

JULY & AUGUST 2024



From the Bishop:

Martin Luther writes in the Small Catechism:

What then does 'daily bread' mean? Everything included in the necessities and nourishment for our bodies, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, farm, field, livestock, money, property, an upright spouse, upright children, upright members of the household, upright and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, decency, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like. (Small Catechism, Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer)

In May, the six bishops of Region One (this includes the synods of Northwest Washington, Southwestern Washington, Alaska, Oregon, Northwest Intermountain, and Montana) were asked by the Region One hunger teams to write a joint letter requesting Congress to re-authorize the federal Farm Bill and to not cut important funding. The six bishops agreed to write this letter. After it was written and signed, the ELCA Advocacy staff in Washington, DC hand-delivered it to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees' leaderships and to the Representatives in each of the synod's respective states.

In June, there was a zoom event for all the Lutherans in the six synods to learn more about the Farm Bill and advocate for its continuation. This event was sponsored by the Region One hunger ministry teams, ELCA Advocacy, and Faith Action Network (FAN). Different speakers shared information, conversation happened, and the opportunity to write letters to legislators occurred.

As you might know, the six synods have over 560 congregations and tens of thousands of Lutherans from the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming. These synods and states are not homogenous. The bishops are not homogenous. The congregations within each synod are not homogenous. The members of these congregations are not homogenous. We have differences of opinion at times, we have different priorities, we vote differently, we even shake our heads at things that don't make sense to us about one another.

And yet, in our diversity, we are also joined in the unity of Christ and the promises we have received. Deep in our bones, we know that we are saved by grace through faith. We hold fast to the truth that God loves us no matter what. We know this and trust this and hold this. And, because of this, together we are called out into the world – as followers of Jesus and as civic members of society.

We join together – over and over – to bring about change and protect the vulnerable. We come together beyond political difference because of what we have been promised and what we are called to do and to be. The example I've been using in this article is the Farm Bill. When we advocate for this bi-partisan Farm Bill, we are advocating for farmers, migrants, agricultural workers, Indigenous peoples, hungry children, the inclusion of those who have been historically excluded, and more.

But, of course, we come together far beyond this Farm Bill. We come together because God calls us to love others as God loves us. We work together for a just society. As German pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "Mere waiting and looking on is not Christian behavior. Christians are called to compassion and action, not in the first place by their own sufferings, but by the sufferings of their brothers and sisters, for whose sake Christ suffered." (*A Testament to Freedom*)

I am thankful and proud to be Lutheran because of all of you who feed and clothe, nourish and shelter, love and protect those who are the most vulnerable in this country and this world. It would take pages to list all the ways that you do this individually, in your congregations, in the synod, and in the wider church. Thank you for your advocacy and your care. There is, of course, more work to be done. And so let us together work towards the day when all may receive "daily bread."

If you would like to read the Bishops' letter you may click this link: <https://fanwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Region-1-Bishops-Joint-Letter-Agriculture-Committee-Leaderships.pdf>

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Special Feature: Young Adults in Global Mission from our synod

Every year the ELCA provides a number of young adults the opportunity to grow in their faith and work hand in hand with our global companions through the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program. These volunteers, who range in age from 21 to 29, take the plunge into a life-changing, yearlong journey in communities around the world. The YAGM program invites young adults into an international year of service supporting the ministries and projects of our global companions. It also invites volunteers into a journey of self-reflection, providing them with space to consider their own identity, God's work in the world and their place within it all.

Young adults serve in the spirit of accompaniment, walking alongside global companions in a manner that practices mutuality, interdependence and solidarity. Areas of service include, but are not limited to, health and human rights, education, environmental justice, professional support and congregational ministry. All site placements provide opportunities for young adults to confront issues of wealth and poverty, racial privilege, gender privilege, economic disparity and globalization, all through the lens of faith.

Each volunteer commits to raising \$6,000 to support their year of service, and other contributors to the ELCA help to support the remaining program \$10,000 per young adult. The total amount of \$18,000 is the average cost per YAGM volunteer, which covers all expenses associated with their service.

As these young adult leaders prepare to head out for their year of service in August, please consider how you and your congregation can support these YAGM volunteers from our synod, financially and otherwise!



Katie Giseburt

from Cross of Christ Lutheran Church in Bellevue & Salt House Church in Kirkland

Heading to Cambodia!

Learn more about Katie & how to support her [HERE](#)



Thomas McCutchan

from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Snohomish & Lutheran Campus Ministry at Western Washington University

Heading to Argentina/Uruguay!

Learn more about Thomas & how to support him [HERE](#)



Brooke Nelson

from Grace Lutheran Church in Des Moines

Heading to Argentina/Uruguay!

Learn more about Katie & how to support her [HERE](#)