

Final Report to the Synod Council
The Rev. Philip Hirsch, Director for Evangelical Mission
January 15, 2019

It is with deep gratitude to God for our work together in the Gospel since July, 2009 that I submit this, my final report. I thank God for all of you and will remember you and will keep in touch. My last day in the office was January 15, 2019. I will begin my work as Executive Director of Domestic Mission in the ELCA on February 1. Follow me on philhirsch.com ☺

TRANSITION

Bishop Graham will announce a person who will serve as DEM until the end of his term. The Bishop Elect will choose the next DEM who may begin as soon as Sept 1, 2019. I have left a comprehensive memo to whomever this person will be to help with continuity of support for our ministries.

MINISTRIES

What follows is a comprehensive report of the ministries that I have been working with closely. Funding is from various sources within the synod (budget, funds and New Connections). The Treasurer has the comprehensive list of where the fund come from for each ministry.

Abiding Presence, Burke VA

A three year grant to reach new people will end in 2019 with the final distribution of \$30,000. This was given to support the calling of Pastor Heidi Eichstad whose term call will end sometime in 2019 or 2020. This ministry has grown significantly in the last three years.

Augustana / Santa Maria

Was supported for years and that ended in 2017. I told them, they may want to ask for support to resume especially if there is leadership change or if they want to expand outreach. No one has asked for further funding.

Christ, Bethesda

A one page transition plan is on file and was presented to Synod Council in December. A \$40,000 loan was made by the Synod to the Congregation in the fall of 2018 to be repaid when the building sells. Another \$40,000 loan request has been made to the finance committee and will come before Council in January. This ministry will need a pastor re-developer to help them restart their ministry on or around July 1, 2019.

Coaching

Nathan Swenson-Reinhold has a signed contract until June 30, 2020 to be the "Coaching Coordinator" for the Synod. This is on file. He is responsible for the whole coaching effort and the \$30,000 portion of the New Connections Budget related to the same. (His stipend of \$15,000 comes from this \$30,000 line item in the New Connections Program Budget). He approves expenses related to coaching.

Grace, DC

Pastor Wendy Moen is in a cohort with “Dying to Restart” method developed by a pastor in DC who led his congregation successfully to close and restart with a new focus to reach new people. The Synod paid \$600 for their participation and the council promptly rejected the idea. Wendy still wanted to participate in the cohort.

Holy Trinity, Falls Church

Decided to rebrand their efforts at Mosaix as an outreach of Holy Trinity and stop trying to build it as a second site or independent church. Requested no funding for 2019 but we left open New Connections Funding for 2020 if it grows substantially and come to the New and Renewing Missions Table with a plan.

King of Kings 2.0

Garrett Wolfe is in candidacy and has begun to develop a community in the Stone Springs area of Loudon. In December, 2019 that had a gathering of over 125 people at Blue Rhino Restaurant. He is getting coaching from folks at the “V3” movement. \$60,000 in 2019 with King of Kings also running a \$50,000 campaign.

La Sagrada Familia

Pastor Rosario Hernandez retired in December, 2018. Pastor Franklin Morales was called by St. Luke to serve La Sagrada and their parish. La Sagrada needs oversight, a budget and to identify more resources.

Luther Place

Received \$40,000 in grants to help them make new connections. Kristin Kane resigned in December and a replacement is being sought.

Mosaix

A one year project with 6 congregations funded by New Connections (\$20,000), participating congregations (\$750 each) and (\$15,000) from the New and Renewing Table Fund. Pastor Shannon Anderson will help lead this. The goal is to help each congregation grow in ways that are more ethnically diverse. Pastor Shannon Anderson is leading the cohort.

The Six Congregations are:

Peace, Waldorf MD

Good Samaritan, Lexington Park MD

First Trinity, DC

Christ, DC

Good Shepherd, Alexandria VA

Emmanuel, Vienna VA

New Connections

Christy Hartigan has a signed contract on file until Nov 30, 2019. She will take the lead on helping congregations run the campaign and set goals for growth. She will also help manage the Campaign Budget. Christy will approve program expenses and manage that budget with the Synod Treasurer until the DEM is on board. She has an extensive file system of the whole campaign. She can provide a report to Synod Council until a new DEM is in place.

New and Renewing Missions Table

Pastor Shannon Anderson and I have recruited an (almost) new team to do this important work. They include: Pastor Carmelo Santos, Pastor Mike Gutzler, Pastor Julie Bringmann, Pastor Brett Davis and Christy Hartigan.

Stewardship and Mission Support Table

Is now seeking Statement of Intent forms from each congregation. Synod Council, please make sure your congregation reports what it has budgeted to provide to the larger church in 2019. A few members of this committee attended the Stewardship Training for Religious Fundraiser Course offered by Eli Lilly and widely considered to be the best training available on this topic. Synod Funds helped three pastors attend who are now on the Table and will help other congregations with their stewardship: They include: Pastor Jeanette Leisk, Pastor Darcy Tillman and Pastor Sarah Scherschligt.

Oromo Lutheran Church (At Grace Lutheran in DC)

The synod stopped giving them mission support when it appeared their accounting system needed attention. I offered to get help for their bookkeeping and they agreed but never followed up. I check in with them from time to time but they are very quiet and I think that is generally not good. Visit with pastor Kanessa and or Council to check in with them is needed.

River of Grace

The synod provided up to \$5,000 to bolster their stewardship program which was very effective. They are going to continue this effort in 2019.

St. Mark's/San Marcos

The synod has provided annual support for this ministry for many years and will review in 2019 to determine if ongoing funding is needed. They currently receive \$15,000 a year.

Swahili Lutheran Church

John Mbatta will be ordained in the ELCA in 2019! Ms. Aileen Mushi is applying to become a TEEM candidate to one day succeed Mbatta as lead pastor there. I recommend that this SAWC become a "Congregation Under Development" in 2019 once John Mbatta is ordained. Funding will increase to \$30,000 in 2019. This ministry has benefitted greatly from Pastor Sandra Shaw and the members of Living Faith Lutheran Church in Rockville MD who help them with everything from bulletins to communion. They are to be commended for their service.