



2020 Ministry Story



Laurie Knott, Eastern Synod Vice Chair and Rev Riitta Hepomaki, Assistant to the Bishop participated in a **companionship consultation in Guyana** in early October. They met with the leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana as well as representatives of ELCA Global Mission department and Florida/Bahama Synod for visioning and planning for the future.



Knowing that we need good candidates for rostered ministry in the ELCIC and that theological education is expensive, the Eastern Synod Candidacy Committee made the decision to offer **student bursaries** to our Eastern Synod endorsed candidates starting this fall. Pictured here is Nicholas Stienberg, a candidate studying at Martin Luther University College receiving his bursary from Mark Weingartner, chairperson of the Candidacy Committee.



Almost 100 women gathered in May at Niagara on the Lake for the biennial **women's spiritual retreat**. Under the theme Joy in the Journey, keynote speaker Joanne Goodwin had everyone laughing and crying with her open and honest storytelling. Special guests Strong Water Women, a local indigenous drum group led several workshops designed to strengthen relationships. The next retreat will be held in Sudbury in 2021.

Healthy Boundaries

The new ELCIC Employment Agreement requires pastors and diaconal ministers to provide the employer with certification of participation in Healthy Boundaries training every five years. The Eastern Synod made this training available for rostered ministers in 2019.

Our National Bishop Susan Johnson trained nine of our rostered ministers to become qualified trainers for the Healthy Boundaries education program of Faith Trust Institute: Ed Bastian, Pamela Harrington, Riitta Hepomaki, Jim Koellner, Ilze Kuplens-Ewart, Bishop Michael Pryse, Adam Snook, Heather Spencer-Stoltz and Douglas Reble.

The Healthy Boundaries training focuses on the particular roles that pastoral caregivers fulfill within a spiritual community. This curriculum was developed to strengthen the understanding of the needs for boundaries, as a method of self-care and community care.

There were a total of 90 rostered ministers who took the training in seven different locations



OUR VALUED PARTNERS INCLUDE:

- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)
- Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana (ELCG)
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL)
- Evangelical Lutheran Foundation of Eastern Canada (ELFEC)
- KAIROS
- Lutheran Homes Kitchener-Waterloo (LHKW)
- Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
- Martin Luther University College (MLUC)
- World Council of Churches (WCC)

Tons of Potatoes and Much More



The members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Neustadt, weren't sure what to do when they received a large bequest from a former member – followed later by a similar amount from his spouse – in the late 1980s. Council member Dave Zimmerman remembers it this way:

“Pastor Mike* said we've got to get a committee together to figure out how we can use this money for the betterment of the wider community, not just for church operations. He instilled that attitude in us, and we still carry it on today.”

They invested the money; every year they used the investment income to support a variety of community projects. They also created an endowment fund to give bursaries to young people from the congregation who were pursuing post-secondary education.

Council chair Darlene Divers speaks proudly about the numerous fundraising events St. Paul's holds each year in aid of local charities, including barbecues, luncheons and bake sales. They enter a float in the annual Christmas parade, and host a community potluck dinner every few months. For several years they have grown potatoes in a field donated by one of their members. After harvest, some of the potatoes are sold and the remainder are donated to the Owen Sound food bank. “Two tons of potatoes feeds a lot of hungry people”, says Dave Zimmerman.

Along with the food bank, the list of charities supported by St. Paul's through the years includes the area hospice, a riding school for children with disabilities, and the Neustadt volunteer fire department.

* Pastor Mike is better known today as Michael Pryse, bishop of the Eastern Synod.

Transformation Through Mission and Property Redevelopment

A New Ministry of the Eastern Synod

In late 2014, Lutheran Homes K-W's Strategic Initiative Committee, along with the Eastern Synod, worked to design, develop and test a pilot program to help congregations transform their assets into tools that could shape a renewed ministry and better serve the community. So far 13 congregations have engaged in this work. Four of the congregations have already made the decision to sell assets and/or properties with more than \$5 million in capital released for new mission opportunities – a considerable sum, much more than anticipated by simply selling their properties on their own.

The synod made the decision in late 2018, to expand the pilot to serve all congregations in the Eastern Synod. To ensure a continued level of service, the Strategic Initiative Committee, along with their expertise, was transferred to the synod to form the Property Redevelopment Advisory Committee (PRAC) under the continued leadership of Geoff Bellew.

The work done by PRAC is one part of a three stream process within the Eastern Synod. Structural Transformation and Redevelopment (work of PRAC) provides assistance to congregations who desire to extend their mission and sustainability through property redevelopment. Congregations considering structural transformation or redevelopment will be provided with resources to guide them through a strategic process which focuses on renewed ministry into the future. During the transition process there will be support for congregations to help discern their future mission as well as support to form new partnerships which may include leveraging real estate assets. When the PRAC process finishes successfully, those involved benefit from the partnership through renewed ministry that is financially viable.

The other two streams provide pastoral care and resources to congregations either deciding to close and sell their properties or working to renew themselves through a shared ministry arrangement or a merger/ amalgamation.

Karen Bjerland, Congregation Redevelopment Advisor, accompanies congregations seeking to renew and refocus their ministry by redeveloping their real estate assets. Contact Karen Bjerland (bjerlandkaren@gmail.com) or 519-404-2896.



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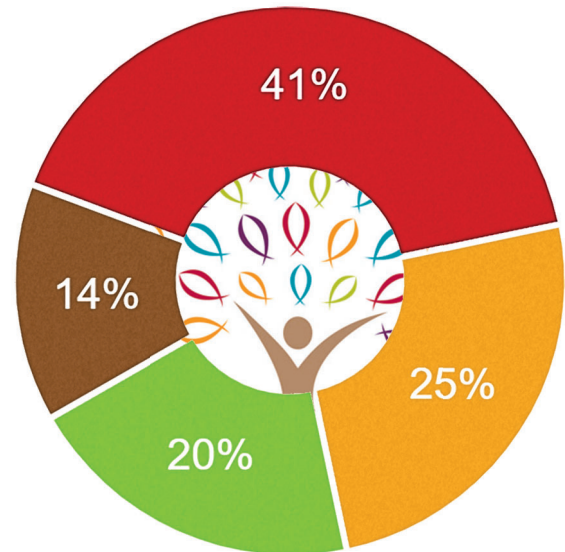
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2020 Eastern Synod Budget

The Eastern Synod's 2020 budget of approximately \$2.6 million supports ministries carried out under the umbrella of four strategic goals.



Goal 1

Provide Vision, Leadership, and Support to the Synod Community

- Interpret and express the vision of our National Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), across the Synod.
- Be present with congregations through prayer, personal contact and counsel to:
 - guide their spiritual direction
 - facilitate partnerships to strengthen mission outreach
 - support rostered and lay leadership needs, and
 - encourage ongoing renewal and transformation
- Provide leadership and resources in support of social justice initiatives.

Goal 2

Develop Capable Leaders

- Identify, recruit and train candidates for rostered leadership.
- Provide for the theological formation of lay and ordained leaders at Martin Luther University College.
- Provide ongoing training and support lay and rostered leaders.
- Support the work of Ministry Areas to broaden the effectiveness of ministry at the local level.

Goal 3

Connect the Synod Community with the Wider Church through Effective Partnerships

- Support the work of our National Church by contributing human and financial resources.
- Partner with our Global Mission Companions in Guyana and in Jordan and the Holy Land.
- Partner with other Lutheran, ecumenical and inter-faith agencies to make our synodical and congregational ministries more effective and to promote social justice in Canada and throughout the world.

Goal 4

Live as a Healthy Synod

- Honour our commitments to each other as articulated in the Covenant that is shared between the Synod and its congregations.
- Communicate effectively.
- Appreciate and nurture the Synod's rostered leaders through the provision of fair compensation, pastoral care, counsel, and opportunities for leadership development.
- Encourage generous financial support.
- Appreciate the financial gifts and assets that have been entrusted to us, ensuring that they are used most effectively.

Your benevolence offerings, combined with those received from 182 other congregations across the Eastern Synod, are vitally important and expected to fund more than half of the Synod's ministries in 2020.