

2018 Metro D.C. Synod Assembly

Report of the New and Renewing Mission Table

Respectfully submitted, Pastor Mark Olsen

There are those who gather at the table in their homes to share food, fellowship, and fun with their family and friends. There are those who gather at the table during worship to be fed and nourished through the Eucharist meal before being sent out to “go in peace” and “serve the Lord.” And there are those who gather at the table, as a “Table,” to meet and talk, to ponder and pray, and to discern and decide in service to the mission and ministry of our synod.

A “Table” is a cadre of people who foster ongoing conversations around certain aspects of how our synod serves God’s mission. Those who gather at the table, as a Table, are focused on producing and implementing mission-related action plans resulting from theologically imaginative conversations with ministries and congregations, doing so as “tablemates” come and go, over time.

In our synod, the New and Renewing Mission Table (NRMT) is one such Table. Our mission is to develop and renew existing congregations in the synod for the purpose of making and growing disciples of Jesus Christ. Our NRMT makes decisions regarding budgeted and dedicated mission funds and makes recommendations to the Synod Council regarding strategies involving new and existing congregations. How does one get a seat at this Table? Members of the NRMT are appointed by the bishop, save for the synod’s Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) who is an *ex-officio* member of the NRMT. To whom does the Table answer? The NRMT is accountable to the bishop and to the Synod Council.

This year, the NRMT has been engaged in much exciting and fruitful work on your behalf as we seek together to participate in and further God’s mission in our synod. Supported by your prayers and your generosity, and in collaboration with our synod leadership team and Synod Council, here are the main areas on which we have faithfully directed our efforts:

New Connections Campaign. Our synod’s New Connections Campaign is focused on four areas aimed at helping us make new connections with people in our communities:

- (1) Developing lay and rostered leaders;
- (2) Revitalizing existing congregations;
- (3) Engaging one another (to help congregations become more inclusive communities);
- (4) Establishing new ministries.

The work of the New Connections Campaign will be discussed in other reports to the Synod Assembly. Suffice it to say here that the Campaign is supporting and furthering the mission of

the NRMT and the strategies we are pursuing and implementing. Thank you for supporting the Campaign!

Intentional Impact Training. We are providing a new cohort group of 27 of our synod's pastors with leadership training through "Intentional Impact." Intentional Impact helps leaders develop an intentional leadership culture that aligns their congregation's ministries and teams, creates reproducing leadership, and positions the congregation for growth. **Resources provided: \$17,500 from the New and Renewing Fund.**

Mosaix Training. We sent five rostered and lay leaders from two of our congregations and from our synod office to attend Mosaix training in Cleveland, OH. Mosaix is a relational network of pastors, educators, authors, and researchers that exists to establish healthy multiethnic and economically diverse churches for the sake of the gospel. Next steps include distributing the book "Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church" to all voting members at our 2018 Synod Assembly; inviting two Mosaix leaders to come to our synod this fall for a one-day training event open to all; and launching a pilot program in our synod in 2019 to provide additional training for up to five congregations. **Resources provided (to date): \$2,000 from the New and Renewing Fund.**

New Ministry Starts

- **Holy Trinity Lutheran Church**, Falls Church VA, has begun a second site in the "Mosaic District" of Merrifield, VA. (mosaicdistrictchurch.org) **Resources provided: 2017 was \$14,600 and a similar request will be made in 2018 all to come from New Connections.**
- **King of Kings Lutheran Church**, Fairfax, VA is planning a second site in the Stonebridge area near Aldie, VA. **Resources provided: 2018 funding request "to be determined;" as the pastor developer was just hired. \$120,000 in funding is approved and will come from New Connections.**
- **Swahili Lutheran Church**, Rockville, MD is a Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community (SAWC) worshipping at Living Faith Lutheran Church. **Resources provided: \$22,000 from New Connections.**

Maturing Congregations

- **River of Grace Lutheran Church**, Manassas (Independent Hill), VA, is a successful congregational redevelopment effort. To help them remain on course, they are receiving stewardship mentoring and support from Pastor Mike Ward of Gronlund Sayther Brunkow (GSB) Consulting. In the future, our NRMT will include stewardship mentoring and support as a standard part of all our redevelopment efforts. **Resources provided: \$5,000 from the Mission Development Trust Fund.**

- **St. Michael's Truth Lutheran Church**, Mitchellville, MD is continuing its second site at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Temple Hills, MD and is now in its last year of synod funding to support that effort. **Resources provided: \$11,500 from the Bethany Fund.**

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Ministries in Existing Congregations

- **St. Mark's/San Marcos Lutheran Church**, Springfield, VA continues its Latino ministry in Northern Virginia. **Resources provided: \$15,000 from synod New and Renewing Missions funds.**
- **Abiding Presence Lutheran Church**, Burke, VA, a growing congregation that is reaching young adults and young families in their area, continues to receive financial support making it possible for them to have a second pastor dedicated to this purpose. Our synod support is ramping down as the congregation picks up a greater share of those costs. **Resources provided: \$20,000 from New Connections.**

Many thanks to all those who have served so well and so faithfully on our NRMT over the last year: Pastors Shannon Anderson, Julie Bringman, Steve Buechler, Phil Hirsch (DEM), Gary Rhinesmith, and Carmelo Santos.