

Southeast Michigan Synod • ELCA

Assembly 2021

Conference 6

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The past year and a half since we gathered have been a difficult journey for our congregations as they have for so many of us. In the city of Detroit the Covid infection rate spiked early in the pandemic and infections and losses took a big toll on our communities. We all know about the disproportionately high rate of infection in communities of color and vulnerable population, of which our conference has many members.

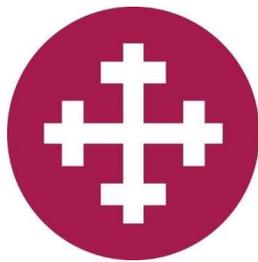
In response to rising infections and the many members of our congregations who traveled to essential worker jobs in surrounding counties, our conference put out a Call for Solidarity in April of 2020. In this invitation we asked our siblings across the Synod to commit to refrain from in-person worship until it was safe for all of us to return and to join our conference in centering the needs of the most vulnerable among us as we collectively decided when to return. We had 22 congregations in the Synod join with us in Solidarity during the months of May-Oct.

As the summer brought on racial unrest in many cities across the country, including Detroit, we urged our siblings to pivot their solidarity response to a posture of learning and action around Anti-Racism, advocacy and voting as we continued into the fall.

As the pandemic continues for all of us we celebrate the myriad ways our congregations have found to be the church in the world, safely worshipping and serving the Lord and loving our neighbors by protecting one another. We encourage all our siblings in Southeast Michigan Synod to continue making decisions in their communities that protect the most vulnerable among us and that are guided by the Gospel's call for justice. Our congregations work and pray in this commitment with you.

During pandemic our conference churches have and continue to share resources and find ways to worship safely and continue gathering virtually or outdoors for Sunday services, Bible Studies and small group, meetings. We have found ways to continue our community feeding programs, safely, with Covid-informed protocols and we continue to advocate against injustices that effect our community like voter suppression, access to equitable health care, affordable community internet access and food/housing insecurity.

On April 11, 2021, we celebrated the life and ministry of Cross of Glory Lutheran Church as we joined in their closing worship service. The beautiful service was live streamed, filled with thanksgiving, and lifted up the many years of good ministry and community shared by that congregation. We honor and celebrate the faithful and difficult discernment that this congregation went through, trusting in the



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resurrection power of Holy Spirit enough to close and blessing many with gifts that will live on. In closing Cross of Glory chose to distribute their resources to St. Philip Lutheran Church, Love Rising Lutheran Church, Living Water Ministries, Samaritas, Freedom House, and the SEMI Synod Fund for Mission with financial gifts that will support the ministry of the Gospel in many places. We are proud of their faithful witness and give God glory for all that has been accomplished through their ministry for the *Kin-dom* of God.

Submitted by

Robin McCants and Lindsey Anderson, Co-Deans of Conference 6