

COMMITTEES and SUBCOMMITTEES

Congregational Life Committee

The main event of the CLC is the annual Congregational Resourcing Event held at Kishwaukee College. “Word of God. Word of Life” was the theme of the 2009 Congregational Resourcing Event. We were pleased to have The Reverend Dr. Matthew Marohl, Associate Professor of Religion at Augustana College and a member of the ELCA Committee on the “Book of Faith” Initiative, as our keynote speaker and workshop presenter. We were also pleased to have our Bishop, The Rev. Dr. Gary Wollersheim, preach at the morning worship and lead a workshop. The CRE offered 48 workshops for the 400+ participants who attended.

Overall, your evaluations showed a positive experience. For that we are grateful to many who played a big part in the planning and execution of the event. We thank Pastor Jay Quinn, the synod liaison to our committee, for making many of the arrangements with the college and scheduling the rooms. We thank Karin Grady for advising us and putting together the brochure for the event. We thank Nancy Corey for handling the registrations for participants and workshops. Thanks to Sandra Musch for helping coordinate the event. On behalf of the committee, I thank the synod staff people for their hard work. Thanks also go to the Worship Committee, headed by Pastor Kris Zierke, for arranging the worship service and to the Praise band from the Rejoice Band from St. Paul in Dixon for their music. And finally, we thank the many exhibitors and workshop leaders, many people from our synod, who shared their special gifts. This is truly a unique event in the whole ELCA. Mark your calendars for the next CRE on March 20, 2010!

Being relatively new to the committee, I’m just getting acquainted with other things that the committee is involved in. The committee serves as an umbrella for these other committees of the synod: Stewardship, Evangelism, Worship, Education and Youth committees. Thanks to all the chairpersons and participants who make these committees an asset to our ministries in the Synod.

Another major program of our committee is the administration of congregational grants to start new ministries. This year we have made two grants to enable new ministries. We invite you to go to the NIS web site and click on Resources, and scroll down to the Congregational Life Committee Grants. There – and in your Assembly packets – you will find the grant application form and guidelines.

The CLC committee meets four times a year. We meet once in the fall for orientation. In December we are moving along with the planning process for the CRE. This year we held our annual December snow meeting in Rochelle. We meet in January to make final plans for the CRE. We meet in April to plan our participation in the synod assembly where we offer a workshop on the ministries of the CLC. This year, we will concentrate on your discussion of hopes, concerns, ideas, directions, and resources to plant seeds to grow our common ministries.

I want to thank the members of the committee for their hard work. Besides the staff people listed above there is Pastor Robert Burton, Pastor Diane Dardon, Ms. Judy Engebretson, Ms. Marcia Meyers (the recording secretary of the committee), Pastor Margo Peterson, Ms. Betty Stralow, Mr. Jeffery Schneider, Ms. Barbara Schwamberger, Ms. Brooke Witsberger, and Mr. Doug Wood. I especially thank the outgoing chairperson, Pastor Greg Olson, for his leadership of the committee and his guidance in my transition.

Submitted by
Pastor Norm Femrite,
Chairperson of the CLC

Global Mission Committee

May 2008-April 2009

- Conferences: Congregational Resourcing Event
Global Mission Events: LaCrosse, Wisconsin, July
[Region 5 Global Mission Conference –No longer held]
- Meetings: 2008: 1/13, 2/23, 4/5, 6/7, 9/12, 10/4 2009: 1/24, 5/2
- Supported: NIS Martin Msseemmaa Memorial scholarship, Moringe-Sokoine School, Arusha
ELCA Missionaries in Arusha area
Peace House AIDs Orphanage, Arusha
ELCA-Global Mission International Companion Youth Visitation, summer 2009
Peace, Not Walls ELCA program
Travel Stipends to Tanzania
Mwangaza Education for Partnership, Arusha
Amendment to NIS Constitution: Raise Global Mission to Committee status

Companionship with Arusha Diocese, ELCT, Bishop Thomas Laiser

Direct financial support for Diocese work and for scholarships in seminary and schools, for evangelical training, visits...

Appreciated help in Arusha of David Msseemmaa, son of Pat Msseemmaa and the late Global Chair Martin, as he helped NIS-TZ Companions arrange trips and photographed NIS visitors.

Companion Congregations-Arusha:

Currently NIS has twenty-three NIS-Arusha congregational partners. [An ELCT “parish” has three to fifteen churches, with one Ordained Pastor and several “traveling evangelists” who hold services throughout the parish.]

From June 30-July 14, 2008, Pastor Gary Erickson, Bethlehem-DeKalb, lead 17 travelers from seven NIS congregations to Arusha, where they visited their respective companion Parishes. The NIS group also visited the new Arusha Hospital and the Mwangaza Education Center.

Mwangaza Partnership for Education:

Along with annual financial support, we continue to arrange visits and support Mwangaza programs for teaching, for HIV/AIDS education, and for family care.

In summer 2008, Mike Wadle, DeKalb, ran the teacher workshops and taught sessions at Mwangaza. Donna Engels and Alexa Schlosser, Joliet, also taught sessions.

New Mission Partner: Arcot Lutheran Church, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, India

January 2008: The Bishops of NIS and the ALC sign a Partnership Covenant!

Companion Congregations-Arcot Lutheran Church, Tamil Nadu, India:
Eight NIS Congregations have partnered with ALC Congregations.
Eight ALC Congregations are looking for an NIS partner.

Friends of the Danish Mission Hospital set up to help rehabilitate this hospital program. Chaired by Dr John Probhakar.

Lutherans Partners in Global Mission [LPGM] of Minneapolis and NIS discuss working together on library and school projects in ALC.

NOTE: In July 2008, Arcot Bishop Gideon Devanesan suffered a severe stroke while attending the Lambeth Conference in London. He was able to return to Tamil Nadu in August, but remained on leave from his post as Bishop. By April 2009, he had recovered much of his physical and mental abilities; though he could still sing, he still could not communicate well through speech. We continue our prayers for his full recovery.

Reverend G. Raja Socrates, ALC Vice-President, has conducted ALC business since last summer. He has been in contact with our Bishop Gary Wollersheim.

In April 2009, Bishop Gideon wrote a letter requesting that his leave be extended another year. At a special convention, the delegates denied this request, and set May 18 as the date for an election for a new bishop.

Bishop Wollersheim and the NIS Global Mission members look forward to continuing our partnership with the ALC and its new Bishop.

Grateful Praise to all Global Mission members, for all the patience, inspiration, work, and joy!

Special Thanks to.... Linda Milton, Secretary
Chuck and Della Moen, for supporting the Msseemmaa Scholarship
Esther and John Prabhakar for leading us to Tamil Nadu
Pastor Gary Erickson for planning and leading the July 2008 trip to Arusha

NIS Global Mission 2008-09

<u>Team Tanzania</u>		<u>Team India</u>	
Ryan Burke	Trinity-Ottawa	John Califf	St John-Rock Island
Gary Erickson	Bethlehem-DeKalb	Dave Lonsway	Our Savior's-Rockford
Anne Gronbach	St. John-Sterling	Rev. Philip Mathai	Trinity-Lanark
Ron Henning	Bethany-Crystal Lake	Leo Patterson	St Paul-Dixon
Rev Tim Kenyon	St. John's-Peru	Linda Patterson	St Paul-Dixon
Art Milton-Chair	Trinity-Moline	David Peterson	Living Waters- Cr Lake
Linda Milton-Sec.	Trinity-Moline	John Prabhakar	Faith-Rochelle
Della Moen	Prince of Peace	Esther Prabhakar	Faith-Rochelle
Charles Moen	Prince of Peace	Peter Thomas	Our Savior's-Rockford
JoDonna Moss	St John-Joliet		
Pat Msseemmaa	St John-LaSalle		
Mike Wadle	First-DeKalb		
Sharon Wadle	First-DeKalb		
Bill Wittig	All Saints-Byron		
Isabelle Wittig	All Saints-Byron		
Arthur A. Milton, Chair			

Companion Parishes

<u>NIS</u>	<u>Tanzania</u>	<u>NIS</u>	<u>Tamil Nadu, India</u>
Grace Lutheran - Woodstock	Arusha	Alpine - Rockford	Saron - Thiruvannamalai
St. John's Lutheran - Peru	Babati	Zion - Rockford	ALC -Parangipettai
St. Paul Lutheran - Sterling	Engaruka	Living Waters - Crystal Lake	ALC - Polur
Trinity Lutheran - Galesburg	Kimandolu	Christ - Belvidere	ALC - Melpattambakkam
Bethesda Lutheran - Morrison	Magugu	Trinity - Lanark	Christ Church - Neyveli
Shepherd of the Valley -Rockford	Loliondo	Our Savior's - Rockford	Carme - Tiruvannamalai
First Lutheran - DeKalb	Ketumbeine	Light of Christ - Algonquin	Transfiguration - Pondicherry
Salem Lutheran - Moline	Selian		
Bethany Lutheran - Crystal Lake	Kiutu		
Faith Lutheran - Wataga	Oldonyo-Sambu	Faith-Rochelle & First - Lee	Sandapet - Thirukoilur
Faith Lutheran - Moline	Engarenarok		
St. John's - Elizabeth	Boay		
St. John's - Pearl City	Olokii		
Zion - LaMoille	Monduli		
Bethlehem - DeKalb	Naberera		
St. Matthew's - Princeton	Elerai		
St. James - Rock Island	Mdori		
Grace - Loves Park	Likamba		
St. Paul - Dixon	Loolera		
St. John's - Sterling	Malambo		
Alpine - Rockford	Moiparo		
St. John - Rock Island	Namanga		
First Lutheran - Geneseo	Osupuko		

Ministry Support Committee

The mission of the Ministry Support Committee is the “Enabling of Christians of the Northern Illinois Synod to realize their call to ministry as both lay and professional workers.

To accomplish the mission we provide resources, support, and continuing education within our synod in cooperation with other synods, agencies, and institutions within the ELCA and the Church.”

The Ministry Support Committee works to help lay and professional rostered leaders, and those interested or pursuing calls as professional church workers. Seven subcommittees accomplish the goals of the Ministry Support Committee.

Candidacy The Candidacy committee guides and supports candidates for rostered ministry through the candidacy process.

Employee Assistance Program The Northern Illinois Synod provides an employee assistance program (EAP) for employees of the churches of the Synod. Any employee who works more than 20 hours per week is entitled to use the EAP. The confidential services of the EAP include psychological, legal, and financial counseling.

Professional Leaders Conference The professional Leaders Conference is an annual event for the Northern Illinois Synod. The 2008 Conference was held at Sinsinawa Center, September 23-25th.

Salary Guidelines Committee The Salary Guidelines Committee provides guidance to congregations in providing fair compensation to rostered leaders in the congregation. This last year the committee has included sabbaticals as an important component of compensation and care for rostered leaders.

Spiritual Formation The Spiritual Formation Committee works to provide spiritual resources and guidance to all members of the Synod, lay and rostered. The committee has sponsored retreats as well as providing prayer space at the 2008 Synod Assembly.

First Call Theological Education This committee work with the Synod and Bishop Wollersheim is providing education and support to rostered leaders in the Synod, who are serving in their first call.

Mutual Ministry Committee This committee works to help congregations develop and implement a mutual ministry program. The committee has focused on educating congregations about the mutual ministry program, and the benefits of a mutual ministry program to congregations and rostered leaders.

The Ministry Support Committee looks forward to providing continued education on equitable salary guidelines, sabbatical education, the usefulness of mutual ministry, and other ways to support the ministry of rostered and lay leaders in the Northern Illinois Synod. For more information about the programs of the ministry support committee go to the resources tab on the NIS home page.

The very capable members of the Ministry Support Committee are Pr. Sue Eckhoff, Sue Cording, Lee Harbison, Pr. Garry Briesacher, Pr. Judi Huseh, Dense Rode, Vicki Sauter, and Richard Althoff, Pr. Keith Killinger, and the staff liaison, Pr. Chris Stienstra. Special thanks to Pr. Tom Rogers, for his six years of leadership on the Ministry Support Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Carlson
Chair, Ministry Support Committee

Candidacy Subcommittee

I write this report of the Candidacy sub-committee of the Ministry Support Committee, having served this year as Chair. It is a privilege to serve with such dedicated followers of Christ. Since Synod Assembly 2008, this group of committed disciples has continued to represent the NIS and the ELCA in the churchwide process of preparation and formation leading to approval for the public ministries of this church. Members of this committee have met their responsibilities of preparing for and, interviewing, assessing and supporting the progress of candidates for commissioned associate in ministry, consecrated deaconess or diaconal minister, and ordained minister in the ELCA. In addition to shepherding candidates of the Northern Illinois Synod, some of the NIS committee members join with candidacy counterparts from Metro-Chicago and Central-Southern Illinois Synods to form the Illinois Multi-Synodical Candidacy Committee. This group acts on behalf of the ELCA in the intentional identification and recruitment of persons called to provide leadership in the life of this church.

The Candidacy Process of the ELCA is guided by the following principles: 1. The process is grounded in a climate of hospitality and nurture. 2. All partners are accountable to one another for the integrity of the process. 3. The church determines who is appropriate for rostered leadership. 4. Those that provide leadership in candidacy are equipped and trained. 5. Evaluation of candidates is fair and thorough. The Candidacy sub-committee is a partner with candidate, congregation, synod, ELCA Seminaries and the Division for Ministry of the ELCA. The Candidacy process follows in the Lutheran tradition that a person's call from God, to public ministry, is to be understood as both internal (discerned within the spirit of the person) and external (discerned and confirmed by the Spirit of the Body of Christ, the Church). During 2009-09 Candidacy was able, thankfully, to offer scholarship assistance to our candidates.

Those who are currently serving the Northern Illinois Synod as the Candidacy Sub-Committee are Myrna Andersen Pastor Steve Dow Pastor Carl Richard Evenson Mr. Lee Harbison Pastor Mark Juliot Pastor Susan Kent Pastor Robert C. Kinnear Ms. Mary Lasits Pastor Richard Likeness Pastor Barb Rapp Ms. Carla Vanatta Pastor Dawn Keenan Mr. Robert Ramage Bishop Gary Wollersheim As a synod, please share your gratitude with these people and support them with your prayers as they make themselves available to the Spirit.

The members of the Candidacy sub-committee are grateful to Judi Fields for her support of the sub-committee's work in giving encouragement, and coordination to us so that all aspects of our committee tasks are organized. She keeps the process running smoothly.

Finally, it is a blessing to have the opportunity to serve in this ministry on behalf of the Church. Thank you.

Pr. Robert C. Kinnear

Candidacy sub-committee Chair

Outreach Committee

In these challenging economic times, people are looking and searching for stability and certainty in all our communities. God has given our congregations and our synod a mission – to proclaim Christ. The Outreach Committee strives to assist the Church in both these expressions to faithful response and initiative in that mission we have been called. This assistance and partnership is expressed in our work together to plant new congregations, to redevelop and/or help equip and strengthen existing congregations in their mission and outreach.

Planting New Congregations

Some of the most exciting and challenging work in the area of outreach this past year has been seen as congregations in our synod have taken the bold and faithful steps to planting new congregations through what are called satellites. St. John, Joliet continues to work toward the vision to multiply themselves by growing ministry sites in South Plainfield. Christ, Belvidere has begun the initial steps in doing the same in Poplar Grove. We have also witnessed the continued ministry of GPS, Machesney Park – which began as a satellite of Grace, Loves Park. In many ways this is a new way for us to plant new churches in our synod. We thank God for what the Spirit is bringing people to do and be in these locations.

Nurturing New Congregations/Restarts

We also continue to support and partner with what are called now called restarts - congregations that take the bold step to let something die, so new life can come forth. Resurrection Lutheran, Channahon and United Lutheran, Rockford are manifestations of restarts in our midst, witnessing to what can happen when we open ourselves and our faith communities to God doing a new thing.

Strengthening Our Outreach

Hispanic Outreach

Our work and ministry together to make Christ known within the Hispanic community and people of our synod continues through the Hispanic/Latino Task Force. This committee's work focuses on our calling to reach out and serve Hispanic and Latino communities through the ministries of our congregations and institutions. We thank Pr. Denver Bitner who served as its chair before answering the call to serve with Lutheran Social Services and the taskforce's members that come from various congregations in our synod. The Hispanic/Latino Task Force has been delegated to the oversight of the Social Ministry/ Multi-Cultural Committee.

Natural Church Development

Natural Church Development continues to be a process that a growing number of congregations in our synod are finding to be helpful. Our team of NCD coaches works with pastors and congregational health teams across Northern Illinois. Those who have served as coaches include: Pr. Roger Asplund (Dixon); Pr. Chris Beamsley (Grace, Wilmington); Pr. Brent Dahlseng (Grace, Loves Park); Pr. Sherry Hoening (Bethany, Leland); Pr. Bob Kinnear (Harvard); Pr. Dustin Lenz (Grace, Loves Park); Pr. Karl Otto (Zion, Belvidere); Pr. Dorothy Wilcox (Immanuel, Yorkville); Linda Winkleman (Messiah, Galva).

Congregations or leaders interested in coaching are encouraged to contact Pr. Kurt Nordby at the synod office in Rock Island.

Congregational Grants

It was a joy this past year to invite congregations of our synod to apply for outreach grants to be used toward reaching out to the communities they serve. The following grants were given this year:

Congregation

All Saints, Byron

Resurrection, Channahon

Living Hope, Frankfort

United, Gardner

St. John, Hebron

GPS, Machesney Park

First, Moline

St. John, Pearl City

Good Shepherd, Rockford

St. Mark, Rockford

Bethlehem, Rockford

Grace, Wilmington

Nativity, Wonder Lake

Redeemer, Woodstock

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center

Outreach to New Residents

Community Garden

Community Youth Event

Outreach through Building Dedication

DVD Production

General Community Outreach

English as a Second Language Ministry

No Cost Meal Ministry

Hospitality Ministry

Community concert series

Mailing ministry

NCD Goals implementation, outreach

St. Nicholas Outreach Night

Bread Ministry to New Residents

Widening the Circle Ministry

Percept

The outreach committee decided to discontinue the contract with Percept, an online resource that provides congregations detailed population statistics including population make-up, values, and needs. These types of services can be received through the ELCA at no cost.

Global Missions

The assembly is encouraged to take notice of the Global Missions Committee's Report.

Thanking God

We are thankful to our new assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Kurt Nordby for his partnership and work with us. We thank the many people who served in part-time positions before the restructuring in our synod: Pr. Ron Voss, who served as Mission Consultant; Pr. Dennis Heaney and Pr. Michael Thomas, who served as Mission

Director; and Pr. Brent Dahlseng who served as Evangelism Consultant. Our synod was also blessed with the work of Pr. Jonathan Black, Rural Ministry Consultant and Pr. Denver Bitner, Urban/Multi-cultural Ministry Consultant.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Chris Beamsley
Outreach Chair

Social Ministry Committee

Mission Statement: *“To express God’s love by leading the church toward greater compassion, justice, and service.”*

Mission Purpose: *“To inspire the people of the congregations and communities of the Northern Illinois Synod to make Christ known in word and deed, locally and globally, through experiential education and Biblical/theological reflection with regard to social ministry concerns.”*

Committee Goals:

1. oversight of subcommittees
2. arrange workshops for Congregational Resourcing Event
3. make social ministry grants
4. promote advocacy on state and national level
5. review and promote discussion of ELCA Social Statements
6. establish a yearly budget

Sub-committees:

1. Anti-Racism/Multicultural
2. World Hunger
3. Rural Ministry
4. Synod Green Team

The Social Ministry Committee met three times this past year with a fourth meeting being held electronically due a severe snow storm. Issues ranging from the appropriate response to an ELCA Social Statement to reducing the meeting cost for the Committee were discussed. Much of the work of the Social Ministry Committee takes place within the various subcommittees listed above and reports from these subcommittees are received at Social Ministry Committee meetings. While all the subcommittees did an excellent job of meeting the challenges of their respective area of interest, the fruit of the work of the Hunger Committee must be highlighted because of the fact that the Northern Illinois Synod was the second largest 2008 contributor to hunger issues of any ELCA synod in the entire United States. This is particularly impressive when tied to the fact that ELCA hunger giving was at an all-time record high.

Social Ministry Grants are awarded each year to organizations and churches within our synod following criteria established by the committee. Priority is given to organizations requesting funds for capital expenditures and other one-time expenditures for activities that exemplify the characteristics needed for furthering the mission of this Committee. Unfortunately, in FY2008, no grants were awarded because no grant applications were received. It is the sincere hope of the Committee that this trend turns around and that many viable grant applications will be received in FY2009. The Committee also researched and made recommendations to the ELCA on five Domestic Hunger Grant Applications received in late 2008 from organizations within our synod. All five received grant assistance from the ELCA.

At the Congregational Resourcing Event held in March, four Social Ministry workshops plus other subcommittee workshops were held to educate the leaders of congregations on Social Ministry issues.

The in-kind offering for Synod Assembly is gathered and disbursed through the Committee. This year’s offering, **school supplies**, will be distributed to the various interested food pantries of our synod. Whether a donor can bring one of every item suggested on the school supply list or a quantity of one or more items from that list or simply a gift card that can be used by the recipient food pantry to purchase items where the demand

exceeds the supply, all such items will be given in the spirit of helping our youngest victims of this economic downturn to have at least a portion of what is needed to get a quality education.

While at the 2009 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly, come and learn more about the work of the Social Ministry Committee through our forum and at the display table located in the College Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Johnson, Chair

Racial Justice and Multicultural Subcommittee

(Formerly the Anti-racism/Multicultural Ministries Committee)

In 2007 the synod Anti-racism Team and the Multicultural Ministries Committee were merged into the Anti-racism/Multicultural Committee which is, in turn, a sub-committee of the Social Ministry Committee. In May 2009 the committee changed its name to the Racial Justice and Multicultural Committee. This change reflects the current thinking in the ELCA and other organizations working against racism and for racial justice in our society and institutions to emphasize the positive goal of racial justice for all people.

The committee is composed of members from across the synod, including persons of color, pastors and lay people. Pastor Kurt Nordby is our liaison with the Bishop and synod staff in his role as Director for Evangelical Mission.

In September 2008 five of our committee members participated in the ELCA Churchwide educational and networking event "At the Intersection of Race and Poverty" in Baltimore, MD.

Over the past year we held an Anti-racism Workshop at St. John's in Rock Island in conjunction with the Southeastern Iowa Synod Anti-racism Team and the Illowa Lutheran Coalition. We had a display and presented two workshops on at the 2008 Synod Assembly. Pastor Denver Bitner and Ruth Fairchild presented examples of multicultural ministries based on their experience at Zion, Rockford. We also had three workshops at the 2009 Congregational Resourcing Event. We arranged for a presentation on Anti-racism to the Synod Council meeting in January 2009 by Ms Shenandoah Gale, Director for Anti-racism Commitment, Office of the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA.

We formed a class using the ELCA resource "Troubling the Waters for the Healing of the Church – a journey for White Christians from privilege to partnership" at St. John's, Rock Island in cooperation with the Illowa Lutheran Coalition. We believe this is an excellent resource to help our mostly white congregations understand and deal with issues of racism and white privilege.

We also offer a 1½- 2 hour "Introduction to Anti-racism" workshop to synod committees, conferences and congregations. We have made a summary presentation of this resource at several conference meetings, and would welcome invitations from other conferences. We have a library of program resources, films and books to help congregations offer anti-racism education programs. We are available to meet with pastors and congregations to help them select resources that are appropriate to their local situation.

We have also been adding resources and programs on immigration issues and invite congregations especially those in areas of large Latino populations to move beyond the politicized rhetoric and explore the economic, human, ethical, and biblical issues involved in immigration policy and practice.

Also under development is a ministry with Multi-ethnic Families to serve the growing number of mixed race couples and families with children of mixed race or minority heritage through birth or adoption.

For further information on these resources, programs and ministries contact me at 309-797-1189 or cfsam@mchsi.com.

Pastor Frank Samuelson, Chair.

World Hunger Subcommittee

The World Hunger committee is a subcommittee of the Social Ministry Committee. We have two representatives from each conference on our committee. We meet twice a year. I am the chair of the committee. Nancy Watkins serves as our secretary.

Our main goal is to help the congregations in our synod in their efforts to feed the many hungry people in the world. I am very glad to report that this last year was another record year of hunger giving in the ELCA. \$21.4 million was given to World Hunger. This was the most ever given in one year and is quite remarkable in this difficult economic time. We are getting closer to our goal of \$25 million. Thanks to some sizeable bequests and faithful giving by our members, last year members in our synod gave \$1,082,601. The average giving per baptized member in our synod last year was \$11.73 (the second highest average of giving of all the synods). Thanks be to God! And thank you for all that you have done to promote giving to World Hunger!

As wonderful as the giving was to World Hunger this last year, I feel that we should and can be doing much more. Hunger in the world today is a huge problem. Over 20,000 people die each and every day from hunger-related causes.

The committee does many things. We have a workshop every year at the Congregational Resourcing Event. At the synod assembly, we lead forums on world hunger, promote the hunger meal, and also have a display table. Carol Erickson, Deb Martin, and Kent Terry attended the ELCA's national World Hunger meeting that was held in Denver, Colorado last summer. Committee members gave presentations on hunger in congregations.

One of the main things that we are promoting is the Foods Resource Bank program. This is an effort where farmers set aside some acres for a growing project. The money raised from the crops grown on these acres is then given to overseas projects which are helping to feed the hungry. Urban congregations help rural congregations in this effort by providing money for the input planting expenses of the farmers. This is a wonderful program. We are looking for more congregations to participate. For more information on the Foods Resource Bank program, please talk to our committee member Pastor Phil Peterson (815-357-6514).

Along with our usual goals, this past year we are encouraging congregations to consider doing one more effort for the cause of world hunger. We call this emphasis "The Next Step: Advancing God's Mission in World Hunger." What is the next step that your congregation can take this year to help feed the many people who are hungry?

I am very thankful to our committee members and also for all the people in our synod who work to help feed the hungry people of the world. Thank you for all that you have done in this effort. May our Lord continue to guide and sustain us as we do this important ministry in his name.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne Derber
Chair of the World Hunger Sub-committee