

A WELCOMING CHURCH

A THRIVING CHURCH

A CONNECTED AND SUSTAINABLE CHURCH

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly

Judith Roberts, Sr. Director for DEI



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



Born in Hartford, CT. Confirmed at Christ The King-Windsor, CT. Deep Southern Roots. Mother to Julian. Lover of museums, afternoon tea, travel adventures and movies.

Worship at Our Saviour's in Naperville, IL

Favorite scripture- Romans 8:38-39
NRSV

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ABOUT ME

MISSION SUPPORT

\$622,706

was shared with the churchwide organization to support our ministry together.

Altogether, synods shared a total of \$38,727,566 in Mission Support from all ELCA congregations for the ministries we share together through the churchwide organization.

Thank you.



WELCOMING
THRIVING
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Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church

The purpose of the commission is from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly action “...shall reconsider the statements of purpose for each of the expressions of this church, the principles of its organizational structure, and all matters pertaining thereunto, being particularly attentive to our shared commitment to dismantle racism...”

The first meeting of the commission will be July 13-15.



Stay updated: [ELCA.ORG/CRLC](https://www.elca.org/crlc)

NEW STARTS

AND
EXPLORATIONS



311 ACTIVE NEW START MINISTRIES

33 APPROVED IN 2022

18 NEW STARTS

15 EXPLORATIONS



**33% OF 33 2022 NEW STARTS IN
ECONOMICALLY CHALLENGED AREAS**

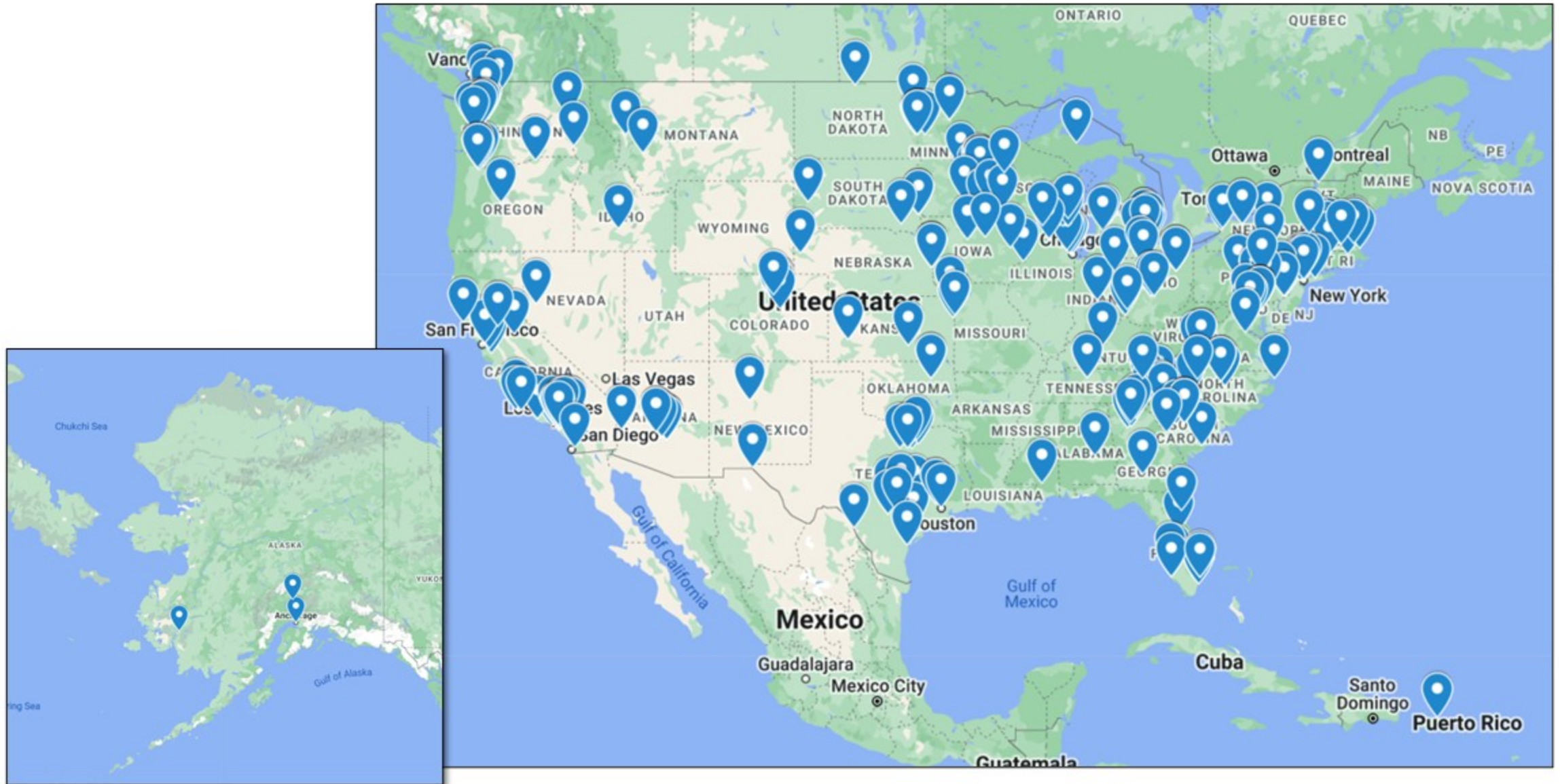


**50% OF 33 2022 NEW STARTS IN
COMMUNITIES OF COLOR**



**33% OF 33 2022 NEW STARTS IN
SMALL COMMUNITIES**

Active New Start Ministries



WELCOMING CHURCH
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Life of Faith Holy Innovations Initiative

In 2021 the SWPA joined with the SEPA synod in a holy innovations pilot project seeking to engage congregations in affirming and equipping the baptized for all that God is doing for the sake of the neighbor in and through their daily lives. This project seeks to make this vocational lens as the central focus of mission and congregational renewal.

- Pilot congregations:
- Christ, Duquesne
 - Emmanuel Heilman, Ford City
 - Grace, Manorville
 - Prince of Peace, Pleasant Hills
 - St. Andrew, Shadyside



ETHNIC SPECIFIC MINISTRIES

Ministries Among Diverse Cultures and Communities

- Arab and Middle Eastern Ministries
- African Descent
- African Nationals
- Indigenous Ministries & Tribal Relations
- Asia Pacific Islanders
- Latino Ministries



Federal Chaplains

Last	First	Branch	Rostered Synod	Geographic Synod
Baughman	Barry	VA	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Southwestern Pennsylvania
Johnson	Torrey	Air Force	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Southwestern Pennsylvania
McCullough	Katherine	VA	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Southwestern Pennsylvania
Messinger	Lewis	BoP	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Upper Susquehanna
Messinger	Lewis	Army	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Upper Susquehanna
Murdy	Joseph	Navy	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Southwestern Pennsylvania
Steiner	Roger	ICE	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Southwestern Pennsylvania



LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

\$23,349,632

Southwestern PA Synod Support
\$245,381



LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE



Photo: Peter Roman

“This humanitarian response connects us. These kinds of boundaries fall, and we are helping each other.”



A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a large, colorful, beaded basket. The basket is made of many small beads in various colors like red, yellow, green, and blue, arranged in intricate patterns. A white, torn-paper-like overlay is placed over the center of the basket, containing text. The background is a blurred green, suggesting an outdoor setting.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

- Together we shared \$19,194,022
- Southwestern PA Synod Giving \$219,0004

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

"For the last two years I have been planting more and more. ... This last year I have already stopped working [as a cleaner] in some houses. At the moment I work only in two houses that I intend to leave soon and make my income only from the garden — because, besides giving me much more joy, it has also given me a great financial return."



ELCA WORLD HUNGER

“I always had heard that the Lutherans excel at helping churches in need, but after having experienced it firsthand, I’m just really so happy and proud to be a member of this church.”



WELCOMING CHURCH
THRIVING CHURCH
CONNECTED AND SUSTAINABLE CHURCH

FUND FOR LEADERS

\$3,062,418



FUND FOR LEADERS



“Without the Fund for Leaders, I would not have become a pastor. That allowed me to do the thing that I thought God was calling me to and to do something that I love.”

Tawanda Murinda is an associate pastor of Sharon Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, N.D., and a Fund for Leaders alum.



FUND FOR LEADERS

“When we support leaders financially, when we launch them into their first call debt-free, when we put the weight of the whole church behind them and we say, ‘You are called’ — we are setting people up for success.”

Meredith Lovell Keseley is a Fund for Leaders Class of 2002, Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, Burke, VA.



Fund for Leaders Scholars

Last	First	Type of Scholarship	Synod	Seminary
Randolph, III	Wilmus Roger	ELCA Fund for Leaders - Full	8B	United Lutheran Seminary





INTERNATIONAL WOMEN LEADERS

\$615,766

Southwestern PA Synod Support \$530

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN
LEADERS



“I am very, very grateful for the sponsors of [International Women Leaders]. I just want to let you know that your support is literally changing lives. It has changed my life. I’m not the same person I was four years ago, when I came here. I am really, truly grateful and blessed to be a part of this.”

Diana Kasente is an International Women Leaders scholar, Kenya, studying at Newberry College, Newberry, S.C.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN
LEADERS



“The IWL program has proven to me that young women are powerful, intelligent and capable of paving their paths to a brighter future, not just for themselves but also for their church community.”

Asi Sitinjak is an International Women Leaders scholar from Indonesia, studying at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn.





INTERNATIONAL LEADERS PROGRAM

Equipping globally-minded leaders for church and society

- 200 scholarships each year support leaders from global companion churches, equipping and connecting leaders of the Lutheran communion worldwide
- The **International Camp Counselor Program** brings young adults from around the world to work at ELCA summer camps
- Program participants enrich ELCA ministries by sharing the diverse **gifts of the global church** through their witness, insights, and impact stories

MISSIONARIES

This church raised over \$1.8 million for missionaries in 2022

In 2022, 131 missionary households, including 24 new missionaries, served in 54 countries around the world.



**Southwestern PA
Synod Support**

\$24,307

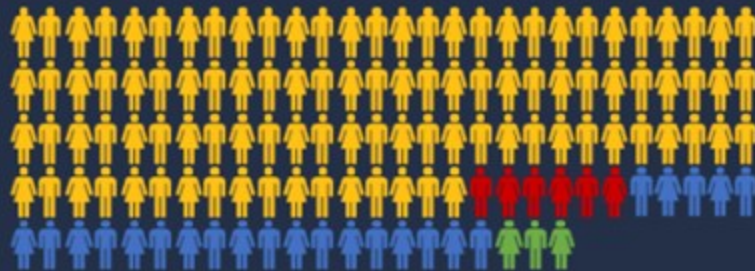


ELCA

SERVICE & JUSTICE GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

walking together in solidarity, practicing interdependence and mutuality

WHO IS SERVING?



As of March 2023 there are **130 missionary households**,
6 YAGM country coordinators, and **23 YAGM volunteers**
3 new missionaries are entering service April 2023

WHERE DO WE SERVE?



70 countries around the world, including **4 YAGM country programs**
2 new YAGM programs in 2023: *Mexico and Central Europe*

HOW DO WE ENGAGE?

Education



29 missionaries serve as teachers,
 professors or trainers

Healthcare



5 missionaries serve as doctors or
 health care coordinators

Parish Ministry



18 missionaries serve as pastors and
 pastoral interns

Relationships



120 Companion Synod Relationships between
 ELCA Synods and Global Companions

Regional Reps



13 serve as regional representatives



MARCH 2023

WELCOMING

Missionary
Sponsorship
provide by
Southwestern
PA Synod &
Donors

Themba Mkhabela

Jeffrey Truscott (currently serving in synod)

Christie Manisto and Steven Saari

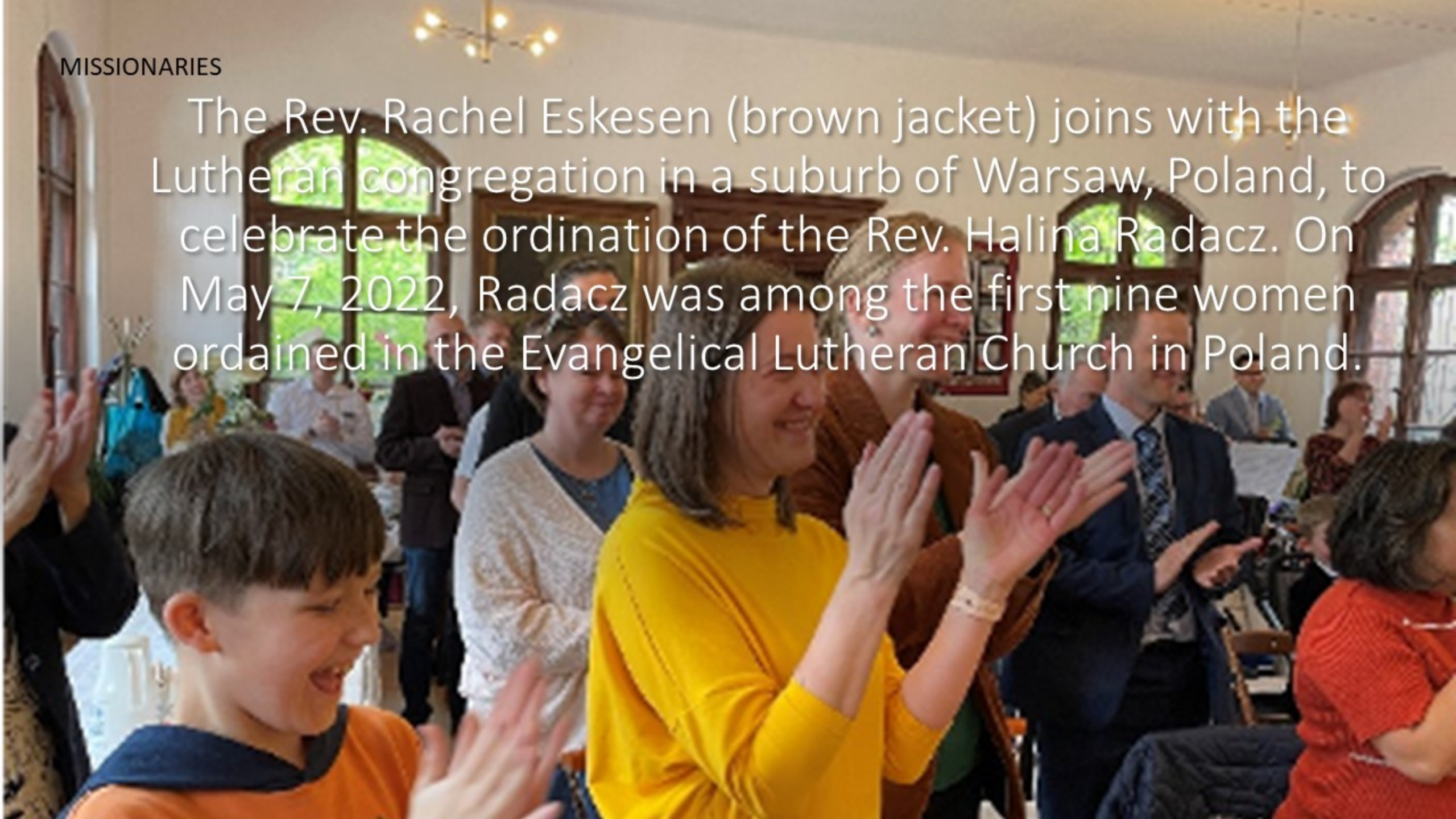
Carolyn Schneider

Asia Regional Representative Chandran Paul Martin (far right) listens to the stories of displaced people from Myanmar in a camp in eastern India.



Photo: Y. Franklin Yishida



A photograph of a church interior during an ordination ceremony. In the foreground, a young boy in an orange shirt and a woman in a yellow sweater are clapping. Behind them, a woman in a brown jacket is also clapping. The background shows other people seated in a church with large arched windows and a chandelier.


MISSIONARIES

The Rev. Rachel Eskesen (brown jacket) joins with the Lutheran congregation in a suburb of Warsaw, Poland, to celebrate the ordination of the Rev. Halina Radacz. On May 7, 2022, Radacz was among the first nine women ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Poland.

MISSIONARIES

“Through your generous donation, you are helping me and Hongo Student Center to not only teach English, Bible class and discussions, but also to be a sunny corner of grace — a cozy place radiating God’s amazing grace in the community.” — Vola Ranaivoson (center), short-term missionary in Tokyo, Japan





YOUNG ADULTS IN GLOBAL MISSION

\$652,763

Southwestern PA Synod support

\$1,800

In 2022, 24 volunteers served in four country programs.

This was the first YAGM cohort to enter service since 2019.



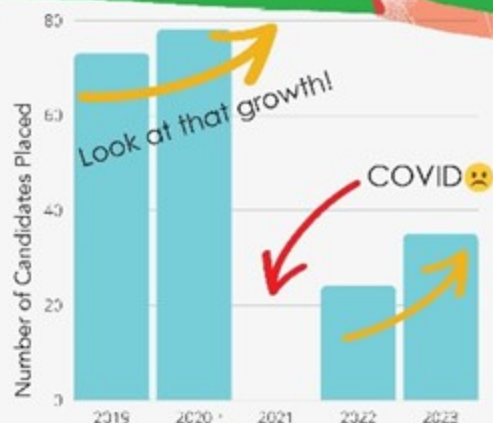
“My host family has truly embraced me as one of their own, and they have become my family. They not only look after me, but they also find ways to engage with me every day. We are building our relationship. ... I am more than grateful for what I am discovering every day here in Senegal: Love and presence, which is the reflection of the greatness of God in this world.” —Sol Namir (right), YAGM participant in Senegal



2023-2024 SERVICE YEAR Young Adults in Global Mission

37 APPLICANTS PLACED FOR 2023-2024 SERVICE

While we yearn for the larger groups from before COVID, we celebrate our continued trend of growth in placed candidates at this stage of the process.

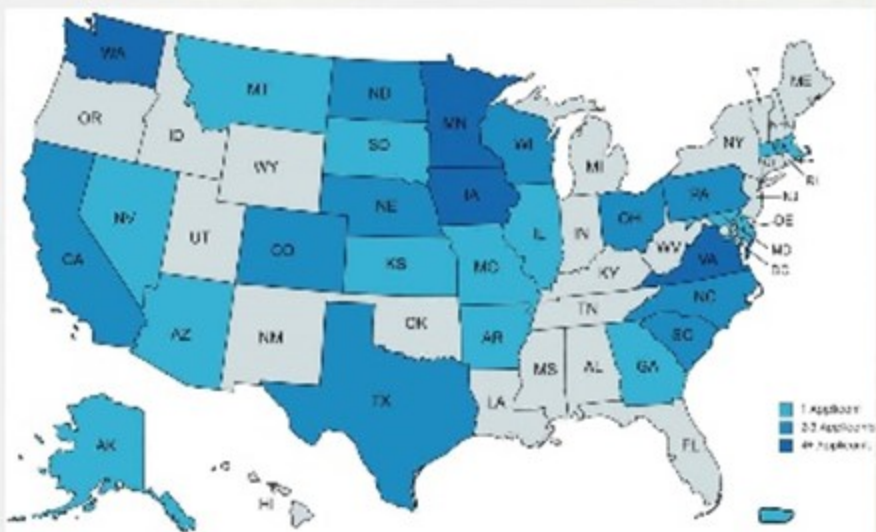


6 COUNTRY PROGRAMS



We are thrilled to welcome back **Central Europe (Hungary) and Mexico!** These countries have been added back to the YAGM program network through faithful discussion with our partners and hosts. We are grateful to be invited.

Geographic Distribution



ROSTERED MINISTERS GATHERING

Rekindle the Gift Within You

www.elca.org/RMG

JULY 17-20, 2023

PHOENIX, AZ

Registration open through June 30

50th Anniversary of the Church's Decision to Ordain Women Survey Reports

The ELCA has released two reports on the experiences of women who are pastors and deacons.

Learn about:

- How women understand their ministry and about their opportunities and obstacles
- How white women, women of color, white men, and men of color experience ministry differently.
- visit:
[https://download.elca.org/ELCAResourceRepository/50th Anniversary Ordination of Women Survey Report.pptx](https://download.elca.org/ELCAResourceRepository/50th%20Anniversary%20Ordination%20of%20Women%20Survey%20Report.pptx)
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Candidacy Working Group

Gathering Data



Your Turn

Reflecting on the data

- What resonated with you?
- What surprised you?
- What might you imagine moving forward?



Public hearings at the end of June
www.elca.org/formation

CREATED

TO BE

2024 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING NEW ORLEANS ▸ JULY 16-20, 2024

MYLE

Multicultural Youth
Leadership Event of the ELCA
JULY 13-16, 2024

NEW

registration fees waived
first 1,000 participants

the tAble

An ELCA Gathering of
Youth with Disabilities
JULY 13-16, 2024

NEW

registration fees waived
first 200 participants

**Young Adult
Gathering**

A new ELCA Gathering
for Young Adults
JULY 16-20, 2024

#ELCAYG2024

**LEARN MORE @
ELCA.ORG/GATHERING**



Registration opens September 15

WELCOMING CHURCH
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AMMPARO companions in the Americas include 11 partners in 8 countries

Growth of the US network to 221 welcoming and sanctuary congregations, 36 synod task forces with activity in 58 synods – only 7 synods remain without a connection!

Several congregations and task forces currently engaged in asylum seeker sponsorship, open to all as well as refugee resettlement, through local partnerships with refugee resettlement organizations

Accompaniment of recent asylum seeker arrivals in DC, New York, and Chicago

Emergency humanitarian responses by our AMMPARO companions to migrant flows in Mexico, along the Honduras-Nicaragua border, on the Colombia side of the Darien Gap, and in northern Chile

Publication of the Sanctuary Discernment Guide

Gathering of the US network at the ELCA S&J "Becoming" conference

Powerful advocacy affirming the right to seek asylum at the US-Mexico border, responding to the plight of Afghan newcomers, & on Dreamers and other immigrants without status, through the ELCA Advocacy network

AMMPARO HIGHLIGHTS 2022



WELCOMING CHURCH
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AMMPARO RESOURCES

Learn how you can make a difference at [ELCA.org/ammparo](https://elca.org/ammparo)

Sign up for the ELCA Advocacy Network: [ELCA.org/advocacy](https://elca.org/advocacy)

Follow on Facebook: [Facebook.com/ELCAammparo](https://facebook.com/ELCAammparo)

AMMPARO blog: <http://blogs.elca.org/ammparo/concord/>



WHAT IS COACHING?

Coaching uses deep listening and the power of conversations to help clients set and reach goals, overcome challenges, and develop into who God has created them to be.



CONFIDENTIAL

Coaches maintain the same level of confidentiality that you'd expect from a pastor or spiritual director.



AFFORDABLE

Many coaches work on a sliding fee scale or are available for pro-bono coaching.

— “ —

Coaching helps individuals and groups to look beyond what may be familiar and comfortable, to ideas and actions that will excite, engage and challenge their status quo.



” —

—Phyllis Blair Milton,
ELCA trained coach

Courageous Leadership:

Join us each Wednesday at 1pm Central on Zoom as we dive into topics of leadership, congregational development, diversity, and mission. Get the link at elcacoaching.org



ELCA Coaching

Coaching unlocks previously untapped sources of imagination, productivity, and leadership.

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3

Where Peace has a Voice!



SALAM RADIO STATION
إذاعة صوت السلام

***The First Arabic Christian
Ecumenical Online Radio Station
in the United States of America***



www.salamgroup.us

Leaders Leading

Melissa Stoller		
DEM		
Rev. Tara Lynn	Church Council	2019-2025

Bishop Kurt Kusserow

Bishop Committees: Bishop Formation Committee member, Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee Representative

Dear Bishop Kusserow,

Thank you for your continued partnership and leadership on behalf of our church. I value the invitation to represent the Churchwide Organization. It has been my pleasure to serve with the Southwestern PA Synod Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In Peace,

Judith Roberts





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