

ASSOCIATE OF ADVANCEMENT MINISTRY

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As I talk to various pastors from around our synod, I am hearing the same theme repeatedly that their congregations are made up of a majority of people who do not come from a Lutheran Brethren background. This is why it is so important that our advancement ministry focus be on building relationships with churches and individuals to help them understand what ministries we are doing on their behalf. We also want to give them an opportunity to partner with the CLB through prayer and financially to help us in our disciple-making movement.

KEY ELEMENTS TO OUR ADVANCEMENT EFFORTS:

Lifting Our Eyes is the name of our five-year campaign to support everything we plan to do. The campaign ends on April 30, 2020. Our Lifting Our Eyes (LOE) Campaign consists of two main parts, ongoing Annual Shared Ministry and new Shared Ministry Advancement Initiatives.

The sustaining Annual Shared Ministry Fund provides a financial foundation to support the ongoing Shared Ministries of the CLB. The Shared Ministries include Lutheran Brethren Seminary (LBS), North American Mission (NAM), International Mission (LBIM), Communications, the Office of the President, and the Finance Department. It is essential to all future advancement initiatives.

The second part to LOE is new Shared Ministry Advancement Initiatives:

- For LBS, the initiatives are to develop an online LB Discipleship Institute to help train congregational leaders in their roles and give church attenders training for service and spiritual growth. LBS would also like to provide seminary students with cross-cultural experiences to better equip them for ministry.
- For NAM, the initiatives involve congregation revitalization and church planting. One of our main initiatives is to develop Arrow Corps, which will train and use young adults and retired people in our revitalization and church planting efforts.
- For LBIM, the initiatives are to send two additional missionary units to Chad (in addition to Kay Asche) and one missionary unit to Taiwan. Our three main areas of focus with our advancement initiatives are as follows:
 - Congregational Engagement:** Over the past year, several CLB individuals have been going out to various LB congregations and sharing with them about what is happening in the CLB. During Fiscal Year 17-18, Steve has given Sunday morning congregational greetings to about 900 people and LOE presentations to about 670 people in 16 congregations and organizations.
 - In December, we mailed out letters to all our CLB Congregations and Affiliated Congregations in the US. In the letter, we thanked them for their past donations to the CLB. In congregations where they are giving us less than 10% of their annual income, we asked them to consider giving more in 2018 - 2019.
 - Over the next three years, we plan to set up CLB Ambassadors in each congregation in the US. These individuals need to have a heart for the CLB ministries and are willing to help communicate our relational stories and financial needs to people in their congregations.
- Annual Shared Ministry Fund Raising:**
 - During this Fiscal Year, we have been targeting our direct mail campaign towards two specific groups: Those who gave a \$1,000 or more in at least one of our last two fiscal years and those that have not given anything or have given less than \$1,000.
 - To identify individuals who donate a \$1,000 or more in a fiscal year to our Annual Shared Ministry Fund, we have established the Cornerstone Network.
 - Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of our faith, and the cornerstone of our disciple-making movement—the Church of the Lutheran Brethren.

Through the Cornerstone Network, we hope to establish a group of financial partners, motivated by the love of Christ, who will form a financial foundation to sustain and advance our shared mission.

At the end of this last fiscal year, we had about 250 Cornerstone Network households who donated about 29% of last year's total contributions. As part of the Cornerstone Network, we are sending members quarterly updates to inform them what their financial partnership with us is allowing us to do in the advancement of our Shared Ministries.

Major Gifts:

- Steve and Mission Team members make visits with potential major donors each month.
- Over the past six months of our last fiscal year, we have had seven families, who were asked to consider giving \$25,000 or more, commit to giving us \$297,500 over five years or less.
- That brings us to 21 families that have been asked to give \$25,000 or more that have committed to \$1,089,500 for up to five years since the start of our LOE Campaign.

In the future, it would be extremely helpful to have more automatic, monthly donations coming in on a regular basis to the CLB. I would also like to see all our congregations giving at least 10% of their income to the CLB in addition to any designated funds given through their congregation. I want to thank everyone that financially partners with us in our disciple-making movement.

Steve Tonneson serves the Church of the Lutheran Brethren as its Associate of Advancement Ministry.