

The primary role of a synod is to foster the life and health of congregations by tending to leaders, especially when there is a pastoral transition. But synods do a great deal more. They steward mission support dollars to be used effectively to care for the life of the whole church including camps, college outreach, social ministries, ecumenical relations and the support for the ELCA in general. They provide resources to support church administrations; plan and present special worship opportunities; and serve as a clearing house for a wide range of resources.

In our synod, there are multiple sources and uses of funds for God's work, including budgeted funds and special appeals.

In 2020, the synod spending plan will encompass the following activities:

- Support the National Church by forwarding 35% of congregational mission support to Chicago (\$542,500).

- Encourage new and renewing local and global congregational missions (\$147,000).

- Facilitate stewardship efforts (\$13,750).

- Encourage future leaders in ministry through support of candidacy, the seminary, financial aid to seminarians, first call education, and Region 8 initiatives (\$76,000).

- Fund outreach to youth and young adults through youth ministry retreats, camps, campus ministries, and other initiatives (\$85,500).

- Work towards racial justice through the Racial Equity Team and for interfaith understanding through the Ecumenical Affairs Office (\$13,000).

- Sponsor important synod-wide events, including the annual assembly (\$26,000).

- Provide the space, equipment, tools, and compensation for our staff to support the overall work of the synod (\$724,950).

In addition to the budgeted funds, the Synod serves as a conduit between congregations and both local and national ministries, including the Building Puentes fund and Gifts of Hope. In the last completed fiscal year (2018), an additional \$236,500 was donated by congregations and passed through for specific purposes to designated ministries.

Finally, for the past few years the New Connections campaign has served as another way to support ministry in our Synod. The campaign will be presenting their report separately, but as of the end of 2018 over \$435,000 in cash has been received at the Synod from this campaign with significant additional funds being held within congregations for their use.

In sum, the people of God of our Synod have dedicated well over \$2 million to demonstrating the work of God in our area.