



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

Rev. Martin Wells, Bishop
Rev. Helga Jansons, Director for Evangelical Mission

Epiphany 2015

To the congregations and leaders of the Eastern WA and Idaho Synod

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thirty months ago a synod delegation visited our companion synod in Tanzania. We were invited to participate in a celebration of 100 years of missionary activity and to meet other international partners and plan for the future of our companion diocese, Ulanga-Kilombero. It was during this meeting that we were taken to Tumaini School and the Assembly and Dining Hall building for a dedication of the work so far achieved. It was a moving day, reminding me of other building dedications/ground-breakings I had been part of at Pacific Lutheran University, Holden Village and in our synod.

I think it is safe to say that our delegation promised themselves, then and there, that we would see this building to its completion. In part we were moved by other projects (fresh water) taken on by other international partners, and in other ways we could see in the frames of this building the beginning of a powerful and new mission of God in education.

Since that time we have been talking with other leaders of the synod and finally to the Synod Council, and we now believe that this is the right time to test the readiness and generosity of the Synod members on some capital projects. In order to do that we have engaged The Enrichment Group of Tacoma, WA, owned by Marc Rieke, to help us test readiness for a campaign. The purpose of this letter is to tell you that Marc Rieke and his associates may be calling on you or your congregation to help us assess our readiness.

Why now? One reason is the Dining Hall/Assembly Hall at Tumaini School. The frame and bones are in place and we want to finish this project begun some years ago. It is time.

Second, the ELCA is mounting its own campaign and is ready to partner up with us in making both campaigns successful. Others of you may be looking at local building campaigns that could be supported by our mutual efforts.

Third, we have some very faithful ministries that only receive support outside of regular budgets, and it's time to pay some further attention and extend these successful efforts.

What else do we want to support?

--The synod SHARE FUND has given away thousands of dollars in new mission grants. We have a chance to push this fund over a million dollars and endow your new mission ideas.

--The FUND FOR LEADERS IN MISSION is our national effort to assist pastors to arrive for their first call debt free. So far close to \$100,000 has been given in grants!

--We believe it is time to make a special gift to our national and international ministry through the ELCA. The last years have been lean ones for our synod and we have asked others to make the gifts we intended to make in support of national ministry. It is time.

--Lutheran Community Services has been our "boots on the ground" ministry for some time and we would like an opportunity to extend their ministry into new areas.

--Finally, three faithful ministries on three college campuses are supported by our synod budget, but we'd like to begin to build endowment for campus ministry.

We would like your sense for the faithfulness, timing, and practicality of this effort. What is your wisdom regarding the focus of these efforts and your own sense of excitement as you think of growing ministry capacity together?

Thank you for your attention to this letter. If and when Enrichment Ministries calls you at church or home we ask that you take a few minutes to help us assess this God moment, this *Kairos* time, in the life of our synod. If you will share your wisdom and generosity of Spirit we will be able to make a faithful decision about this missional adventure!

God bless you and keep you,



Bishop Martin Wells



Synod Vice President Gary Gemar