



Summary of Eastern Synod Offerings (pre-audit) 2020, A Year Like No Other

This past year has been a wild ride to say the least. While the year began like any other, the emergence of Covid-19 quickly upended our lives, and the world, as we know it. The year was one of heartbreak and loss. Due to Covid-19, we have grieved over the loss of lives, the loss of our social interactions and the loss of businesses and employment. As with anything bad that happens to us there is always the flip side, where there is also something good. This year has also brought us great examples of compassion, support and recognition of those who are sometimes overlooked or taken for granted. This year has seen many stepping up to be compassionate and concerned about strangers. Neighbours have been helping neighbours with the little things and ensuring their safety. Many people are making an extra effort to connect regularly with those who are isolated and have little interaction with others. One of the most outstanding things to happen in 2020 is that people recognized how important our health is, both physical and mental, and truly appreciating those health care workers who have *always* been working tirelessly to ensure our health is championed. It is only when one needs these social supports that we truly realize how important it is to always give to others, even in moments when it may not seem to be needed. 2020 has been a wake up call that compassion, support and recognition of others is fundamental to sustaining humanity and our future together.

This past year has definitely had an impact within the Eastern Synod world as well. We have experienced the closing of our church doors and have quickly (surprisingly!) pivoted to learn how to operate in an online world, with virtual worship and meetings. As we rallied together to find ways to maintain the support the Synod provides to congregations, we have been grateful that, we too, have received an outpouring of reciprocated support. Those of us who work out of the Eastern Synod office are very thankful for the generous financial support and gifts that have been provided this past year.

Benevolence Offerings

General Benevolence represents the primary source of funding for the Synod's operating budget. The first quarter of the year saw benevolence increase over 2019 by almost 3%. With the emergence of Covid-19, the level of benevolence began to decrease with the year ending

at 4% under last year. Overall, the resulting reduction in benevolence offerings was not as drastic as might have been predicted midway through 2020. This is due to the amazing support of those individuals and congregations who continued providing to the Synod in such an uncertain time. The vast majority of offerings were remitted by congregations, but the benevolence total also included approximately \$50,000 that was received directly from individuals and from the windup of a private foundation. We feel truly blessed!

Canadian Lutheran World Relief Offerings

Offerings to the Canadian Lutheran World Relief organization consist of gifts for general/undesignated causes and gifts for special appeals/projects. The first quarter of the year saw a 10% increase in CLWR offerings over 2019. Not surprisingly, most likely due to Covid-19, the year end results showed a decrease of 25%.

Offerings to Other Eastern Synod and ELCIC Ministries

As is shown in the table below, remittances to the remaining ministries also decreased in 2020.

Summary of Total Offerings Received in 2020

Overall, considering the challenges of the past year, we are pleasantly surprised by such a generous response:

	2019	2020	% Change
Regular Benevolence	\$ 1,430,418	\$ 1,369,044	-4%
CLWR Undesignated	\$ 202,383	\$ 166,342	-18%
CLWR Special Appeals	\$ 34,088	\$ 9,382	-72%
ELCIC Global Mission	\$ 9,028	\$ 6,231	-31%
ELCIC Other	\$ 2,890	\$ 410	-86%
Outdoor Ministries -Camps	\$ 10,720	\$ 10,571	-1%
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$ 4,585	\$ 300	-93%
Martin Luther University College	\$ 19,790	\$ 13,240	-33%
Other Misc. Designated Gifts	\$ 44,151	\$ 39,797	-10%
Total	\$ 1,758,053	\$ 1,615,317	-8%

A detailed listing, [2020 Congregational Remittance Report](#), showing the breakdown of each congregation's remittances is posted on the Eastern Synod website.

Thank you for your generous support of the Synod. We are truly grateful! Without you, we would not be able to maintain and grow our ministries. We pray that everyone stays safe and realizes that we will get through this challenging time together as a team.

Kim Marcy,
Director, Finance and Administration