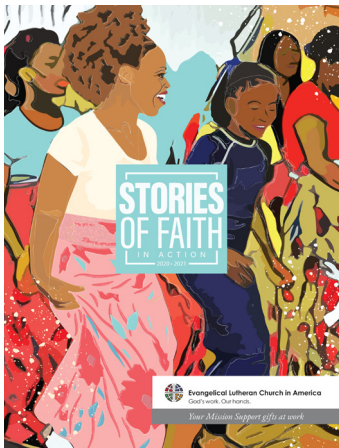




WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER 2021

WE INVITE YOU TO MAKE A STATEMENT OF INTENT FOR 2021.



In his letter to the Christians at Ephesus (Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16), the apostle Paul makes seven references to the word “one,” reflecting the importance of being called into the “unity of Christ.” While the members of this young faith community were Jews and Gentiles from several ethnicities and nationalities, they were taught to believe in “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” Paul also invited these early Christians to recognize the different gifts given to each person by God and to consider these as gifts to build up the whole community.

These gifts were to equip and support God’s work, and for “building up the body of Christ.” Today we too are connected in the same body of Christ. We enable and support each other to grow in faith and to put our faith into action. One way we are connected is the regular offerings shared by members and friends with your congregation. These are a gift to be used for ministry in your congregation and as Mission Support for your synod and churchwide ministries. Whether your congregation is a young one beginning its journey or one that has grown in stature through Christ, we are knit together to “promote the body’s growth

in building itself up in love.” We invite you to share in the grace given to your congregation by building up the portion of your regular offerings shared as Mission Support. How do these gifts make a difference? You can find stories about our work together in “Stories of Faith in Action” at ELCA.org/SOFIA.

Thank you for expressing your unity in Christ through our work together. And thank you for your commitment to Mission Support. Together we are building up the body of Christ!

A MESSAGE FROM THE ELCA MISSION SUPPORT TEAM

Dear partner in ministry,

The ELCA’s story is one of action. We act by listening to God’s call to serve one another. We act by serving our neighbors around the block and around the globe. We act by sharing Mission Support. Through this sharing of Mission Support we continue to write our story of action together, as three expressions of the church — congregations, synods and the churchwide organization — by sustaining our ministry together.

Your congregation’s Mission Support commitment helps your synod and churchwide organization plan more effectively. As you make your own financial plans for the coming year, we ask you to prayerfully consider your Mission Support portion of your regular offerings as you join in writing our story together. Please use this form to communicate your commitment to your synod. We join your synod in offering our gratitude for you and for the story that God continues to write in our hearts as we strive to be church together for the sake of the world.

Gratefully,

Victoria Flood
Director, ELCA Mission Support

Nick Kiger
Associate Director, ELCA Mission Support



Nick Kiger, associate director, Mission Support, and Victoria Flood, director, Mission Support

SHAPING YOUR CONGREGATION'S PLAN FOR MISSION SUPPORT

As your congregation prepares a spending plan for 2021, please reflect on the following questions in making your decisions.

- In what ways is your congregation like the congregation in Ephesus, "tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind"?
- Where do you find "one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling"?
- In what ways does the grace given by God to each person strengthen and increase the whole congregation?
- How do you build up the body of Christ through your regular offerings and Mission Support?
- How are you building up your commitment to Mission Support from one year to the next?

As you discuss your Mission Support commitment for the coming year, please consider how your offerings reflect your calling and build up the body of Christ. As a church together, we can have a greater impact in your community and beyond, sharing God's abundant grace with others.

To learn more about how God is changing lives through the ELCA, visit LivingLutheran.org.

Instructions: Use the columns below to indicate your congregation's current level of Mission Support and your 2021 Mission Support plan. When you have completed this information, please return this form to your synod office.

Name of congregation _____

Congregation ID number _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP code _____

Submitted by _____ Date _____

Phone _____ Email _____

	2020 ACTUAL	2021 PROJECTED	PERCENT CHANGE
Regular offerings received from members	\$	\$	%
Mission Support* budgeted for sharing with the synod and churchwide ministries	\$	\$	%
Percentage of Mission Support (Mission Support divided by weekly offerings)		%	%

*Mission Support is the portion of regular offerings that your congregation shares for synod and churchwide ministries for God's mission beyond the local congregation. For specific information about the ELCA churchwide budget, visit ELCA.org/resources/financial.