



## **SW MN Synod End of the Year Financial Report**

The financial books are closed for 2009 in the SW MN Synod. We want to say thank you to all the congregations who continue to support the ministries that we share together and the vision for being Christ-like in our service. With your help we have made a difference in all kinds of ways within the congregations of our synod, institutions of our church body, churchwide work and God's larger church in our world.

In your synod last year we were able to...

- ✦ Walk with candidates for rostered service as God forms them to lead as public stewards of the Gospel.
- ✦ Help many congregations call a new pastor or journey into transition.
- ✦ Work on reconciliation ministry with congregations experiencing conflict and change.
- ✦ Provide places for leaders to gather, share their work, learn and support one another.
- ✦ Provide training for leaders to proclaim the Gospel and invite people deeper into Christ Jesus and the community that gathers in his name.
- ✦ Gather to celebrate our life in Christ as men, women, Jr. High and Sr. High youth.
- ✦ Support congregations as they seek to grow in effectiveness as evangelical mission stations.

We finished the year receiving 91.5% of the 2009 budgeted mission support. We are thankful for the careful planning with the synod council and adjustments like rescinding staff compensation increases at the end of the first quarter that allowed us to end the year with our expenses within the income. Our shared ministries like Luther Seminary, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Shalom Hill Farm, Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy and others received this same 91.5% of the financial support we had hoped to provide these ministries.

Looking forward the synod council has taken steps to revise the 2010 budget to reflect the intentions of the congregations. Our current plans will reduce our support for our shared ministries by 2% of our budget which will result in decreases of about \$30,000 for both Luther Seminary and Lutheran Campus Ministry. This decrease concerns and saddens us. The reduction in financial support reflects both the economic times we are living in and the change in mission support from some of the congregations in SW MN. About 12 congregations of the 263 in SW MN Synod have made decisions to withhold or re-direct their mission support. Some others have reduced their support for our life of ministry together. We are especially thankful for the congregations that are experiencing increased financial support and are sharing proportionately for the good of all the congregations in our synod.

Congregations who are at less than 10% of budget for mission support are encouraged to consider special offerings for the sake of our life of ministry and the care of our infrastructure as a church. These might be directed towards general mission support or focus on the needs of supporting theological education and campus ministry.

We will continue to provide the congregations of SW MN Synod with ministry support through call processes, leadership training, development of ministry candidates, ministry resources and of course the personal assistance of the synod staff. We are one body with many parts as we hear Paul speak about in First Corinthians 12. Through the varieties gifts of each of us we are able to make the good news of God known to others. It is together that we carry out God's Work, Our Hands.

***Rev. Linda Pedersen, Synod Minister, SW MN Synod***