



Alaska Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

January 12, 2023

Dear Alaska Synod siblings in Christ,

Signs of hope were everywhere in 2022. **Thank you for being partners in proclaiming our hope in Christ**, through words and actions, to each other and the world. The Alaska Synod is all of us, and together we equip leaders to proclaim the gospel and create partnerships and networks to learn and serve. Here's what we did together this year:

Equipping leaders to proclaim the gospel

- Three new Alaska Synod pastors were ordained this year!
- Four people are in the candidacy process to become rostered leaders for the church.
- One-third of synod congregations have a lay Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM) or a someone studying to become one.
- Congregations are back to in-person worship; nearly all who began an online presence in the pandemic have continued. Grief groups and Bible studies moved to Zoom have stayed, with broad participation.
- A synod team overhauled the rostered leader compensation guidelines to better support support leaders.

Creating partnerships and networks

- The synod stewarded generous donations supporting Western Alaskans impacted by Typhoon Merbok.
- Ministry partners Lutheran Social Services and Lutheran Disaster Responses provided grants for typhoon relief. Lutheran Social Services in Alaska shipped food, water and tools to villages. The Food Bank of Alaska and the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank sent frozen fish.
- Four congregations participated in a cohort to grow generosity and shape faithful stewardship education and responses.
- Synod voting members attended the ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Synod leaders are participating in churchwide work to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery – a historical document that paved the way for abuses of Native lands and peoples.
- Together we prayerfully and financially support our newer ministries in Trapper Creek and Bethel, and our partner congregations of the Seward Peninsula Cluster.

We are partners in this work. Thank you for all you do in your communities and beyond to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. Thank you for collaborating with others for greater impact. Thank you for living out the hope that binds us together.

In Christ,

Rev. Shelley Wickstrom
Bishop of the Alaska Synod

Rev. Lisa Smith Fiegel
Director for Evangelical Mission

