



Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God is Doing a New Thing!

SECTION FOUR ELCA & PARTNER MINISTRY REPORTS

Report of Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM)



916 Hickory Street
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
814.696.4500 • 800.400.2285
www.alsm.org

*“To serve people through a ministry
of love, compassion, and mercy
in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.”*

2026 Message to the Allegheny Synod, ELCA

Greetings and blessings to each of you from the ALSM TEAM!

ALSM is proud to serve as the only regional faith-based not-for-profit organization offering services that span the generations. ALSM has been responding to the needs of individuals and families for over 78 years.

As we reflect on the past year, we do so with hearts full of gratitude and hope. At ALSM, our mission to serve people through a ministry of love, compassion, and mercy in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, is rooted in the belief that every life—at every age—has purpose, dignity, and value. In 2026, as we celebrate America’s 250th anniversary, we’re reminded that the strength of our nation has always come from the dedication, resilience, and heart of its people. ALSM is planning celebrations to celebrate our nation, those we serve and our dedicated team members.

Your generosity has enabled ALSM to continue our mission and provide benevolent care to too many we serve. In 2025, ALSM provided \$1.6 million in benevolent care.

At the heart of our mission are the dedicated team members and volunteers who are committed to those we serve. We welcome you to become an ALSM volunteer. If you are interested in learning more, contact Andrea Schurr at andrea.schurr@alsm.org.

We are truly blessed to be able to serve the needs of people throughout eight counties in Central PA with the following programs and services:

- **Senior Communities** (The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg and The Oaks at Pleasant Gap)
- **Rental Assistance Senior Housing** (Lutheran Commons at Berlin Pike and Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap)
- **Children’s Services** (Head Start, Early Head Start, Family Center, Growing Years Early Learning Centers, Kid Stop before-and-after programs and PRE-K Counts programs)

The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg

- Blairmont and Hickory Commons cottages offer residents a stress-free lifestyle. Exterior and interior maintenance is included in the cost, allowing residents the time to enjoy their favorite activities. The cottages are energy efficient and handicapped accessible so that residents may “age in place” in this secure neighborhood setting. These independent living residences attract individuals aged 55 and over. The waiting list for these cottages continues to grow.
- The bright and spacious apartments at Hillcrest were beautifully renovated last year. The updates include new stainless-steel appliances in kitchens, and new flooring and paint. The apartments are located in historic Hollidaysburg, overlooking ALSM’s Hickory Commons campus. Small pets are welcome. Meal plans are available with dining room and to-go options. Monthly housekeeping is provided. One and two-bedroom apartments are available but are filling quickly.

Report of Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM)

- The Lutheran Home focuses on individuals who require short-term rehab. Many times, people who have suffered a stroke or are recovering from a broken limb or limb replacement surgery may benefit from therapy services in a nursing home setting. In addition, long-term care residents are also accepted.
- Short-term respite stays are available. Respite stays allow family caregivers to take a break from caregiving, tend to their own healthcare needs, go on vacation, or attend a family celebration such as a wedding or graduation.
- For more information or to schedule a tour, contact the administrator at 814-696-4527.

The Oaks at Pleasant Gap

- The Oaks at Pleasant Gap campus serves older adults by providing personal care services and offers independent living apartments and cottage homes.
- For information or to schedule a tour of The Oaks, contact the administrator at 814.359.2782.
- The personal care neighborhood on campus was renovated with new paint and carpet in beautiful calming blue hues.
- Short-term respite stays are available in personal care. Respite stays allow family caregivers to take a break from caregiving, tend to their own healthcare, go on vacation or attend a family celebration, for example a wedding or graduation.

Children's Services

- Growing Years Early Learning Center and Kid Stop managers completed educational courses through the Keystone STARS program for continuous quality improvement. The centers have a rating of 3 STAR or higher out of 4 STARS. Those centers include Bedford and Johnstown Kid Stops and Growing Years in Bedford and Johnstown. PRE-K Counts is offered through Growing Years in Bedford and Johnstown.
- Head Start continued partnerships with the Intermediate Units 08 and 11 to provide inclusive preschool programming to children in Bedford and Fulton counties.
- Head Start continued collaborations with the Chestnut Ridge, Northern Bedford, and Central Fulton school districts for preschool programming.
- The Family Center of Bedford County serves families through home visits, monthly playgroups, fathers' groups, and special events.

Lutheran Commons at Berlin Pike

- For those seniors who meet income guidelines, there is also a 32-unit apartment building, Lutheran Commons at Berlin Pike. For information on Lutheran Commons, call 814.696.4500 or 800.400.2285.

Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap

- For those seniors who meet income guidelines, there is also a 14-unit apartment building, Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap. For information on Lutheran Commons, call 814.696.4500 or 800.400.2285.

For more details on ALSM programs, I invite you to contact us by phone at 814-696-4500 or visit our website at ALSM.org.

Coming Together To Do Great Things!

Christopher Reighard
President/CEO

Report of the Breezewood Trucker Traveler Ministry

NEWS FROM BREEZEWOOD TRUCKER TRAVELER

THE YEAR IN REVIEW 2025

P.O. Box 286, Breezewood, PA 15533 (814) 977-6964

Greetings and grace to Allegheny Synod ELCA! We appreciate your partnership in this marketplace outreach. The Breezewood Trucker and Traveler Ministry is blessed to record the following:

(2022) (2023) (2024) (2025)

| | | | |
|------|------|------|--|
| 700 | 990 | 853 | 792 trucker contacts. |
| 1014 | 1269 | 1499 | 1527 traveler contacts. |
| 763 | 810 | 723 | 676 employee/staff contacts. |
| 62 | 60 | 64 | 58 spiritual/emotional assistance for truckers. |
| 104 | 155 | 159 | 126 spiritual/emotional assistance for employee/staff. |
| 208 | 253 | 221 | 272 pastoral care calls in the community. |
| 802 | 650 | 554 | 494 food resources provided. |
| 191 | 159 | 115 | 76 nights of lodging provided. |
| 46 | 33 | 25 | 24 persons assisted with gasoline. |
| 35 | 44 | 41 | 25 persons provided with transportation(including bus). |
| 40 | 75 | 86 | 70 camp gear, clothing, showers, gift cards, cash, car repair. |
| 121 | 106 | 106 | 63 traveler's "Zip Lock" care packages given. |
| 140 | 148 | 165 | 160 Bibles or New Testaments provided. |
| 85 | 8 | 34 | 18 families/individuals served through Christmas food drive. |
| 4 | 7 | 7 | 6 local church sponsored holiday hospitality tables. |
| 21 | 21 | 28 | 26 ministry presentations/preaching/special services. |
| 46 | 47 | 43 | 40 Bible studies. |
| 2177 | 2092 | 2078 | 1812 professional staff hours worked. |
| 1774 | 1639 | 1685 | 1603 hours served by volunteers. |

**Professional Chaplaincy: Membership(NIBIC): National Institute of Business & Industrial Chaplains
Endorsed Chaplain, United Methodist Church**

In 2025 the United States experienced natural disasters(flooding/fires), partisan politics, targeted shootings, and continued inflation amidst signs of a world weary of war and a world anxious to utilize the growing arsenal of technology (eg: Artificial Intelligence) to make the planet a better place to live. There is some progress: children living in poverty is at the lowest level in recent history, the number of girls in school or college is at the highest level in history, and the largest coral reef restoration project was completed in 2025. In the battle of big business in Breezewood, the traveler has been the one to benefit at the pump, as a gas price war has begun to entice locals back into Breezewood to fuel up. The PA Turnpike Commission has announced selection of "lead designer" of the Breezewood Interchange Project to link I-70 to the I-76 turnpike. A transient homeless population continues to live under the radar, yet often in plain sight- camping in a nearby woods, living in a vehicle, or resting/sleeping in a 24 hour business location. Movement, migration, and change are a fact of life. How can we be flexible of foot and mind and heart to respond when the Holy Spirit bids? Scriptures give us wisdom and prophecy from the ages, with Jesus teaching a way to live and serve in fulfillment of all the Law and Prophets. Whether offering hospitality in Breezewood, delivering goods & services over the road, or any other vocation, place or purpose we are blessed because of Christ. The healing presence of God in Christ is freely given – to all. The ministry continues to share Good News through compassion, hope, and fellowship among those we encounter off the highway.

We give thanks for Judy Simonson(Mt Zion, Breezewood) and David Wright(St. Clairsville Parish) for their service on the Management Committee- organizing and enabling a ministry of presence, prayer, counsel, hospitality, and food/lodging/gas/care kits in the Name of Jesus!

**He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds. – Psalms 147:3**

Report of the ELCA Candidacy and Leadership Regions 7 & 8



Candidacy and Leadership
Regions 7 and 8
2026 Annual Report to Synod Assembly

*Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey; I'll tell everybody about you wherever I go:
you alone are our life and our peace and our love. Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.*

Les Petites Soeurs de Jésus and L'Arche Community. "Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song." Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 2006, #808, v. 1






Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace to you and peace as you meet in synod assembly. I write to you with greetings from my Candidacy Team Colleagues on Churchwide Staff and my home synod of New Jersey.

The ministry of Candidacy is one of accompanying, evaluating, and assessing the readiness of people who discern a call to pastoral or diaconal ministry. Each synod has a committee that does this confidential and prayerful work on behalf of the whole church. The committee includes clergy and lay members, a seminary representative, and synod staff or Bishop. Your synod has a committee that has met in the past year to do this work. You can read more about their ministry elsewhere in this bulletin of reports. I have the honor of working with these committees in the northeast and mid-Atlantic as they listen to candidates, ask questions, and consider how God is calling people to serve.

In 2022, a Candidacy Leadership Development Working Group (CLDWG) was convened to start reenvisioning candidacy ministry in the ELCA. Since my report to you a year ago, the work of this group has changed. After years of surveys, planning, and dreaming, the work has shifted from the CLDWG to churchwide staff to begin the rollout of a launch for a new candidacy process. Of the 65 synods in the ELCA, 10 are "candidacy launch synods" who will be working with applicants and candidates in these next few years under a newly proposed candidacy process. These launch synods will also provide valuable feedback so that a new candidacy process can be finalized for the whole church.

Main elements of this new candidacy process include:

-  Accompanier with candidates throughout the process
-  Discernment as a more intentional and robust time prior to meeting for an Entrance Interview
-  Annual Reviews with candidates instead of an Endorsement
-  Competency based emphasis for meeting milestones throughout candidacy
-  Continuing to honor both MDiv and Certificate pathways for candidates

Synods that are not "candidacy launch synods" will continue with the current candidacy process until 2028 or 2029 when we anticipate a rollout of the new candidacy process across the ELCA.

While we continue in the ministry of accompanying and assessing potential deacons or pastors in the ELCA, we appreciate your prayers. The church needs leaders who are equipped, called, and prepared to serve the church. If *you* are sensing a call to serve as a deacon or pastor in the ELCA, please contact your synod staff person for candidacy for further conversation.

In Christ,
The Rev. A. Rebecca Resch (she/her)
Candidacy and Leadership Manager, Regions 7 & 8
becky.resch@elca.org

Region 7: ~ New Jersey Synod ~ New England Synod ~ Metropolitan New York Synod ~ Upstate New York Synod ~
~ Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod ~ Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod ~ Slovak Zion Synod ~

Region 8: ~ Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod ~ Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod ~ Allegheny Synod ~
~ Lower Susquehanna Synod ~ Upper Susquehanna Synod ~ Delaware-Maryland Synod ~
~ Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod ~ West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod ~

Report of the ELCA Church Property Resource Hub

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Did you know there is a new project of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the [Church Property Resource Hub](#)?

Developed in response to requests from synod and congregational leaders, the Church Property Resource Hub offers support in navigating the opportunities and challenges that buildings and land represent for congregational vitality and the wider mission of the church.



COURSES &
RESOURCES



SUPPORT
FORUM



SUCCESS
STORIES

Find **resources** and expand your knowledge of church property management through templates, guides, explainers; and **courses**.

Share advice and get support from colleagues with experience answering property management questions, all on our digital **forum** (forthcoming).

Be inspired by **success stories** of faith communities using underutilized space in exciting new ways to fulfill their missions.

The Church Property Resource Hub is ...

... an online platform that connects congregations and synod leaders to information, organizations and guidance on effective, faith-driven management of church property.

The Church Property Resource Hub is NOT ...

... an attempt by the churchwide organization to take control of congregations' property. Local churches hold the title and deed to their property; their right to make independent decisions about the use, management and future of their property is codified in the ELCA constitution and churches' individual constitutions.

The Church Property Resource Hub is led by the Rev. Sarah Jones (program director), Deacon Sarah Kretschmann (digital communications manager) and the Rev. Tim Brown (director of congregational stewardship). This team is reaching out across the ELCA, our sibling denominations and the many organizations and businesses that focus on church property, to collect, curate and disseminate information that synods and congregations need.

Report of the ELCA Church Property Resource Hub

In these first months of the project, the Church Property Resource Hub team has:

- Invited all 65 of the synods across the ELCA to connect with the new initiative
- Published 15+ new FREE church property resources for faith leaders
- Hosted monthly webinars featuring experts in church property
- Sent monthly newsletters to leaders throughout out the ELCA and beyond
- Gathered 12+ stories of congregations' innovative space and land projects
- Launched the new Church Property Resource Hub online Support Forum for resource sharing and support
- Developed eLearning courses for rostered and lay leaders to building their skills in managing church property

We encourage you to access the following resources as you navigate church property opportunities and challenges:

- [Join the Church Property Resource Hub Online Community on LeadNet!](#)
- [Explore resources available to you today.](#)
- [Sign up for e-newsletters to receive invitations to future webinars and the latest resources.](#)

We are grateful to do this work together. Please reach out to CPRH@elca.org with any questions or to set up an individualized meeting.

Grace and peace,



**The Rev. Sarah Lyn Jones, Deacon Sarah Kretschmann
and the Rev. Tim Brown**

Church Property Resource Hub Team

[773.380.7443](tel:773.380.7443) | CPRH@elca.org



CHURCH PROPERTY RESOURCE HUB

Resourcing Faith-driven Church Property Stewardship

A project of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the **Church Property Resource Hub** was built in response to requests from synod and local church leaders, to support them in navigating the challenges and opportunities that buildings and land represent for both congregational vitality and the wider mission of the church.



COURSES & RESOURCES

Find **resources** and expand your knowledge of church property management through templates, guides, explainers and **courses**.



SUPPORT FORUM

Share advice and get support from colleagues with experience answering property management questions, all on our digital **forum** (forthcoming).



SUCCESS STORIES

Be inspired by **success stories** of faith communities using underutilized space in exciting new ways to fulfill their mission.

Why Is the Church Property Resource Hub Being Developed?

The Church Property Resource Hub (CPRH) was created **in response to questions and needs voiced by synods and congregations** regarding the use, management and support of church-held property. Our congregations find themselves with buildings and land that no longer fit their need for programming or their capacity to manage them. This has spurred urgent conversations at local and synod levels about the future of church property. There was no centralized hub collecting the information and wisdom congregations need to **faithfully steward buildings and land** for both congregational vitality and mission impact. The ELCA churchwide organization is addressing this need by equipping congregation and synod leaders with the expertise that will empower congregations to continue to steward their buildings and land as a witness to the gospel through the Church Property Resource Hub.

Sign up for **“Church Property Resource Hub Newsletter”** for the latest news and resources.



The Church Property Resource Hub is ...

... an online platform that connects congregations and synod leaders to information, organizations and guidance on effective, faith-driven management of church property. It includes how-to lessons for the many aspects of property stewardship, stories of congregations that have found creative solutions to property challenges, and a network of professionals who can answer questions and partner with congregations and synods.

The resource hub is **built for synod and local church leaders, to help them navigate the challenges and opportunities that buildings and land represent**. The hub offers advice and experience for churches in a variety of contexts across the United States, from urban centers to suburban areas to rural and small-town communities. The Church Property Resource Hub is a growing initiative that will be completed by 2028, though the first, most basic version was launched in August 2025.

The Church Property Resource Hub is NOT ...

... an attempt by the churchwide organization to take control of congregations' property. Local churches hold the title and deed to their property; their right to make independent decisions about the use, management and future of their property is codified in the ELCA constitution and churches' individual constitutions.

... an attempt by the churchwide organization to bypass synods' relationships with their congregations. The resource hub is being built **in collaboration with synod leaders** and equips them to **assist and guide congregations** that approach the synod with ideas, questions or concerns about property stewardship.

Who leads the Church Property Resource Hub?

The Church Property Resource Hub is led by the **Rev. Sarah Jones** (program director), **Deacon Sarah Kretschmann** (digital communications manager) and the **Rev. Tim Brown** (director of congregational stewardship). This team is reaching out across the ELCA, our sibling denominations and the many organizations and businesses that focus on church property, to collect, curate and disseminate information that synods and congregations need. Please reach out with your questions!

Report of the ELCA Federal Credit Union

Faithful financial services for ELCA members and ministries



The ELCA Federal Credit Union (ELCA FCU) provides a full range of financial products and services to members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA. **As the first of the ELCA's financial ministries to offer loans to individuals**, the Credit Union offers savings and checking accounts, CDs, loans and lines of credit, credit cards, home mortgage loans for purchases or refinances, as well as home equity loans and lines of credit.

The ELCA FCU serves ministries through federally insured deposit accounts, a flexible corporate credit card program, auto loans and unsecured ministry loans up to \$100,000 to support smaller projects such as building repairs and purchases. In addition, the Workplace Banking program allows ministry organizations and congregations to offer ELCA FCU Credit Union products and services, along with other exclusive perks, to their employees.

A new cohort joined the ELCA's Resourceful Servants program, **designed to improve financial wellness and assist rostered leaders in building emergency savings funds**. Through this matching program, ELCA rostered leaders make ongoing deposits to their Credit Union emergency savings accounts. The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA matches those deposits up to an established amount. Together, more **than 700 rostered ministers** have been served, collectively depositing more than \$1 million in emergency savings.

A **strong online presence** means members have access to funds with an ELCA Federal Credit Union Mastercard Debit Card at more than 30,000 surcharge-free ATMs. The ELCA FCU also offers account-to-account (A2A) transfers, person-to-person (P2P) payments (similar to Venmo and Zelle), remote deposit, bill pay and more.

Why choose the ELCA Federal Credit Union?

- **The ELCA Federal Credit Union supports the ELCA's mission of good stewardship.** We provide full services to all ELCA members, congregations and related ministries.
- **As a not-for-profit financial cooperative chartered to serve our church, we offer socially responsible banking solutions often priced more competitively** than traditional banks. We have demonstrated success in providing savings to our members.
- **With the church as our sponsor, we operate in ways that are consistent with the church's values.**

Membership is open to every ELCA member, synod, congregation and ministry—and their employees.

For more information about the products and services of the ELCA Federal Credit Union, please visit our website, elcafcu.org or call us toll-free at 877-715-1111.

Updates from the ELCA Foundation

Synod Assemblies 2026



We are the ELCA Foundation, a financial ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We walk alongside faithful people and organizations – helping them turn generosity into legacy, and legacy into ministry.

We believe generosity is more than a financial act; it is a testimony of faith, gratitude and hope. With \$1.5 billion in donor-designated gifts and invested assets entrusted to our care, we partner with individuals and organizations to thoughtfully steward these resources and maximize their impact.

We serve as a bridge between individual generosity and the shared mission of the ELCA – from congregations and synods to seminaries, outdoor ministries, and churchwide ministries such as ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response. Every planned gift we steward is an investment in the church's life – now and into the future.

What we do

We offer guidance that is both spiritually grounded and financially sound, ensuring every gift reflects the heart of the giver and the needs of the church.

- **Gift Planning Services:** Our regional gift planners accompany individuals and families through faithful, personalized planning – helping them create charitable legacies through bequests, trusts, charitable gift annuities, real estate, retirement assets and more.
- **Ministry Growth Fund:** A socially responsible investment option that supports endowments and ministries across the ELCA, balancing fiduciary excellence with faithful stewardship.
- **Resources and Tools:** From our online Planning Library and free Personal Estate Planning Kit to our partnership with Giving Docs, we provide easy, trustworthy ways to start planning today.
- **Ministry Partnership:** We help ELCA ministry leaders grow a culture of generosity without adding more to their workload, offering training, templates and direct support to strengthen local ministry.



Our vision

is to support and sustain ELCA ministries by enhancing gifting capacity and stewarding resources.

Our mission

is to be a thriving ministry that develops a culture of intentional generosity and financial stewardship to expand the work of the ELCA.

Updates from the ELCA Foundation

Synod Assemblies 2026



2025 At a Glance ✨

In 2025, the ELCA Foundation's gift planning network walked alongside **190 donors/families** in developing faith-focused gift plans that reflect their passion and purpose.

\$79.9M

in future planned-gift commitments

\$6.9M

in currently funded gifts

\$34.4M

in direct support to individual congregations

\$105.4M

in existing gifts to ministry stewarded

In total, the network generated **\$205.4 million** in gifts and investment assets, which includes **\$118.5 million** in new assets invested in the Ministry Growth Fund.

Let's continue the conversation

The ELCA Foundation has gift planning tools for every situation and professional staff throughout the U.S. ready to walk with you every step of the way. All of our gift planning services are made available to individuals and congregations without obligation. Contact your gift planner to get started:

Lisa Marie Higginbotham, CFRE

Lisa.Higginbotham@elca.org

805-910-5048

Report of the ELCA Mission Investment Fund



Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund: Helping ELCA congregations bring ministry to life



The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a *financial services ministry of the ELCA*, has been a **steady and reliable financial partner** for congregations, ministries and individuals for more than 150 years. Through times of growth and uncertainty alike, MIF has remained committed to strengthening ELCA ministries and communities — delivering customer-first support backed by flexible financing solutions.

In 2025, MIF continued to support ministry growth across the ELCA. Your investments helped expand worship spaces, rebuild congregations after fires and natural disasters, provide spaces for people to age with dignity, start green projects and support accessibility remodeling for community spaces. Each project strengthens ELCA ministries, ensuring that they stay vibrant, inclusive and fully prepared to support the communities they serve.

By the numbers:

- **Total Loans Outstanding:** \$614,967,000
- **Total Assets:** \$779,189,000
- **Total Investment Obligations:** \$551,452,000
- **Net Assets & Capital Ratio:** 27.4%

What makes MIF unique?

- **Proven stability:** With more than a century and a half of experience, MIF has weathered changing economic and political landscapes, maintaining financial strength for ELCA ministries.
- **Deep expertise in church and ministry financing:** We understand the unique needs of faith communities and have longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects.
- **Competitive rates and terms:** Our financial offerings are structured to support ministries of all sizes.
- **A full suite of financial services:** In partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union, we provide a range of financial solutions for congregations, ministries and individuals.
- **Faithful stewardship:** Investments in MIF directly support loans that fund hundreds of capital projects across the church.

MIF continues to enhance our tools and financial services to better support ELCA ministries. And even as we look ahead with fresh vision and innovation, our foundation remains the same: enduring trust, time-tested stability and commitment woven through generations. In every chapter, we journey with ELCA members and ministries, united in faith — a steadfast partner supporting God’s work in the world.

MIF at work in the Allegheny Synod (as of December 31, 2025):

- \$3,058,937 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations.

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact The Rev. Kent Peterson, Regional Manager: 276-698-7970 kent.peterson@elca.org

Report of the ELCA Presiding Bishop

Rev. Yehiel Curry



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

March 23, 2026

Dear siblings in Christ,

As you gather for your synod assembly, I want to express my gratitude for what you are doing — and have been doing — for this church, *our* church.

In the months since I was installed as presiding bishop, I have been focused on connection. Some of you have heard me talk about what it means to be a connected church. This vision of connectedness grows directly out of one of the three priorities we, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, have named for this season of our life together.

When we lifted up these priorities, we committed ourselves to them not as abstract ideas but as guiding commitments for how we live and serve as church. As I reflected on them, the third priority stood out with particular clarity: to be a connected, sustainable church, raising the bar together.

That priority has been shaping my thinking and my leadership. It asks not just what we do but how we do it — together, across congregations, synods and the churchwide organization. Connectedness is not a program or a slogan; it is a way of being church that recognizes our shared calling and our shared responsibility. This is not my church. It is yours. It is ours, together. The ministries you carry out in your congregations and synods are not just yours — they are ours together.

Over the next several years, you will hear this priority expressed with greater focus and clarity. In 2026, our emphasis is on connection — strengthening relationships, listening deeply and recognizing how much we depend on one another.

In 2027, you will begin to hear me speak more intentionally about sustainability — how we steward our people, our resources and our structures so that our witness remains strong for generations to come. By 2028, connection and sustainability will come together in a shared language of togetherness, as we more fully live into who God is calling us to be as church.

So, when you hear language about being together, it is about living out the ELCA’s vision of a world experiencing the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. It matters deeply to me that we know who we are, moving forward as one body, trusting God and one another.

I believe this is how connection is built — not by standing alone but by being church together.

With gratitude and hope,

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Report of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa)



Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa)

Church Together in Pennsylvania for the sake of the world God loves

In response to God’s love in Jesus Christ, we advocate for wise and just public policies in Pennsylvania that promote the common good. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania is a shared ministry of seven Pennsylvania synods and ELCA Service and Justice. Through LAMPa, Lutherans called to be part of God’s healing and reconciling mission in the world are supported to voice their faith convictions in the public square with and on behalf of our most vulnerable neighbors and the world we share, while seeking to create a more just Commonwealth.

In 2025, LAMPa marked 46 years of ministry with gratitude for a legacy of community building and justice seeking. We worked together on state legislation addressing hunger and poverty, housing insecurity, health care, climate change, immigration and discrimination. We equipped people of faith to stand against hate, to bridge divides and work for peace. We trained and organized to prevent political violence and protect vulnerable neighbors – helping disciples act at the local, state and federal levels. We helped congregations and leaders stand together against attempted intimidation by white supremacist groups and threats to immigrant communities.

We published a study guide to accompany the newly approved ELCA social statement on Faith and Civic Life – now offered as an official resource for the whole ELCA.

As 2026 began, we partnered with United Lutheran Seminary to host our second program based on lessons from Dietrich Bonhoeffer – this time in companionship with the life and writings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Our annual day in the Capitol saw another year of record attendance with more congregations sending teams to learn and return to inspire others and support one another as they act on behalf of neighbors near and far.

As marginalized communities are under attack and safeguards for human rights, religious liberty and human and environmental health are increasingly threatened, LAMPa is striving to connect and equip growing numbers of disciples seeking to respond faithfully in their communities and with state and federal policymakers.

I give thanks to God for you and for the support of Allegheny Synod Policy Council representatives Terry Koch and the Rev. Rebecca Horn.

With deep gratitude for all of the ways in which you support LAMPa’s ministry,

Tracey DePasquale
LAMPa Director

Report of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State / Lutheran Student Community



Every fall, as new students move into their residence halls for the first time and returning students make their way back to campus from summer internships, study abroad, and other time away, Lutheran Campus Ministry remembers clearly that God is always doing a new thing. A new academic year means starting over; rebuilding community with a mix of new and returning people, each at a different place on their college journey and their faith journey. God is truly the author of new beginnings for our student community.

On the first Thursday of classes this fall, Brady (first-year student majoring in microbiology) came to worship and dinner with Lutheran Campus Ministry. He was looking for an inclusive community, where everyone is welcome. It was even better than he expected. "I've only been coming for a little bit, but it's a close-knit group of people you can rely on. It feels authentic. Everyone is open and comfortable sharing. It feels like a family setting, without hierarchy and you don't find that much around campus."

Student life is as complicated and challenging as any other chapter in life. Students face family concerns, academic demands, social and friendship challenges, and uncertainty about finances and their future. Within Lutheran Campus Ministry, students gather with others for worship, discussion, service, or meals together and there they encounter authentic community. Students are reminded that they are loved and embraced by God. In community, students discern the ways God will work through them in their careers and their whole lives to be part of bringing the Good News to the world around them.

YOUR presence on campus. We are at Penn State on behalf of the synod and the whole church. We walk with students through their years at the university, providing opportunities for them to encounter God and grow as people of faith, make connections with other Christians, and find opportunities to serve their neighbor. Lutheran Campus Ministry provides ongoing reminders of God's love and action in the world that touches individual students and the wider campus community as well.

Worshipping Community – Students gather weekly for worship on campus with Lutheran Campus Ministry at the interfaith Pasquerilla Spiritual Center. In the midst of their demanding and busy schedules, students set aside time for worship together, using the ancient rite of evening prayer. They sing, pray, share scripture and reflections; encountering God in the middle of the campus. On Sunday mornings, Deacon Alicia Anderson, Campus Minister, welcomes students at Grace Lutheran Church near campus, helping them know they are welcome and find connections within the multi-generational worshipping community.

Community of Students – Weekly group meals through LCM help students find authentic community within our campus ministry. As students spend time together over Thursday dinner, they talk about their week, sharing struggles as well as successes. Students also connect with each other and build friendships at volunteer events, through discussions, and in worship. They truly share the journey together, supporting and caring for each other in the highs and lows of university life and the years that follow. As students share challenges, laugh together, pray for each other, and learn, they embody the presence of God with and for one another.

Report of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State / Lutheran Student Community

Service and Learning – Students are eager to share their time and abilities to help others. Through service both on campus and off campus, they find the joy of helping while learning more about the complexities of need, generosity, and justice. They also learn about themselves while serving as God’s hands in the local community and wider world.

Growing in Faith and Knowledge – Students seek safe places to ask questions about life and faith, as well as places where they can share their thoughts and develop new understandings. Students explore questions and delve into the countless ways faith and daily life intersect through informal conversations, discussions, events, campus-wide speakers, and one-on-one conversations with our campus minister. They discern how God is calling them to serve the needs of the world through the work they are preparing for, as well as the activities, interests, and relationships in their lives.

Congregational Partnerships – Grace Lutheran Church continues as an important partner in ministry in State College. Students worship there on Sundays and are welcome to participate in the life of the congregation. Students are a vital part of vocal and instrumental music at Grace this year and help with anti-hunger food distributions in partnership with the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. Throughout the region, LCM is striving to build more and deeper connections with congregations. The wide network of congregations in central Pennsylvania and Maryland that provides financial support helps offset cuts in synodical and churchwide funding. We are deeply grateful for the generous support from congregations, alumni, and friends of the ministry.

Campus Partnerships – Lutheran Campus Ministry and Lutheran Student Community maintain important connections with a variety of groups on campus. Our office in Pasquerilla Spiritual Center provides regular opportunities to work with the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development in supporting students who are seeking pastoral care, and to partner on events and projects, including Interfaith Literacy Chats and hosting Labyrinth reflections during Advent and Lent. Opportunities to volunteer at the Penn State Arboretum allow students to serve the community while enjoying the beauty of God’s creation. We continue to explore ways to deepen partnerships with the Gender Equity Center and the Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity within Penn State Student Affairs.

Ecumenical and interfaith partnerships are valuable in our campus setting. We participate in a Ramadan Iftar with the Muslim community at Pasquerilla Spiritual Center, and continue to connect with the Hillel Jewish community at Penn State through the challenges of violence in the Middle East, knowing there are no easy answers to the complicated issues there. On Ash Wednesday, Campus Minister Alicia Anderson offers *Ashes to Go* for students between classes on the plaza outside Palmer Art Museum alongside the United Methodist campus minister. This year’s Alternative Spring Break to North Carolina for hurricane relief is a partnership with the United Methodist Campus Ministry and hosted by Luther Rock Camp and LDR in North Carolina. Through the Penn State Powwow, we experience Native American spiritual practice and learn more about native communities.

Online Presence – Lutheran Campus Ministry engages and informs people online through weekly listserv messages, Instagram and Facebook posts, and our website. Reflection and prayer resources, updates on events and opportunities, and ways to request prayers or one-on-one conversation are available for students, alumni, parents and supporters. This is our sixth year offering a Lenten program through social media, alongside year-round weekly reflections, prayers, and other posts. Through social media, we inform, offer resources for spiritual growth, and tell the story of how Lutheran Campus Ministry impacts students.

Report of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State / Lutheran Student Community

Fundraising Efforts – As Lutheran Campus Ministry continues adapting to decreased synodical and churchwide support, congregational gifts and individual donations are vitally important. Through social media for *LCM IMPACT*, *Campus Ministry Madness*, and *Giving Tuesday* campaigns have helped increase our ministry's visibility and provide opportunities to tell the story of Lutheran Campus Ministry. Your financial contributions, volunteer time, leadership skills, student referrals, regular prayers, and other forms of support help us continue to build our faith community and bring the good news of Jesus on campus.

We are grateful – We truly are grateful that the Allegheny Synod sees the vital need for Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State and our work on campus. Providing a community that is centered on the Gospel of Jesus where questions are welcome, diversity is celebrated, and God's love is truly lived, is both life-giving and life-altering. Reaching out to young adults to support and foster their faith is incredibly important for the life of the church.

We invite your continued prayers for campus ministry and for students as they face the unique challenges of university life and growing into adulthood. Please pray especially for those who will graduate this year and those who will arrive on campus for their first year this fall.

Thank you for the important partnership we share in this ministry.

Peace,
Alicia Anderson, Campus Minister
Minister of Word and Service (ELCA Deacon)

Website: lutheranpennstate.org
Social Media on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/lutheranpennstate) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/lutheranpennstate): @lutheranpennstate

Weekly listserv for students at Penn State: [Sign Up Here](#)
Listserv messages for Friends of Lutheran Campus Ministry: [Sign Up Here](#)

Visit the LuMin Network website to find information about campus ministry at other colleges and universities and connect students from your congregation: luminelca.org/ministries/.

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State is the ELCA's presence on the Penn State campus, supported through grants from the Allegheny Synod, Lower Susquehanna Synod, Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA Churchwide, as well as individuals and congregations who are committed to fostering spiritual growth of students on campus, laying the groundwork for their lives as followers of Jesus in college and after graduation.

Report of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

Preserving—and sharing—our Lutheran story

What we do

The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic (LHSMA) helps people find, protect, and tell Lutheran stories. Our mission is simple: **preserve, document, and spark interest** in our rich Lutheran traditions across the Mid-Atlantic region. We connect congregations and researchers with the right repositories, offer programs, and lift up new voices in church history.

Why this matters

Our congregations have deep roots worth celebrating and learning from. Good records help today's ministry—**confirm anniversary dates, ground mission plans, and share our witness with the next generation.** LHSMA makes it easier for Allegheny Synod's members, both lay and ordained, to start, organize, and share their work in church history.

What we offer

- **Practical research help:** We point you to the right archives and collections so your time is well spent.
- **Workshops and events:** learn how to preserve and share your congregation's story.
- **The Abdel Ross Wentz Prize:** \$2,500 awarded for outstanding work in American Lutheran history, including an **Amateur Historian** category.

How you can take part:

- **Congregations:** Tell us what you need—anniversary plans, records questions, or how to begin preserving today.
- **Amateur historians & students:** Submit your research for the Wentz Prize.
- **Everyone:** Follow us on Facebook, join as a member, and invite others to explore our shared story of faith.

Find us online:

[Website: lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](http://lutheranhistoricalsociety.com) (programs, membership, Wentz Prize)

[Facebook: Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic](https://www.facebook.com/LutheranHistoricalSocietyoftheMidAtlantic) (updates and events)

Questions during Assembly? Speak with the Rev. Paul Tomkiel or message us on Facebook. Let's make sure today's ministry builds on yesterday's faithful witness—and that we hand the story on well into tomorrow.

Your Calling + Our Benefits

Portico Benefit Services' Report to 2026 Synod Assemblies

Your calling is to serve. Ours is to support you. As the ELCA's benefit ministry, Portico provides benefits that nurture holistic health, so you can live out your calling and serve with confidence and grace. Here's a visual recap of what our community of more than 52,000 plan members experienced in 2025.

52K
Members
Served by
Portico



2,829

Text/Virtual Health Care Visits
to 98point6®, with an estimated cost savings of \$263 per visit.



205
Births &
Adoptions

11th

Consecutive Year
of our Customer Care Center being named a Center of Excellence by Benchmark Portal.



619
Changes
of Call*

1,702

Sword Health Enrollments
and nearly 42K total sessions in their Thrive, Move, and Bloom digital physical therapy and mobility programs.

\$157K
Debt Paid Off
by members via LSS of Minnesota Financial Counseling, with over \$2.6M paid off since 2008.

16%

of Member Income
saved for retirement, on average, by members sponsored in the Traditional Benefits Program, thanks to employer and member contributions.*

\$232M

Made in Annuity Payments
and 533 retirements.

4,214

Members Worked with a Portico Financial Planner,
with a cumulative 95.5% satisfaction rate.*



32
Beginning
Disability Benefits

\$232M
Made in Annuity Payments
and 533 retirements.



Nearly 10% of Our 10K ELCA Medicare-Primary Plan Members
participated in the SilverSneakers fitness program.*

1,927
Members Made Roth After-tax Contributions
to their retirement plans.

We design our benefits to align with the needs of the church, pooling resources through a community benefits plan to deliver stable, sustainable support that enhances everyday life and brings value to those who serve. Follow us on social media @PorticoBenefits.

*Source: Traditional Benefits Program. All other numbers and percentages are drawn from across Portico's benefit programs.



Report of St. Olaf College



Report to the ELCA Synod Assemblies - April 2026

Founded in 1874, the mission of St. Olaf College is to challenge students to excel in the liberal arts, examine faith and values, and explore meaningful vocation in an inclusive, globally engaged community nourished by Lutheran tradition. St. Olaf's current student population of approximately 3050 degree-seeking undergraduates represents 49 states and 100 countries. 21% are first-generation college students, 22% identify as domestic students of color, 11% are international students, and 22% are income-eligible for Pell grants. St. Olaf continues to be one of only a handful of higher education institutions nation-wide that meets the full demonstrated need of all admitted students through a variety of financial assistance programs, [including a new study abroad affordability commitment to be launched in 2027, thanks to the generosity of Louis and Mary Kay Smith](#). Approximately half of our students indicate that they are affiliated with a Christian denomination, with 15% self-identifying as Lutheran and another 5% as members of a denomination in full communion with the ELCA.

St. Olaf's core curriculum engages students with the full array of liberal arts disciplines, including one required course examining Religion, Faith, and Values, one on Christian Theology in Dialogue, and one on Ethical Reasoning in Context. Among our class of 2025 graduates, 97% had participated in a "high-impact educational practice," such as a mentored research experience, a learning community, study abroad/away, or an academic civic engagement course. Over the past three years, an average of 94% of our recent graduates were working, pursuing further education, or engaged in full-time military or other service programs within seven months of graduation.

Under the leadership of president Dr. Susan Rundell Singer, the college is now implementing a six-year strategic plan, focused on elevating vocation, expanding innovation, and sustaining community. Leading the implementation of the strategic plan are three implementation teams and the President's Leadership Team, including our new vice president for academic affairs and provost Dr. Tarshia Stanley and chief of staff Kathryn Lohre '99. Dr. Stanley comes to St. Olaf from Wagner College on Staten Island where she served as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Ms. Lohre comes to St. Olaf after serving for fifteen years in the Presiding Bishop's Office as the Executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations and Theological Discernment.

St. Olaf continues to offer [daily Chapel services and Sunday worship](#) throughout the academic year, led by College Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Matthew Marohl, and featuring members and friends of the St. Olaf community as speakers and musicians. Consistent with St. Olaf's identity as a "rooted and open" ELCA institution, the College Ministry team also includes an Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life and an Associate Chaplain for Muslim Life. This year, St. Olaf was ranked #4 on Niche's [Best Christian Colleges in America](#) list, recognizing St. Olaf as an academically strong, faith-based institution.

In the fall of 2025, the College named [Dr. Kiara Jorgenson, Associate Professor of Religion and Environmental Studies, as the Martin E. Marty Chair in Religion and the Academy](#). The [Marty Chair](#) fosters ongoing dialogue that explores the intersection between significant religious and cultural issues and St. Olaf's role as a liberal arts college of the church.

The [Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community](#) continues to advance a compelling vision for Lutheranism in the 21st century, foster interreligious engagement, nurture vocational discernment, and provide thought leadership on campus and in the community. A key part of the Lutheran Center's work is to help all the college's constituencies understand the role of Lutheran tradition in supporting the things they value most about St. Olaf. The Center has recently completed or is nearing completion on two projects

Report of St. Olaf College

made possible by grants from the [Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education](#). The Life on Purpose project infused vocational exploration in St. Olaf students' experiences by supporting shifts in advising, classroom projects, and faculty and staff capacity building around vocation. The Honest Storytelling project engaged twenty staff and faculty and one student to research and tell untold and undertold stories from the college's first 150 years, and will result in the publication of a volume in honor of the college's sesquicentennial due out through Fortress Press this fall.

In 2025, grants from [Lilly Endowment Inc.](#) continued to support two complementary initiatives—the [Nourishing Vocation Project](#) and the [Nourishing Vocation with Children Project](#)—advancing congregational leadership, vocational discernment, and intergenerational, arts-enriched worship. The Nourishing Vocation Project, part of the Thriving Congregations Initiative, strengthened congregations and ecclesiastical partners by fostering peer leadership, deepening vocational discernment, and expanding practical ministry tools. Pastoral coaching pilots and adaptable resources enhanced leaders' capacity for contextually grounded discernment, while integration with broader institutional and interfaith efforts extended the initiative's reach and sustainability.

The Nourishing Vocation with Children Project advanced child-attentive, arts-enriched worship through the Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer Initiative. Resources were refined and expanded, engaging congregations across multiple states and denominational contexts. New liturgies and participatory art experiences nurtured children's faith while strengthening congregational life.

We look forward to an exciting summer 2026 at St. Olaf as we welcome back [Lutheran Summer Music](#) to campus for the first time since 1994 and the national conference of the [Association of Lutheran Church Musicians](#).

We invite lay, professional, and rostered church leaders to the [2026 Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts](#), July 20–22, 2026, at St. Olaf College, under the theme “Nourishing Vocation: Every Time + Every Age + Every Place.” We encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities and resources St. Olaf provides for education, artistic engagement, and spiritual enrichment. We look forward to welcoming you to campus, and to welcoming the prospective students you introduce to St. Olaf.

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS Seafarers International House

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: A Homecoming for Prisoners of Hope

Return to your fortress, you prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you.

Zechariah 9:12

Dear friends of Seafarers International House (SIH):

In February 2024, a report released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that refugees and asylees have generated tens of billions of dollars more in local, state, and federal tax revenues over the last 15 years than they have cost in direct government services — ultimately representing a net fiscal gain at all levels of government. (See text box for details.)*

And yet, throughout 2025 and especially today, many refugees and asylum seekers are being threatened with deportation and imprisonment. As SIH board member Ralie Deffenbaugh reminds us, in September 2025, the Council of Churches in Namibia convened an event titled “we are prisoners of hope,” which drew parallels between Namibia’s historical struggle for liberation and the current plight of refugees and asylum seekers. The phrase is based on Zechariah 9:12 and has historically been used by leaders like Bishop Zephania Kameeta and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. What a powerful connotation.

Here at SIH, we have been charting a course toward a grand Homecoming — a return to a new home through the purchase of a property in downtown Manhattan. Just a stone’s throw from our original site in 1873, this new space will become a true home away from

home for asylum seekers and seafarers, many of whom are “prisoners of hope.” Within these walls, our guests will find safety, welcome, and the assurance that they have reached a secure harbor.

During 2026, we will begin renovating this right-sized mission building, creating 16 guest rooms and community space to accommodate both small asylum-seeking families and individuals, as well as visiting seafarers. With these improvements underway, we are looking ahead to opening our doors in early 2027, ready to offer refuge and rest to all who arrive.

Parallel, we will be launching a comprehensive campaign to pay for the renovations, reduce the burden of a loan for the new building, and strengthen our services to seafarers and asylum seekers. We will keep you posted in the months to come.

In April 2025, we had a most successful Setting the Course reception thanks to the generosity of our honorees Susan Winfree, Willie Barrere, and notably Robert Sappio, - and their friends. The boost in event support enabled us to expand our services through a partnership with the Houston International Seafarers Center with our port chaplain Pastor Tammy Sharp in that busy port in the Lone Star State.

Thus, we continued a robust port mission in now six ports with nine port chaplains and ship visitors, and a fleet of six vans that we use to visit ships and to transport seafarers. In the summer and fall, volunteers from the Propeller Club, congregations, board members,

MISSION

Seafarers International House (SIH) is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and immigrants.

SIH offers hospitality, social assistance, and advocacy to a multi-national and multi-faith community in the Ports of Albany, Baltimore, Duluth, Houston, New Haven, and New York & New Jersey, and in New York City.

and individuals helped us assemble satchels. These efforts paid off with 3,405 Christmas-at-Sea satchels delivered to seafarers connecting donors with seafaring “prisoners of hope” who experienced the joy of Christmas.

In 2025, we served 19,519 people including 19 asylum seekers we welcomed providing them with shelter, food, and social work assistance; a far cry from the 33 and 49 in 2024 and 2023 respectively because asylum seekers are fearful of coming out of the shadows. Obviously, the curtailment on asylum seekers has had its effect.

With these positive 2025 highlights in mind, perhaps we are all “prisoners of hope” in that as we are bound together in despair, we are also bound together in hope that will not leave us imprisoned.

“For I know the plans I have for you” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

Peace,



Marsh Luther Drage
Pastor and Executive Director

* From 2005 to 2019, refugees and asylees paid a total of \$123.8 billion more in taxes than they cost in government services, for a net fiscal gain of \$31.5 billion to the federal government and \$92.3 billion to state and local governments combined. Refugees and asylees paid an estimated \$363 billion to the federal government through payroll, income, and excise taxes, and \$218 billion to state and local governments through income, sales, and property taxes. Even when factoring in their spouses and children under 18, many of whom are U.S. citizens, refugees and asylees still provided a net fiscal gain, costing \$723.4 billion in government services yet paying \$739.4 billion in tax revenue, for a net gain of \$16 billion.

2025 Program Impact

19,519 immigrants and seafarers directly benefited from SIH's services (up from 19,066)

2,351 lodging nights (up from 2,225) provided to 139 seafarers in Manhattan.

14,078 seafarers were visited and counseled (up from 13,556) on 1,347 vessels, receiving essentials they requested.

1,878 seafarers were transported to a mall or medical facilities.

3,405 seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings to spread joy beyond borders and oceans.

19 asylum seekers received free lodging for a total of 1,328 nights. They hailed from Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Cuba (3), Haiti (5), Nigeria, Peru, Ukraine, and Venezuela (5). See map below.



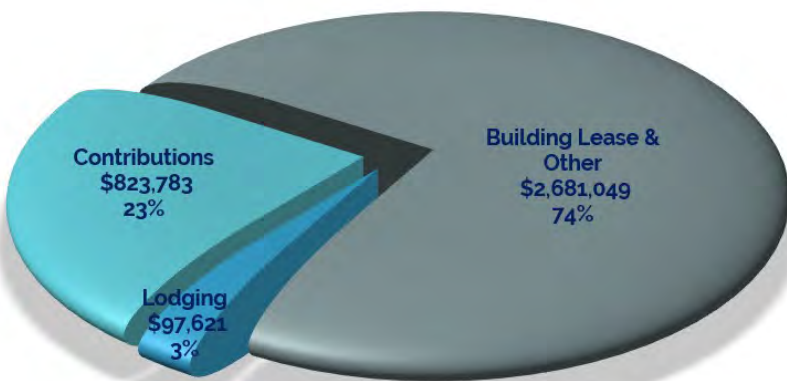
2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

In accordance with our 2024 - 2028 strategic plan, operating gains continued to help build reserves for the purchase of the new right-sized mission headquarters (\$1M). These gains also allow for capital repairs on the guesthouse (\$324,806), which is leased to Breaking Ground, a NYC-based non-profit which provides transitional housing to the community.

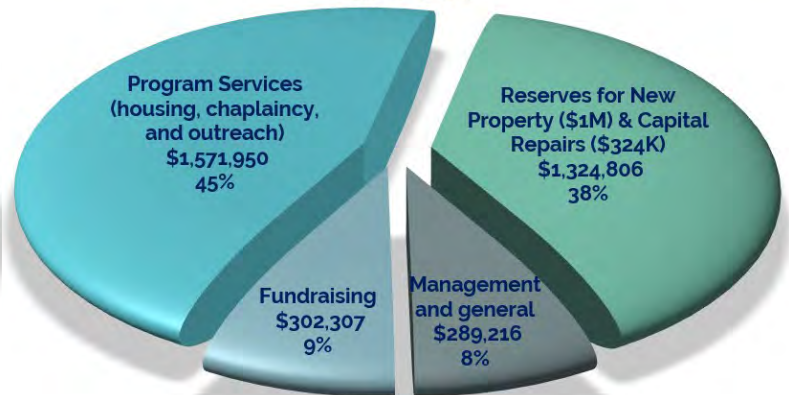
Lease revenue needs to be augmented by donations to support our services and the purchase and renovation of our new home starting in 2026. Program services and reserves accounted for 83% of expenses with only 17% spent on management and fundraising. These figures reflect unaudited revenue and expenses and are subject to change.

To request the audited 2025 financial statements please send an email to henryk@sihny.org.

Operating Revenue 2025 (pre-audit)
\$3,602,453



Operating Expenses & Reserves for New Property 2025 (pre-audit)
\$3,488,279



Report of the Sequanota Lutheran Conference Center & Camp

Rev. Nathan Pile, Director



Sequanota

Lutheran Conference Center & Camp

PO Box 245, Jennerstown, PA 15547

(814) 629-6627

www.sequanota.com

2026 Allegheny Synod Assembly Report

The 2025 season was another exciting year. There were over 736 summer campers for our summer season. An additional 1,364 people slept under our roofs in 2025. Combined this is roughly the population of Geistown passing through Sequanota's facilities on an annual basis.



13 Lutheran congregations supported 79 campers through additional scholarship programs.

The 2025 season saw some significant year-round staff changes. Hanna Weimer has returned to teaching full-time. She is still working for camp during our summer season and on a very part-time basis year-round. We love Hanna and are delighted to still have her as a part of the

Report of the Sequanota Lutheran Conference Center & Camp

Rev. Nathan Pile, Director

team. We have also been transitioning the front office registrar for over six months. So if you have called and missed us, I am sorry. We hope to have this office transition completed by the end of this year to better be able to serve the needs of all who call Sequanota.

Sequanota continues to grow our Hosted Ministries at the Bowersox Center and Main Camp. As you can see in the chart below this aspect of our ministry continues to expand especially after the pandemic. One of the true blessings was being able to host the Synod Rostered Leaders events in January and September last year. Thank you Bishop and Rostered Leaders for supporting camp!

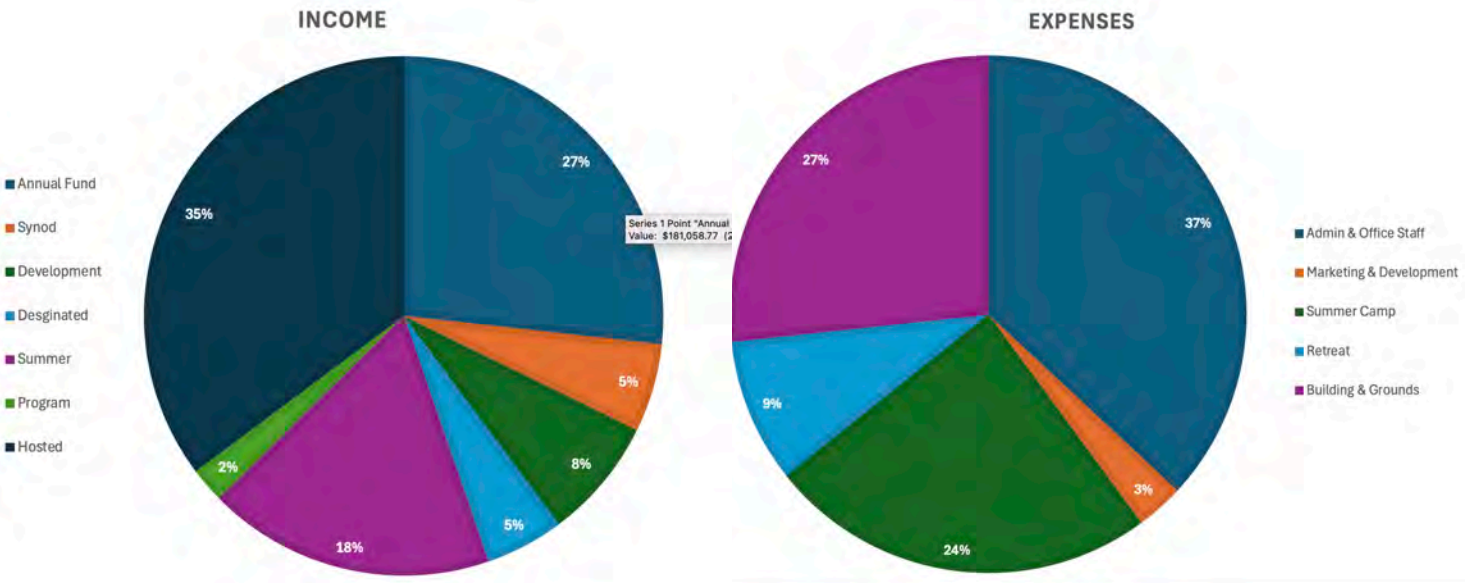
| Hosted Ministry | 2017 | 2019 | 2021 | 2025 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Main Camp | \$84,557.33 | \$76,234.00 | \$25,274.60 | \$146,642.50 |
| Bowersox Center | \$83,032.65 | \$84,999.80 | \$46,896.84 | \$104,406.30 |
| Total: | \$167,589.98 | \$161,233.80 | \$72,171.44 | \$251,048.80 |

Along with Synod leaders and congregations like Zion Lutheran, Hollidaysburg who visit at least 4-5 times a year. We host groups from other Christian faith groups like the Johnstown/Altoona Roman Catholic Diocese. As well as a Muslim youth gathering, spiritual communities, family reunions, a mushroom group, a ski/dance group, and other ELCA organizations like LAMPA. Pastor Bowersox's dream of Sequanota being a place for all generations is certainly true today.

Report of the Sequanota Lutheran Conference Center & Camp

Rev. Nathan Pile, Director

Here are the financials for 2025. **The total income for the year was \$681,851.79. The total expenses were \$631,600.92.** Here is a breakdown by ministry area to show how you helped accomplish Sequanota's goals this year.



New and exciting information for the 2026 season.

Again we celebrate the improvements to Cabin #9 by Friedens Lutheran Church. St. David's Lutheran, Mt. Calvary Lutheran, and St. Paul's Lutheran (Mundy's Corner) churches are all sponsoring upgrades to their cabins as well. By mid June we will have 50% of our main camp cabins under a metal roof. Thank you to all who have helped to make this priority a reality.

This summer we will welcome international staff from Pakistan, Paraguay, Mexico and Spain. Two of the five staff are returning staff from last summer.

Also this summer we will be gifting a new age appropriate Bible for each camper thanks to a grant from the "Go Tell It IN the Mountains" proclaiming the gospel grant. Every camper at three regional camps across the three synods will receive a new Bible to help the engage the word of Christ. A BIG thank you to Pr. John Kratz and the grant steering committee to make this amazing gift happen. The reason behind this is that 60% of Sequanota's campers do not connect with a Lutheran church. We wanted to make sure all campers have a Bible to connect with God. Thank you for this gift to make this dream a reality.

Our hosted ministry calendar continues to fill up and we are continuing to take new registrations for summer camp. Though we have applied the first waiting list to a week of camp. If you know kids who will benefit from a week at camp please invite them. No camper is turned away from camp because of financial reasons. If your congregation has felt the desire to connect to each other in new and powerful ways we would invite you to consider a retreat at Sequanota. We will help you plan it! Coming to camp as a camper or a guest connects you to Christ, creation, and community. All are welcome!

Report of Susquehanna University

The Rev. Kristina E Schaefer, Chaplain to the University

Life of the University

The 2025-2026 academic year marks the 168th for Susquehanna University. The University continues to serve a religiously diverse student body, about 8% of whom self-identify as Lutheran and who originate from 32 states and 30 countries. Dr. Jonathan Green, Susquehanna's 15th president, is completing his ninth year of service.

Campus Religious Activities

The past year has been a time of transition in the office of religious and spiritual life. Rev. Dr. Scott Kershner left in December 2024 to accept a new congregational call. The university is grateful to Rev. Vickie Brown for her pastoral leadership during the call process and the interim time. In December 2025, Rev. Stina House '04 Schaeffer was called as the University's 10th chaplain and director of religious and Spiritual life.

Religious and spiritual life, as part of the Center for Spirituality and meaning, continues in its mission to invite all students to explore life's big questions during their development as moral ethical global citizens.

Worship is held in Weber Chapel on Sunday mornings when classes are in session. We welcome students, faculty and staff as well as members of the local community. A group of student leaders is instrumental in leading worship and focusing on servant leadership in all parts of the worship experience.

Susquehanna's commitment to interfaith engagement remains at the core of our work in Religious and Spiritual life. Over ten religious clubs and organizations offer a wealth of opportunities for students to engage in religious life on campus. This year, as in years past, as part of our commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr and his legacy, an interfaith celebration was held and focused on the question, "What ties us together"?

In Conclusion

Susquehanna University continues to be grateful for the support and encouragement we receive from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Report of the United Lutheran Seminary



Dear Partners in Ministry,

Grace and peace to you as you gather for your Synod Assembly. On behalf of United Lutheran Seminary, thank you for your faithful partnership in forming leaders for Christ's Church.

This is a remarkable year in the life of the seminary. In 2026, we mark our bicentennial, celebrating 200 years of preparing leaders to proclaim the Gospel, serve communities, and guide the Church through seasons of change. We give thanks for those who came before us, whose vision and faithfulness built the foundation we stand on today. At the same time, we look ahead with confidence, trusting that God continues to call new leaders for a new day in the life of the Church.

That sense of being grounded and moving forward at the same time is shaping everything we do. The needs of the Church are changing, and so the way we prepare leaders is changing as well. Across our campuses in Gettysburg and Philadelphia, and through our distributed learning model, students are engaging in theological education that is rigorous, flexible, and deeply connected to real ministry contexts. Many remain rooted in their home communities while they study, bringing what they learn directly into the places where they serve.

We are forming leaders not only for congregations, but also for chaplaincy, nonprofit leadership, campus ministry, and emerging forms of service that continue to take shape across the Church. The need for well-prepared pastors and deacons remains urgent, and we are responding by growing into that need with creativity and purpose.

At a time when many theological schools are facing uncertainty, United Lutheran Seminary is in a position of strength. Our recent ATS reports show an institution with significant financial stability and long-term sustainability, including strong reserves and consistent operating performance. At the same time, we continue to see encouraging signs in enrollment and student engagement across our programs. These are not simply institutional metrics. They are signs that we are equipped to carry this mission forward and to invest in the future of the Church.

One of the clearest ways that investment is felt is in the lives of our students. Because of the generosity of congregations and individuals across this Church, we have been able to remove many of the financial barriers that once stood in the way of theological education. Today, only a small percentage of our

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students take on educational debt. That means our graduates are free to say yes to calls in congregations and ministries without hesitation, able to serve where they are needed most.

We see hope in these students every day. They come from a wide range of backgrounds and bring with them a deep commitment to the Gospel and to the communities they will serve. Some are answering a call they have carried for years. Others are stepping into ministry in places that have long been underserved. All of them are being formed in partnership with the wider Church.

That partnership matters more than ever. The seminary does not raise up leaders on its own. This is shared work. When you encourage someone to explore a call, when you support a student, when you pray for this ministry, you are part of forming the next generation of leaders for Christ's Church.

As we mark this bicentennial year, we are not simply looking back. We are making intentional investments in the future. We are strengthening our campuses to be more accessible and more welcoming. We are expanding programs that equip leaders for a rapidly changing world. We are building partnerships that extend our reach into new communities and new forms of ministry.

This is a moment of gratitude, but it is also a moment of commitment. We believe the Church will continue to need thoughtful, faithful, well-formed leaders in the years ahead, and we are committed to preparing them.

We ask for your prayers, that God would continue to call and sustain leaders for the Church. We ask for your encouragement, that you would help identify those who may be discerning a call. And we ask for your support, so that together we can ensure that financial barriers never stand in the way of formation.

Thank you for your faithfulness and for your partnership in this shared work. May God bless you, your bishop, and the congregations you represent, and strengthen you for the ministry you carry.

In Christ,

Rev. R. Guy Erwin, Ph.D.

President, United Lutheran Seminary