

# In the Name of Jesus



Southeastern Iowa Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
*Good news. Our friends.*

*Stories from the Southeastern Iowa Synod*

Volume 2 No. 2 | Winter 2016

## In this issue

- 3** See how what the Southeastern Iowa Synod is doing to enhance ministry
- 4** Our shared mission hear how our partner at LSI are serving Iowans
- 8** Preview of the 2016 Synod Assembly



**In this Issue**

**Forward Together**

**3**

Learn about the campaign for the synod

**Our Shared Mission**

**4**

Read stories from LSI

**2016 Synod Assembly**

**8**

A preview of the synod's annual meeting

**Southeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA**

**Office of the Bishop**

Bishop, Pastor Michael Burk  
 Pastor Paul Ostrem  
 Pastor Eric Carlson  
 Kathy Smith  
 Lorraine Jordan  
 Valerie Harlynn  
 Lori Uhl

**Newsletter editor:** Valerie Harlynn

This publication is published twice a year by the Southeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA, 2635 Northgate Drive, Iowa City, IA 52245; 319-338-1273, [www.seiasynod.org](http://www.seiasynod.org).

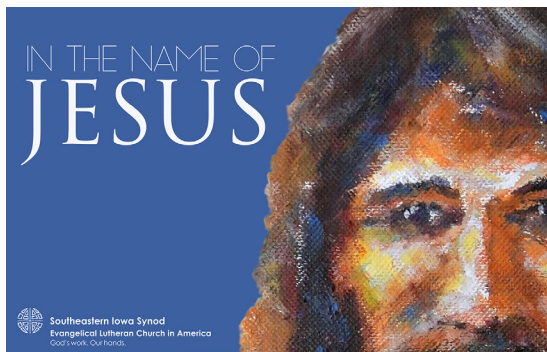
Articles in this publication may be duplicated for use in synod congregations and organizations with credit to the synod.

**How to Give**

Make a gift through your congregation by writing a check to your congregation with "Synod Mission Support" in the memo line.

**By Mail:** Checks payable to "Southeastern Iowa Synod" can be sent to:  
 Southeastern Iowa Synod  
 2635 Northgate Drive  
 Iowa City, IA 52245

**Online:** Make a gift using your credit card using our secure online donation form at [www.seiasynod.org/online\\_donation](http://www.seiasynod.org/online_donation)



**About the Theme**

This newsletter is entitled *In the Name of Jesus*. This is part of our annual theme around which we focus ministry, prayers, and events in the Southeastern Iowa Synod. Bishop Burk talked about the theme and it's implications at the annual Synod Assembly in May 2015.

Bishop Burk reminded the assembly that what we do - is all about Jesus. "We are all about pointing to Jesus. Acting, living, feeding in the name of Jesus... We are called and we are privileged to live in the name of the One who saves the world."

Over the weeks and months ahead, consider what it means to live and serve in the name of Jesus. Talk to one another. Listen to each others' story. Reflect and pray about how your relationships, work and play point to Jesus.



**Southeastern Iowa Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
 God's work. Our hands.

The Southeastern Iowa Synod is a network of congregations and ministry partners who are called to share God's love in Jesus Christ.

Connect with us online at [www.seiasynod.org](http://www.seiasynod.org)

# Campaign to Enhance Ministry in Southeastern Iowa

*Synod Launches \$1.2 million campaign for ministry.*

We are moving Forward Together as the Southeastern Iowa Synod to bolster our proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ by increasing our capacity to partner with local congregations, regional ministries, new leaders, and new communities.

The 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly approved a \$198-million-dollar campaign in support of new and expanded churchwide ministries. The Campaign for the ELCA, Always Being Made New, focuses on four ministry priorities to ensure the financial and ministerial health and expansion of churchwide services and programs.

The 2015 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly adopted a series of resolutions in support of the The Campaign for the ELCA while establishing a companion, \$1.2-million-dollar campaign to support ministries of the Southeastern Iowa Synod. Forward Together, the Campaign for the Southeastern Iowa Synod, reflects a commitment to the same priorities: congregations, leadership, hunger and poverty, and the global church.

This effort, concluding in 2019, builds on the rich legacy of this synod while moving forward together.



*...continued on pg 7*

# Our Shared Mission

*Stories from Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) a ministry partner of the Southeastern Iowa Synod.*

Lutheran Services in Iowa serves Iowa's most vulnerable people, fulfilling a promise to respond to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. They partner with children, youth and families, people with disabilities, the elderly and people of refugee status – helping people in times of need, strengthening families and advocating dignity and social justice for our neighbors in the community.

Every day, thousands of moments of compassionate service are shared at LSI across the state in this article there are two snapshots of service in a day of the life of LSI

## No One Loves Me

“Adam” was having a tough night. The young boy, who was staying at LSI's Beloit Residential Treatment Center in Ames, missed his foster family. He felt lonely and afraid. Jeremy, an LSI youth specialist, went to check on Adam and found him crying.

“He was saying, ‘No one loves me,’” said Jeremy. “I told him, ‘That’s not true. The staff here cares about you. I care about you. You are a great kid. And things will get better.’”

Children and youth at LSI's Beloit Residential Treatment Center in Ames and Bremwood Residential Treatment Center in Waverly come from all over the state. All of them have experienced some measure of trauma, neglect or significant challenge in their lives, and LSI provides 24-7 mental health services to help them heal and move forward with their lives. Sometimes service also means reminding children of their own worth with a well-timed word of love.

“We see a lot of kids who have been conditioned by life or by others to believe they aren't cared about and they shouldn't care about anything except themselves,” said Jeremy. “Sometimes the best moments are when we can tease out of a child what he cares about. Like compassion for animals. Or elderly people. Or his friends.”



Helping children see their potential for greatness is one of the reasons Jeremy chose a career in service at LSI.

“I love working with our kids because they have



***Lutheran Services in Iowa has been serving Iowa's most vulnerable people for 152 years.***

so much potential,” said Jeremy. “They can learn to recognize who they really are: a kid who deserves to be loved and deserves to love. They can realize they have the capacity to care. They have suffered trauma, and they’ve been conditioned to believe no one cares about them. That’s not true. I do. We do.”

### **The Greatest Class I’ve Ever Taken**

Vachon, age 16, rested on the couch at Retrieving Freedom in Waverly, a black Labrador named Gabriel cuddled comfortably on his chest.

The two were taking a break from a morning training session, one of many to prepare Gabriel for his future life as an ADA-certified service dog.

What Gabriel didn’t know is he was preparing Vachon for life, too. Vachon was one of six teens at LSI’s Bremwood Residential Treatment Center in Waverly to participate in a first-of-its-kind pilot program during the summer of 2015. A partnership between LSI, Retrieving Freedom and the Wartburg College Social Work Department, the program empowers teens at Bremwood to train service dogs for veterans and children with autism.



“It’s wonderful for our teens,” said Susan, LSI clinical supervisor and professor emeritus at Wartburg College. “They are so focused knowing the dogs they help train will go to help a veteran or a child with autism.” And that’s important. Because focus isn’t always easy for these teens.

Bremwood provides 24-7 mental health services for youth ages 13 to 18. Many, though not all, have experienced trauma from abuse, neglect or an unstable home environment. Some have been involved in juvenile court, and others have lived in foster homes.

Training the service dogs inspires the teens to pursue excellence and, most importantly, reminds them they are deserving of it. “The teens do an amazing job,” Susan said. “It’s wonderful motivation for them to keep doing well in other areas of their life, too.” It’s also just doggone fun.

“This is the greatest class I’ve ever taken,” said Vachon. “It’s a good chance to help train the dogs and get close to them and best of all have fun while doing it.”



**For more stories of compassionate service, connect with LSI at [www.LSIowa.org](http://www.LSIowa.org) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa](http://www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa)**

## A Note of Thanks

Dear Southeastern Iowa Synod ministry partners,

Every era of Lutheran Services in Iowa's nearly 152-year history has had its heroes, from the Lutheran churches that founded Bremwood and Beloit to the caring Iowans who have carried on the mission of service with indescribable generosity. You also are special heroes of our ministry today. Through your faithful support and your generous kindness in sharing God's blessings, your partnership has helped so many people find hope and healing.

You demonstrate this through financial support and in so many other ways: furnishing for a first apartment for a student graduating from Bremwood, hundreds of quilts that warm the body and spirit, angel trees at Christmas and "God's Work Our Hands." projects.

For these and countless other ways that you show God's love, we are so very grateful.



In Matthew 25:40, Jesus reminds us that ministering to our neighbors during times of greatest need is the same as showing care and love for Him. Thank you for the legacy of love you create with Lutheran Services in Iowa and for responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service.

With gratitude,

Jason Lee

LSI Vice President of Philanthropy and Church Relations

### **Want more stories and information like this newsletter?**

Subscribe to our weekly E-News. Get stories from around the synod, upcoming local and regional events, and news from the ELCA in your email inbox every Monday morning.

Sign up online at [www.seiasynod.org/follow-us/](http://www.seiasynod.org/follow-us/) and select the weekly E-News option.

The priorities for this campaign are as follows.

**Congregations:** We seek to support emerging and renewed faith communities in our synod. Creating and renewing our presence in places where mission needs outpace the local capacity.

**Leadership:** The ELCA Fund for Leaders is one of the many needed means by which we enhance the possibility of preparing enough candidates for ministry to meet the growing need. Gifts to the ELCA Fund for Leaders may be designated for the Southeastern Iowa Synod Fund For Leaders, providing support for candidates from this synod.

**Hunger and Poverty:** We are an anti-hunger synod, we believe in not only feeding people but addressing the root causes of hunger and poverty. As the “breadbasket of the world” and home of the World Food Prize, we see ourselves as leaders in the goal of eradicating hunger in Iowa and around the world.

**Global Church:** With the support of this campaign we will be able to continue and increase our ministry of accompaniment, walking in ministry together with the Pare Diocese and the Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

**Where Needed Most:** We seek to use resources wisely and grow our capacity for ministry in southeastern Iowa and beyond. We will fund an endowment, reduce our debt, and make capital improvements to ensure long term stability and ministry.

Our goals for the Campaign for the Southeastern Iowa Synod are shown in the table. Growing our capacity for ministry will not be possible without your contributions. Your gifts may be designated for any of the areas, or undesignated to be applied where the need is greatest. Together we can do more in our communities, our synod, and around the world. •

<b>Goals for the Campaign for the Southeastern Iowa Synod</b>	
Congregations	\$250,000
Hunger and Poverty	\$240,000
Global Church	\$50,000
Leadership	(no set goal)
Where needed most	\$725,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,265,000</b>

# 2016 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly: *Drawn to the Light of God*

The 2016 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly is only a couple short months away. The 29th Assembly of the Southeastern Iowa Synod will be held May 6 – May 7, 2016, at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Convention Center in Coralville, Iowa. Voting members and guests gathered around the theme Drawn to the Light of God.

While the many reasons to celebrate may be overshadowed by any number of challenges facing the church, we are preparing for the 2016 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly filled with hope. We will gather under the theme, Drawn to the Light of God, with an eye toward how Christ, the Light shines in our varied ministries and in every corner of our lives.

This year's assembly will include election of Synod Council members, Rev. Ruben Duran, Director for New Congregations, will serve as the churchwide representative providing updates and stories of the work we do together as the ELCA. Below is the information you need to know to participate and follow along with what is happening at this year's assembly.



## **Registration**

Registration opened in February and will continue through April 29. Assembly registration fees are \$190 per voting member and \$125 per visitor. Online and paper registration options for assembly and the Friday banquet are available by visiting [www.seiasynod.org/assembly](http://www.seiasynod.org/assembly)

## **Pre-assembly materials**

Agenda, reports, nominations, resolutions and will be available on the synod's website at the end of March [www.seiasynod.org/assembly](http://www.seiasynod.org/assembly). Check out these materials to learn what's been happening in the synod over the past year.



## **Stay connected**

Can't attend this year's assembly? Follow what is happening live through social media via Twitter by using and searching #seia16 or following @seiasynod. You can also follow what is happening at assembly on the synod's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/southeasterniowasynodelca](http://www.facebook.com/southeasterniowasynodelca).