

Conference 6 Report Synod Assembly 2023

The congregations of Conference 6 are still here. We are still here!
This may seem to be a minimal claim in a context like this report, but we find it to be a cause for much celebration. The great American poet Lucille Clifton wrote:

*Come celebrate
with me that everyday
something has tried to kill me
and has failed.*

We make no claims on the future for only God knows it, but today, this morning/afternoon/evening, this moment, we are here and we are alive! Hallelujah! Against the odds, against the tides of change and gentrification that displace our people and empty our neighborhoods, against the racism inside our church structure and outside it, against the slow death of poverty and the depression that oppression foists upon our people, we have survived. As Clifton said, *Won't you celebrate with us?!* The resurrection is revealed in our congregations and we commend to you God's glory revealed in this moment of life, in the liminal space that is the Black and Latinae Lutheran church.

Relying on God's grace and pursuing the power of community cooperation, we give thanks for the work of Holy Spirit among us. God has enabled our congregations and communities to continue to gather people to worship, both virtual and physically, to engage in faithful and necessary feeding ministries across several congregations, to dive into faith education by gathering together and creating content in new and varied ways. We give thanks that Holy Spirit continues to move us into new community outreach and justice ventures, responding to the needs in our communities. Our congregations have supported and walked with candidates for ordination from ecumenical backgrounds this year, have completed building renovations that allow for better access and service with their community, continued to *dream* AND to *develop* plans for housing access, anti-racism education, emergency shelter and expanding the use of our resources in creative ways for the sake of our communities.

We especially give thanks for the partnerships of our synod Justice Ministries and of Acts in Common and the newly-formed SEMI Chapter of the African Descent Lutheran Association (ADLA) and for other great partners in ministry.

In this season of uncertainty, in the wilderness space between threat and provision, we ask that you pray with us and partner with us, to sustain the unique and important ministries of our congregations of color, who primarily make up Conference 6. For our part, we will continue to praise the Lord with our words and our actions, as long as we have breath and ministry to do.

Peace and Love,
Ms. Robin McCants and Rev. Lindsey Anderson
Co-Deans of Conference 6