Galatians
- After a year and a half of partnership, we transitioned our occasional food assistance program into an administration sponsored program called Retriever Essentials. We are key partners in running this program.
- Offered a service of Evening Prayer on Tuesday nights, welcoming 3-6 students weekly
- Held on-campus worship for Ash Wednesday and All Saints Day

Together we:

- Took a Spring Break trip to Lumberton, North Carolina to with flood recovery and to learn about the Lumbee- a local Native American tribe. On this trip, one of our students, who doesn't identify as a Christian, told us that the week spent with us was her first experience of Christians who were kind and who welcomed her.
- Took students from all 3 campuses to a beach retreat with other Synod campus ministries to focus on stories in Luke
- Took on a Lenten Challenge at UMBC and Towson- focusing on the 7 deadly sins with a challenge to live into each week.
- Took a winter break trip to Philly with 5 students to learn about poverty and gather with The Welcome Church, a church among those experiencing homelessness.

Carroll Lutheran Village/The Lutheran Village at MILLER'S GRANT

Lisa Albin, Director of Church and Public Relations

Carroll Lutheran Village and The Lutheran Village at MILLER'S GRANT continued to serve seniors in Carroll and Howard Counties in 2017. Both continuing care retirement communities are social ministry organizations of the DE-MD Synod. Carroll Lutheran Village (CLV), serving adults 60 and older since 1980, has 396 apartments and homes, 50 assisted living suites and 103 skilled care beds. MILLER'S GRANT, opened in 2016,

has 241 homes and apartments, 20 assisted living suites and 12 skilled care beds. Over 630 seniors reside at CLV and over 350 reside at MILLER'S GRANT.

In fiscal year 2017 CLV served a total of 536 residents in residential living, 71 residents in assisted living, 299 residents in long-term care and short-term rehabilitation and 223 people in outpatient rehabilitation. Nearly 290 residents with need across all three levels of residency received \$3.29 million in benevolent support. During the same time The Lutheran Village at MILLER'S GRANT celebrated its first anniversary by exceeding occupancy projections for its first year. In FY17, MILLER'S GRANT served a total of 321 residential living residents, 18 residents in assisted living and 18 residents in short-term rehabilitation. The organization provided over \$290,800 in assistance to 26 residents - about \$194,800 in direct support through the Howard County Moderate Income Housing Unit Program and nearly \$96,000 for unreimbursed care.

Both communities had notable achievements over the past year. Carroll Lutheran Village was reaccredited as a continuing care retirement community (CCRC) by CARF International through 2021. Just over 210 of the 1,900 CCRCs in the country have achieved this additional quality 'seal of approval.' Carroll Lutheran Village has been accredited since 1991. To celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the Village held an intergenerational concert and planted 70 of the 500 Reformation trees available through the Synod. In its second year of operation, MILLER'S GRANT formed a Residents Association and elected its first Residents Association Council. The assisted living and skilled nursing levels of residency welcomed their first residents after completing the final requirements to become licensed by the state of Maryland. During the fiscal year, 18 residents were served in the Health Care Center and 18 in assisted living. MILLER'S GRANT installed Rev. Stacey Brady as its first chaplain, who has already established regular worship services within the community and has begun establishing a firm spiritual base.

Support for the greater community was demonstrated in many ways at both Villages. Volunteers, residents and staff at CLV documented nearly 23,530 hours of volunteerism, time valued at more than \$574,300. More than \$57,000 was collected through Sunday worship offerings in support of local and national organizations. More than \$21,000 in scholarships were provided to 21 employees for student, clinical and professional advancement. The Village provided more than 6,200 hours of clinical experience to 86 allied health students; more than 941 hours in internships, job shadowing and service learning to four students; and 50 hours of instructional support at several learning institutions. At MILLER'S GRANT, employees and residents gave over 2,400 hours to the community, time valued at nearly \$58,600. The organization collected nearly

\$1,200 through tee shirt sales to benefit the Ellicott City Partnership flood recovery efforts. MILLER'S GRANT provided five clients of The Arc Howard County with internships to provide on-the-job training that will prepare them for future employment. A group of residents got involved with Blessings in a Backpack and met bi-weekly to pack backpacks with food for students at a nearby Title I elementary school. The program distributes the packs to students on Fridays to ensure they have enough to eat over the weekend. That not being enough, the residents coordinated a food drive to further support the organization so that other schools with need could benefit.

What's next for these two communities? A mission discernment process that began in the summer of 2015 will culminate in late spring of 2018 with a formal decision to form a corporate parent that will embody the traits described through the process. The corporate parent will provide governance to both communities and set the stage for future growth. Key stakeholders have been involved throughout the process.

For more information on Carroll Lutheran Village visit www.clvillage.org. For more information on The Lutheran Village at MILLER'S GRANT visit www.millersgrant.org.

CLAIM (Coalition of Lutherans Advancing in Mission)

Elaine Wagenfuehr, CLAIM Coordinator

The Coalition of Lutherans Advancing in Mission (CLAIM) continues to expand membership and create new programs and partnerships. There are now 19 churches and 2 organizations in covenant with CLAIM and 4 in consideration.

CLAIM 2017 in Review:

DISCIPLESHIP: CLAIM sponsored their second Disciples Together Workshop. This workshop brought together people from 16 churches throughout Baltimore for worship, prayer, fellowship and learning. Practical workshops gave us ideas and guidance in: The Language of Prayer, The Art of Discipleship, Loving our Neighbor, and Youth as Disciples. CLAIM, again, participated in the Annual Baltimore City Mayor's Christmas Parade in Hampden. We had 10 churches participate in this event – making angels to hand out, walking and riding with the "Nativity float" and encouraging people to celebrate Christmas in their local churches. Our youth continue to love this experience and the opportunity to be disciples for Christ and plan to participate in 2018.

COMMUNICATIONS: Meetings: More than 50 people attended CLAIM's Annual Meeting to learn about the Creation Care Team efforts and meet with our partners.

Attendees gathered in groups to discuss Strategic Goals for the next three years and plan ways to achieve these goals. Elections for 2018/2019 were held. The Executive Board is represented by: Pastor Mark Parker (Breath of God) as the Clergy Co-Chair, Marie Barber (All Saints) as Lay Co-Chair, Spencer Errickson (Epiphany) as Treasurer, and Sheron Campbell (People's Community) as Secretary.

CLAIM continues to host a display table at Synod Assembly gatherings. Please stop by during breaks to visit and find out more about CLAIM programs and events.

Church Leaders Forum brought together more than 40 people from 14 congregations came together to discuss challenges, successes and future opportunities in their churches. Participants worshipped together and then broke into groups for those working or interested in Evangelism, Council Presidents, Treasurers, Worship, Youth, Communications, Social Ministry, and Property.

PARTNERSHIPS: CLAIM participated and promoted the Martin Luther King, Jr. program and is represented in committee meetings of ADLA, Creation Care Team, City Conference, and Racial Justice Team. These partnerships continue to evolve with our Lay Leaders representing us at the table.

CLAIM continues to reach out to Social Ministry program and initiatives to provide support and encouragement.

Striving to find ways to assist churches in their financial struggles, CLAIM continues to maintain an agreement with Office Depot to provide discounts to member churches.

Wishing to build on the program providing clean energy and cost savings on electricity, CLAIM continues relationships and partnerships with Creation Care Team, Interfaith Power & Light, and Interfaith Partners of the Chesapeake. These partnerships bring us together to educate and inform churches on environmental issues and how they can affect savings while helping the environment.

GRANTS: CLAIM coordinates assistance in writing grants for churches and in providing information to congregations when various grants are available.

FUNDRAISING: CLAIM held its annual Walk-A-Thon at Lake Montebello Park. Participants included children, teens, adults and a 4-legged walker. Eleven churches plus the synod office were represented. Through the efforts of these volunteers and grants from Thrivent, participants raised more than \$2,000 for CLAIM and youth programs.

ChoirFest, was not held in 2017, but will again be held in October 2018 at St. Mark's on St. Paul Street.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our supporters for their prayers, encouragement, and participation in CLAIM. Please continue to pray for all of us as we look for ways to spread the word of God throughout the communities we serve.

Creation Care Ministry

Deacon Laura Heller

The Creation Care Ministry continues to grow in participation and in our mission to care for the gift of creation that God so generously bestows upon us.

Our Ministry started 2018 by having a planning retreat hosted by Pr. John Burk. Participants discussed their vision for our work this year. One of the suggestions was to develop a roadmap for congregations to follow in order to become better stewards of creation. This concept, called "New Hope for Creation", will be piloted at New Hope Lutheran Church in Columbia, MD.

Carroll Lutheran Village was selected for the 2018 Gretchen Greensheep award for planting seventy trees on their campus in 2017 and for the special commemorative service honoring all creation. The award is given to recognize congregations and other faith communities for projects they have completed that are focused on the care of creation.

There were several important environmental bills in the 2018 Maryland Legislative Session this spring including Clean Energy Jobs, Reforestation, Wind Energy, and a Styrofoam Ban. The Creation Care Ministry supported these bills by attending rallies and meeting with legislators in Annapolis. We also met with faith leaders within the Synod to encourage congregations to support these bills.

With our initial grant in 2017 of \$16,520 from the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT), the Creation Care Ministry coordinated the planting of 336 trees in 26 different congregations and faith communities for the Reformation 500 Tree project. Five outreach workshops were also held to provide education on the importance of caring for creation and specifics regarding caring for the trees. Our application to continue this work was approved by CBT and we were awarded \$18,900 in January 2018. We have more than 200 trees scheduled to be planted this spring. We are continuing to partner with the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland on this project.

Several congregations, including Amazing Grace in Baltimore, The Lutheran Church of

the Good Shepherd in Wilmington, and Lutheran Community Services of Delaware, received funds for expansions of their community gardens and to purchase gardening tools. Carroll Lutheran Village also received funding for the start of a berry garden. In addition, we received a donation of more than 1,500 vegetable and flower seed packets from the Walmart in Westminster, MD, at the end of the summer in 2017, and these were provided to several congregations to be used in their community gardens.

We want to thank Bishop Gohl and the Synod Council for their continuing support of our ministry.

Definitely Abled Advocacy and Resource Team

The Rev. Sandra Carlson Alexis, chair

The Definitely Abled Advocacy and Resource Team (DAART) is a ministry of the DE-MD Synod that encourages congregations to be aware of those with mental, physical, and cognitive challenges in their worship community. Please consider having a PossABILITY Sunday at your church. The synodically voted upon time is the third Sunday of May but “when” is not as important as adding this to your church agenda at some point. Just like many have a youth Sunday, a PossABILITY Sunday can raise awareness and appreciation for the gifts of all.

This past year we helped sponsor a Tea and Talent Show before the Rejoicing Spirits worship on October 21, 2017 at Grace Hockessin, DE and are grateful for the support of Pastor Tara Magoon. We continue to guide our synod brothers and sisters to our DE-MD Synod web-page (<http://www.demdsynod.org/definitely-abled-advocacy-and-resource-team.html>) for resources and suggestions. Look for us in the display table area at synod assembly as well. In addition we also invite you to join our Facebook Page, “DAART Disabilities Forum of the DE-MD Synod” Please contact Pastor Sandy at PastorSandyCAlexis@gmail.com for more information.

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries & Diakon Child, Family & Community Ministries

Mark T. Pile, MSHA, MSW, President/CEO

2018 is a special year for the Diakon family of organizations—it is our 150th anniversary! And the ministries we celebrate as part of our 150-year history includes Lutheran Social Services of Maryland. To celebrate this milestone of uninterrupted service to our neighbors, in response to God’s love for us in Jesus Christ, Diakon will

hold numerous anniversary events at local program sites throughout the year.

More information on this event can be found at www.diakon.org/150.

As always, Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries—our senior living services—and Diakon Child, Family & Community Ministries celebrate our partnership with the Delaware-Maryland Synod and its congregations as we live out our 150-year-old mission. Through Many Hands, guided by One Heart, Diakon serves people in need of all ages, especially those with limited financial resources. In 2017, Diakon has provided nearly \$18.5 million in annual benevolent care, including more than \$2.2 million within the synod.

Diakon Senior Living – Hagerstown/The Ravenwood & Robinwood Campuses served more than 1,000 residents and family members last year and countless others through a range of community-benefit programming including Smart Seniors educational sessions and the hosting of educational events by sister organization SpiritTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice.

Licensed as a single Continuing Care Retirement Community, Diakon Senior Living – Hagerstown offers senior living accommodations and assisted living on both campuses (the Robinwood location also provides specialized assisted living for those with Alzheimer’s disease or similar memory-related illnesses), and nursing and rehabilitative care on the Ravenwood campus. That campus also houses Diakon Adult Day Services at Ravenwood, which served 79 clients last year.

Frostburg Heights, a rental-assistance senior housing community in Allegany County, served some 130 people last year. The senior housing complex also continued its beneficial relationship with Diakon Youth Services’ Flight Program, which serves at-risk youths who have “aged out” of traditional county-based services.

We thank God for the gifts of staff, volunteers, congregations, donors, and board members who, together, enabled us to directly serve thousands of people last year, including nearly 1,300 in the Delaware-Maryland Synod.

Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Delaware

Mindy Holland, Chaplain

Being part of the vibrant team at Lutheran Campus Ministry continues to be a joy and blessing! The students with whom I work regularly inspire me and give me hope with

their desire to grow in faith, their respect and care for others and for diversity, and their giftedness and loving hearts. In May we celebrated seven outstanding seniors; one went on to Lutheran Volunteer Corps service, one bicycled across the United States with 4K for Cancer in honor of his cousin, and others have begun internships and jobs in their chosen fields. These young leaders are deeply missed, even as we have welcomed a new group of talented and faithful underclassmen into our group this fall.

Some highlights of 2017-2018 include a spring retreat at Hack's Point, Maryland, which included the joyous baptism of one of our seniors in the Bohemia River, and a fall retreat in Ocean City, Maryland, together with other LCM groups from our synod. Our students gather weekly at the LCM chapel for dinners, worship, and Bible study; during spring term, we finished our journey through the Gospel of Mark, and this year we are studying John's Gospel. Our LCM members are also active in service, volunteering with FISH (our monthly food program, in cooperation with Lutheran Community Services and St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Newark), as well as helping with the Empty Bowl dinner at St. Stephen's Lutheran, Wilmington, in the fall, and caroling at a local retirement home at Christmastime. Our five student Executive Board members, two Peer Ministers, and student photographer provide thoughtful leadership, committed service, and inspiring expertise in ways that regularly bless this ministry, provide meaningful models for other students, and have rich influence in the wider campus and Newark communities.

I am also thankful for the many non-student team members who serve and partner with us to keep the ministry running smoothly. I am daily blessed by my phenomenal Administrative Assistant, JoAnne Gross, who manages correspondence, publicity, finances (in cooperation with our volunteer treasurer), property concerns, Tuesday dinner coordination, and an abundance of fundraiser and special event details. She is a gem and an outstanding colleague! Our Directing Committee (governing board) brings together an insightful team of people, including recent alumni, local pastors, and lay people from nearby parishes; their support, participation, service, and leadership are invaluable to LCM. In addition, we give thanks for the many friends and supporters of the ministry who share often and generously; for committed colleagues; and for alumni who step up to take on leadership and service in many ways.

Our LCM fall fundraiser was hosted this past November by St. Philip's Lutheran Church, Wilmington. We were very pleased by the turnout of supporters from many congregations who joined us for our dinner, by the words of our thoughtful alumni speakers, and by the success of our silent auction and raffle baskets. Together we raised over \$11,500 in support of our ministry with and among college students.

Local congregations provide welcome home-cooked meals for our Tuesday suppers, participate in our Saturday property work days, offer wonderful financial support, and keep our students in their prayers.

Finally, we are deeply grateful for the continued support that we receive from the Delaware-Maryland Synod, both in the form of regular monthly grants and through special gifts and memorials. The summer gift from Second English Lutheran in Baltimore was a remarkable blessing! We are thankful for the vibrant support of Bishop Bill Gohl and for the ways in which our synod partners with campus ministry in reaching out to young people and empowering them to grow in faith, discipleship, outreach, leadership, and service. We invite your continued support and prayers for this ministry and for blessing upon our students, staff, and volunteers; may our shared efforts daily reflect the love and grace of Christ and give glory to God!

Mar-Lu-Ridge Camp and Retreat Center

Sarah Lefler, Executive Director

“So now you are no longer strangers and aliens. Rather, you are fellow citizens with God’s people, and you belong to God’s household. As God’s household, you are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone. The whole building is joined together in Christ, and it grows up into a temple that is dedicated to the Lord. Christ is building you into a place where God lives through the Spirit.” Eph. 2:19-22

Knowing that Christ is our strong foundation, we stepped out in faith in several areas in 2017. Thanks to a generous gift from the community of Second English Lutheran Church, we were able to invest in several deferred capital projects which improved the safety and appearance of our facilities. This included new roofs for the Chapel and the Ridge Inn, as well as one of our cabins. We also invested in our programming by participating in the Effective Camp Research Project in an effort to learn about the impact of summer camp in our camper’s lives. The results confirmed that Mar-Lu-Ridge is 100% fun (!), and that our staff and volunteer pastors play an important role in mentoring our young people, helping guide them in their faith journey. Many of our programming expenses, including an increase in summer staff pay and Camperships for families in need, were met in large part because of Second English Lutheran’s desire to continue its ministry through organizations such as Mar-Lu-Ridge. We are grateful and faithful in our use of this gift – and more plans are on the horizon!

We stepped out in faith by increasing our online and in person presence with a goal of bringing more youth to camp, and more retreat guests to our year-round facilities. We are pleased to report that we showed growth in both areas. One of the highlights of summer camp was our partnership with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) and Lutheran Social Services/National Capital Area (LSS NCA). Our campers made Welcome Cards for children who are housed in temporary detention centers, waiting for a home for their family. They also assembled Welcome Home cleaning kits and hygiene kits for immigrants and refugee families. It was exciting to see the campers as they worked to make a neighbor feel welcome and safe, and to hear the discussions as they prayed about ways to continue this welcome in their own communities. Camp families and campers donated leftover store money, which was matched by a grant from the Forward in Faith initiative, and given to LIRS and LSS NCA. Both organizations were amazed by our camp community's generosity.

We welcomed a new Associate Director, Amy Sowers, in June. Amy worked alongside Karl Muhlbach to learn the many aspects of the job, and the transition was positive for everyone. As we prepare for the 60th Anniversary of Mar-Lu-Ridge in 2019, we remain committed to providing community, service, and sanctuary for all!

Mission Interpretation

Claudia Harrington, Coordinator

Mission Interpretation is about sharing the stories of the difference Lutherans are making locally and globally. When we share our time, talents and offerings, we make mission and ministry possible. Each month I gather three ministry stories from our DE-MD Synod congregations, Social Ministry Organizations, Campus Ministries, Mar-Lu-Ridge, Hunger Task Force, Companion Synod Task Forces, and United Lutheran Seminary. I also include stories from our ELCA World Hunger Appeal, Lutheran Disaster Response, and Global Church initiatives. We are able to do so much more together than we can as individuals. If you would like to receive the monthly Mission Interpretation - Stories in DEManD, please give your name and email address to Claudia Harrington. You may sign -up at the Mission Interpretation display table. Thank you for making a difference in your neighborhoods, communities, and around the world.

The Mission Investment Fund

The Rev. Kent Peterson, Regional Manager

MIF is the lending ministry of the ELCA. MIF makes low-interest loans to ELCA congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building and renovation projects. With MIF loans, congregations and ministries can purchase property, construct new buildings, and expand or renovate existing facilities.

MIF loans expand the capacity for ministry. MIF loans help create expanded worship spaces, updated space for education and youth ministry, new kitchens for community meals and soup kitchens, affordable housing units for the community and much more.

At year-end 2017, MIF had 888 loans outstanding, totaling \$539.1 million. To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio of investments for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. At year-end 2017, MIF investments totaled \$506 million.

MIF is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of \$715.7 million and net assets of \$203.9 million at year-end 2017, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.5 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds. For more information, visit mif.elca.org.

MIF loans and investments in the Delaware-Maryland Synod (as of December 31, 2017):

- 23 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$10,014,080
- \$10,845,150 in Mission Investment Fund investments
- MIF representative: The Rev. Kent Peterson, Regional Manager, Tel: (276) 698-7970; email: kent.peterson@elca.org

Mosaic

Linda Timmons, Mosaic President and CEO

Dear friends,

Our work at Mosaic is filled with surprising, spontaneous moments that regularly remind us why we do what we do. As example, the following conversation took place after a woman Mosaic supports surprised everyone with her piano talent, playing a wide repertoire of songs.

Employee: Shari, did you have a piano growing up?

Shari: Oh, no.

Employee: Did you ever take piano lessons or have a piano teacher?

Shari: No. No, I didn't.

Employee: Did anyone in your family play the piano?

Shari: No. Just me.

Employee: So Shari, who taught you how to play? How do you know all those songs?

Shari: God. God teaches me how to play. He teaches me the songs I need to know.

People of faith know that God is always at work—and sometimes works to surprise us! We have many stories similar to Shari's and we share them to help people understand Mosaic's mission of service and advocacy: We provide a meaningful life in a caring community, giving a voice to people's needs. How that happens looks different for every person we serve.

Shari lives on her own but can't be fully independent. We work with her about 15 hours a week, helping her with the things she can't do, like finances, doctor's visits, etc.

Mosaic also serves people who need assistance 24 hours a day, every day.

It is a mission we could not fulfill without you, our church partners. We are grateful for the many churches and faithful people who support our ministry across the United States. Thank you for all you do.

Seafarers International House

The Rev. Bob Schmitt

Greetings from the Port of Baltimore.

I would like to thank all the congregations who have participated in support to the mission to seafarers this past year. Our two major projects Christmas Satchels for Seafarers (end of each year) and the Prayer and Cookie project (year-round) have strong support from congregations in the territory of the Delaware Maryland synod. Visiting nearly 100 ships myself and the joint ministry with our Episcopalians partners at the Baltimore International Seafarers Center visiting over 1000 ships makes Baltimore a favorite port for our international seafarers to visit.

The Highlight of 2017 for me was an Ascension Day service aboard one of the Filipino crewed sugar ships stopping at Domino/AMS see pictures at the websites of SIH or BISC. Crews are often away for up to 10 months. We held a service of Word and Sacrament, followed by a festive meal of all the crew hosted by the captain. He help lead the service reading from a Tagalog (his native language) the Ascension Day text. Your help with this outreach to the world visiting us puts the church in contact with persons from 6 continents and over 50 countries. Visit our display in the ministry room. Pick up some Prayer and Cookie Boxes or Christmas Satchels to fill, or if knitting is your gift there is yarn and directions to knit caps and scarfs for the sailors who come from 'warmth' to the 'cold weather' of Baltimore. If traveling to New York city consider staying at the New York Hostel and Hotel.

For more information visit the Seafarers International House Website www.sihnyc.org

Pastor Bob Schmitt
Seafarers International House
Lutheran Port Chaplain for the Port of Baltimore

United Lutheran Seminary
The Rev. James S. Dunlop, Acting President

At United Lutheran Seminary, we have a new understanding of Jesus' words from the Gospel of John: *Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*

We are a new seminary, born out of our predecessor schools with over 300 years of experience in theological education. Many people have sacrificed their time, talent, and resources to bring us to this point. The sacrifices continue, as does the work of United Lutheran Seminary.

On both the Philadelphia and Gettysburg campuses, we look to those who have gone before us in order to learn those core convictions of our confessional learning that hold us steadfast in grace. We call on the excellence of our alums to provide us with benchmarks and goals for our current students. We remember the suffering of those who fought on our campuses, both in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. We look to the future of the church in which all are empowered to bring God's reign into fullness and fruition.

As recipients of these gifts, we are working diligently to raise up leaders for an ever-evolving church. We are striving to keep the best of our predecessor schools:

- The Urban Theological and Town and Country Institutes.
- A strong, diverse faculty.
- The best support from alumni and synods of all the ELCA seminaries.
- And of course, your prayers and support that sustain us from day to day.

There have been some birthing pangs along the way. In March, after much prayer and discernment, our board made the difficult decision to have the president step down. We continue the process of building our administration and faculty, with multiple search committees working diligently to make sure the needs of our students are met by the best-qualified candidates. And we are working through the challenges of bringing together two established schools with their myriad traditions and best practices.

There are many highlights to our first year. United Lutheran Seminary has record enrollment numbers. This past fall, 78 new students enrolled. Thirty-five additional new students have enrolled this spring. This is significantly higher than the combined incoming classes of our predecessor institutions, where enrollment of new students was 15 to 20 in the spring semester.

As these emerging public leaders join us, we are proactively helping to reduce the problem of student debt. All full-time ELCA, residential students in the candidacy process receive full-tuition scholarships at United Lutheran Seminary. In the two years that we have offered this initiative, there has been a dramatic drop in the level of borrowing as each new class enrolled. Prior to offering these scholarships, 70-85% of new students financed part of their seminary education by borrowing through the federal loan program. That rate has dropped to just 22% of new students financing their education with loans.

New technologies are making it possible for classrooms on both campuses to come together in virtual environments to discuss theology, study scripture, and discuss best practices for ministry. In addition, we are creating new life-long learning opportunities for pastors, deacons, and lay leaders in all fifteen synods of regions seven, eight, and beyond.

Last September, the Association of Theological Schools visited both campuses and concluded that “ULS has in place the required authorizations and documentation to deliver theological education as a school in good standing.” This ensures our future as an institution of higher education that meets and supersedes the benchmarks placed

before us by all accrediting agencies. Sacrifices will continue to be asked of those who serve and support the school. It is the nature of our servant leadership to do so.

In this time of interim leadership, we are focusing on three priorities:

- Nurturing diverse, culturally competent Christian leaders and communities.
- Developing new pathways for theological education (e.g., continuing education, M.A. programs, and distance learning programs).
- Cultivating partnerships within and across institutions.

We are moving forward with each of these by launching a ULS Diversity Task Force, entering into conversations with synods and foundations to explore means of reaching new students, and discovering ways to provide resources for public Christian leaders – students, alumni, and other church leaders – for ministry in the 21st century.

Most importantly, ULS strives to foster a diverse community of faith where people come to meet Jesus and each other at the table of God's grace. During our recent time of discernment and conversation, the ULS board heard the concerns and pain of the students, faculty, and staff. The decision to remove the former president was not made lightly, but was done with care and compassion for the needs of the institution, as we believe the future of ELCA congregations in the Northeastern United States calls for a robust academy of learning for future rostered leaders, with a healthy and vibrant community of *koinonia* and trust. To this end, we are committing considerable resources for counseling and sensitivity training for everyone in the ULS community. In this context, we will work to forge a new sense of mission and purpose so that our graduates are empowered to serve the church of the 21st Century.

Without endings, there can be no new beginnings. Without dying to the self, there is no hope of new life, no chance of resurrection. United Lutheran Seminary is a place of extraordinary education, living into the power of death and resurrection through our shared experience and learning. It is a story of sorrow and love, suffering and hope.

We are grateful to you for continued prayers, financial support, and compassion as we move forward in faith. We ask you to join us on this journey in every way possible. God bless you in your ministries to the church and the world.