

CROSS

Connection



The Cross Connection is a monthly publication of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod published for its clergy, members, deacons, lay leadership and ecumenical partners.

July 2017

Greetings to the people of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod! For the first time in many years, the words that greet you as you read the newsletter do not come from Bishop Wells, but instead come from me: Kristen Kuempel, the Bishop-Elect for our synod.

Bishop Wells has been a faithful leader of our synod for close to 20 years, guiding our congregations, leading us through the call process, working as the primary connector of Eastern Washington-Idaho through all three expressions of the ELCA—congregational, synodical, and national. We have benefited from his leadership, his calm wisdom, and his steady hand. As I said after my election at the Synod Assembly: I have been given big shoes to fill, and we can expect a few bumps along the road as we navigate this transition.

Some of the struggle will come in that Bishop Wells and I have very different leadership styles. Some of it will be because I will be trying to jump on a train that is trying to slow down a little bit—but realistically, can't slow down much. Some of it will come because I will have different areas of emphasis than Bishop Wells did. And some of it will come because change is hard, and most of us just plain don't like it.

But we will get through it. God has called us into relationship as Bishop and Synod, and will be with us in the midst of the days, weeks, and years to come. I am excited about the challenges that are before us, and look forward to meeting you, learning about your congregations, the mission and ministry you are engaged in, and how the rest of the synod can support you in that. I look forward to the changes and opportunities that will come our way, as together we live into the words of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, "We are church together, for the sake of the world."

Please mark your calendars for my installation! It will be held on Saturday, September 16th at 2pm at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Spokane. There will be more information coming in further newsletters, so keep an eye out! Please keep our synod in prayer in this time of change, challenge, and excitement.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Bishop-Elect Kristen



Presiding bishop

Serving the neighbor in charged times

By Elizabeth A. Eaton



These are politically charged times. This very sentence in the presiding bishop's column is likely to raise eyebrows.

Across this church I've heard stories of parishioners disturbed by the Gospel read on Sundays, believing the pastor chose the passage as a critique of the current administration. The Beatitudes seemed to provoke the most attention. In a way this is good—maybe we are all hearing Jesus' words with fresh ears. But really, the Beatitudes have been the appointed Gospel for the fourth Sunday of Epiphany (year A) for as long as we have been using the lectionary.

In these charged times it's helpful to consider two things: the relationship between church and state, and how Lutherans participate in civil society. Often we speak about the "separation of church and state." This principle is usually raised when parishioners feel the pastor (or the synod, churchwide organization or bishop) is being "political." There is the assumption that the church should only deal with the spiritual and that it should have nothing to do with civil and political life. The First Amendment says: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The separation of church and state is intended to protect religious liberty and keep the government from interfering in the church.

We Lutherans also cite Martin Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms—the temporal and the spiritual. This has been misinterpreted to mean that the temporal realm is inferior to the spiritual realm—or that God, and therefore the faithful, should not be as concerned with the temporal, should not allow the temporal into the church, and really need not be too engaged in the public square.

But our understanding as Lutherans is that the church and the state, the spiritual and the temporal, are *both* established by God and are *both* part of God's twofold rule. When we pray, "Give

us today our daily bread," we are also praying that God send us the gift of good government (Luther's Small Catechism).

Both church and state are good gifts from God and have been established for specific purposes. The proper work of the church is to "preach the gospel in its purity and administer the sacraments according to the gospel" (Augsburg Confession IV). The proper work of the state is to keep peace and order and to support and nourish the lives of its citizens. And since we confess that God entered human life through the incarnation of Jesus Christ, who took our flesh upon him, we do not have a hierarchy of value that places the spiritual above the temporal.

Active participation in public life and the duty of government to care for its people, especially the most vulnerable, have been part of the Lutheran movement from its beginning. In his explanation of the petition "Give us today our daily bread," Luther said: "It would be therefore fitting if the coat of arms of every upright prince were emblazoned with a loaf of bread instead of a lion" (Large Catechism). He also wrote that the "second virtue of a prince is to help the poor, the orphans, and the widows to justice, and to further their cause."

Lutherans don't withdraw from public life. In fact our constitution pledges us to "work with civil authorities in areas of mutual endeavor, maintaining institutional separation of church and state in a relation of functional interaction." Lutherans fulfill our baptismal vocation when we show up.

So why are we so tense? I think we've been influenced by a divisive culture. We forget that we are one people. I think we fail to recognize Christ in others, whether the other is across the pew or across the world. We forget that we all—whatever our politics—stand under the judgment of God and that only God's promise of reconciling love in Jesus can save us. Set free by that promise we can find a way to serve the neighbor. **L**

A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address: bishop@elca.org.

Church Secretaries Connect

Take it from someone who was not raised Lutheran, there is a lot to learn about the ELCA Synod and what goes on at a church behind the scenes. As a Church Secretary of only three years (with the occasional fill in), believe me when I say, "I still feel like a newbie at times." Bishop-elect Kristen said it beautifully in her Facebook post after the Synod Assembly "how truly connected we are--invisibly, but connected none the less." I see that connection as being family. We are a very large one at that. There is family we have never met that live hundreds of miles away and ones that are right here in the same towns and cities as us.

In the Tri-Cities Area (Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland) we have three ELCA Churches. Pasco First Lutheran (PFL), Kennewick First Lutheran (KFL), and Lord of Life (LoL). As congregations we come together for God's Work, Our Hands; ELCA National Youth Gathering; Pasco Latino Lutheran Ministries (PLLM); Vacation Bible School; as well as many other events which are usually organized by Pastors, Deacons, Youth Coordinators, etc.

When Pastor Kirsten Sauey Hofmann joined us at Lord of Life, with her came many questions (as expected) and when the questions about PFL and KFL came around I could not answer many of them because of my lack of knowledge of the other two churches. Which got me thinking, I have been working at LoL for almost three years and I don't know who the other office staff are at PFL and KFL. So, I approached Pastor Kirsten with the idea that the office staff from the three churches get together so that we can:

1. Officially meet.
2. If we need help with something we don't feel weird or awkward about asking for help.
3. If we struggle with something we can be that support system and help brainstorm. There could be experiences from each other that can be shared and who better to get ideas of church stuff from than another church staff? Our work load is quite unique.

In February we began meeting for lunch once a month. Each church takes a turn at paying for the lunch so that it is not a large expense on just one church. We like to try new places each month as a way to share places we like or try places we have never been. We are still in the get-to-know each other stage. We remain flexible, supportive, and eager to see where these new relationships are going and how they are going to help bring our churches closer together.

As a part of getting to know one another, I have now been over to PFL and taken a tour of their church. I plan on hopefully getting to see KFL in the next couple of months. The other office staff are being encouraged to also take tours of the churches.

It is my hope to inspire all of the Synod's churches to offer their office staff the same opportunity to get to know one another or at least those they work with on a regular basis. We never know the triumphs or the struggles of work issues that others have gone through, which may give insight to your church or someone else's.

Shannon Jackson (Secretary, Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Kennewick)

Would You Like to Be Part of a Synod Wide Team?

by Pastor Helga Jansons Director for Evangelical Mission

I have been very grateful to serve as Director for Evangelical Mission for our Synod. It has been a joy and a challenge from start to finish. I have learned so much from congregations and from ELCA churchwide training. Since I am coterminous with Bishop Martin Wells, I am to finish this work at the end of August. However, I will continue to be a resource and contact person until a new DEM is employed. As I get ready to end my position I would like to provide people – clergy and lay – the opportunity to get involved at the synod level in various areas of ministry. You could be involved because you have some skills in the area or because you would like to learn more. If you are interested, contact me on helga.jansons@elca.org This email address is active through the end of August and after that you would need to contact me at my new ministry, as pastor of First Lutheran Church, Pasco. I am excited to serve as pastor again and particularly in this congregation. This congregation houses the Pasco Latino Lutheran Ministry which is a new ministry start, and I am looking forward to this partnership. The other way to get connected to these synod wide initiatives is through the three Net-Workers that you can contact through the synod office.

Here are the ministry areas in which you could get involved at the synod level:

- Asset Mapping a 90 minute process to discern congregational strengths and interests. Create new ideas/ initiatives for ministry or even a Mission Plan from this process.
- Coaching have a coach or be a coach in general, or for stewardship leaders / team.
- Community Organizing engaging congregation members and your community to make a difference; from educational opportunities to a social justice issue.
- Earth-keeping stewardship from community gardens to community action.
- Latino Ministry synod team meets quarterly to discuss challenges and ministry opportunities
- Mission Developer find out if you have the gifts to be one through the ELCA interview process.
- Mission Redevelopment intentional change which includes training of the pastor, funding and accountability within the ELCA.
- Ministry review be part of a team of pastors/ leaders who listen to congregations and then report their observations and recommendations for direction.
- Mission Plan development help congregations to develop a 6 month - one year plan.
- Mission Interpreter train to become one or coordinate interpreter training across the synod.
- New ministry starts if you have any new ideas you would like to try and need guidance or resources.
- Parish Nursing teach others how it is done/ qualifications/ or learn how to set it up.
- Rural Ministry be part of the ecumenical rural ministry team and its direction or learn of resources
- Stewardship training in Ventures for Growing Stewards (a 4 part workshop series) or shorter training such as Rediscovering Macedonia and several other resources e.g. money leadership retreats.
- Technology be part of a team to learn about new way ways to communicate. Or, help other congregations who need assistance in website development and other forms of communication.
- Transformational Ministry be part of a team offering workshops in discerning Purpose, Guiding Principles, Vision, and a Mission Plan. Teach Congregational Renewal, Adaptive Change, Outreach, Engaging the community, and some Community Organizing skills.



Highlights of the May 19-21, 2017 Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod Assembly

The Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod (EWAID Synod) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) gathered for its annual Synod Assembly at the Downtown Double Tree Hotel in Spokane Washington May 19-21, 2017. The theme of the Assembly was "Grace Draws Us In – Grace Sends Us Out". On the first afternoon of the assembly participants spent time attending nineteen workshops that were offered. On May 20th the Rev. Chris Boerger, Secretary of the ELCA, led the process to elect a new Bishop. On the fourth ballot, the Rev. Kristen E.M. Kuempel, Kennewick, Washington, was elected to serve a six-year term as Bishop of the EWAID Synod. Rev. Kuempel serves as Pastor of First Lutheran Church of Kennewick, Washington.

The following individuals were elected to the Synod Council:

Mt. Spokane Cluster Representative: Patty Cowan
Palouse Cluster Representative: Wayne Beebe
Youth Representative: Gwen McQuaig
At Large Position – Lay Female: Norfilia Tijerina

The following individuals were elected to serve on the following Committees:

Consultation Committee: Wes Howell
Discipline Committee Clergy Position: Betty Kraft
Discipline Committee Lay Male Position: Melvin Martin

The following Resolution was adopted:

Resolution to bring the Synod Constitution into harmony with the Churchwide Constitution

On Saturday evening the Assembly celebrated Rev. Martin D. Wells who is the retiring Bishop of EWAID Synod. Rev. Wells served three terms (18 years) as Bishop. The evening was emceed by none other than Martin Luther (aka Rev. David Haven) and was filled with laughter and gratitude; a time to honor a much-admired leader for the past 18 years. Bishop Wells' term officially ends August 31, 2017. During the event, Vice President, Gary Gemar called a special meeting to order during which the Assembly adopted a Resolution naming Rev. Martin D. Wells as Bishop-Emeritus.

On Sunday morning, prior to closing worship, the traditional time for "Synod Shorts" was spent with members of congregations from all over the Synod sharing stories of mission work by their congregations in their communities.

Prior to the Assembly the Synod Council adopted a resolution to create the Martin D. Wells Campus Ministry Endowment.

Throughout the Assembly we heard from Martin the Moose who has been traveling around the synod promoting the Synod's campaign – My Synod: Moving in Mission Together and learning what ministry activities are occurring in our congregations.





**TRYSIL 1892 – ZION 2017
Celebrating 125 Years**



**August 27th
4:00 pm.**

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Deer Park

You are cordially invited to help us celebrate bringing the gospel to the community of Deer Park for 125 years!

The Celebration will be August 27th with a special Celebratory Worship Service at 4:00 pm.

Please join us for fellowship and a catered meal following the service.

Paid reservations for the meal are due by August 5th, and may be sent to:

Carol Carroll
32518 N. Ridge Road
Chattaroy, WA 99003

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number attending: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

Family: \$40 Adult (13 & older): \$15 Children (12 & younger): \$10

Questions?

Call Carol Carroll at: (509) 292-2430 Or email at: carrollxx2@aol.com

Pray with us



We ask that you keep the ministry of the church, our synod, and the whole world in your prayers, as well as the people listed below . . .

Pastor Dave Daus, for healing and health.

For Bishop Wells, Bishop Elect Kuempel, and their families in this busy time of transition.

Prayer Requests . . . to be included or removed from the Synod Prayer Request list, please send your request to the synod office@ewaidsynod.org, or call 509-838-9871.

LATINO MINISTRY WORKSHOPS

Saturday October 21st 10am-3pm Pasco, WA - Sunday October 22nd 2-5pm East Wenatchee, WA

Open to all clergy and lay people across the synod

Presenter: Rev. Alexia Salvatierra

<http://www.alexiasalvatierra.com/bio.html>

Domestic Hunger Grants Program

The ELCA World Hunger-funded Domestic Hunger Grants Program supports ministries that offer hope and assistance to many thousands of people who experience poverty and hunger in the United States. These grants do more than just give food to people who are hungry – in addition to immediate relief programs, ELCA World Hunger Domestic Hunger Grants fund projects in advocacy, community development, community-based organizing and relief that strengthen the foundations of communities affected by hunger and poverty.

In 2017, this program allocated a total of \$691,810 to support 347 domestic projects and programs ranging from congregational food pantries to urban farms, job training and living-wage advocacy campaigns. ELCA World Hunger-funded Domestic Hunger Grants make a difference. Below is a summary of the dollars allocated in 2017 among the four project categories:

Advocacy: 4 programs, \$11,500	Development: 43 programs, \$106,560
Organizing: 37 programs, \$78,500	Relief: 263 programs, \$495,250

The Application Form must be submitted on or before July 7, 2017.

Faith Lutheran Church in Seattle, WA is currently accepting applications for the position of Director of Music Ministries. Central to the life of our congregation is the community at worship. The Director of Music Ministries will lead and facilitate appropriate worship music experiences by engaging congregation and musicians alike. The Director of Music Ministries will work with Pastors, staff, and lay leadership in providing direction and content of music ministries in support of worship and other ministries.

For more information send a note to FaithLutheranMusicSearch@gmail.com

“Becoming the Story We Tell”: A Catechumenate Training Event

Oct. 6 – 7 at Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church in Seattle WA

To experience and learn how you can transform lives and your congregation through the adult catechumenate, plan to attend a training event that will be held 5 p.m., October 6 through evening, 6 p.m., October 7, at Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church in Seattle, WA. At this event, you will explore the stages of catechumenate and experience some of the elements and rites of this process through large group presentations, small group time, story sharing, Bible reflection, and worship. This event is recommended for teams of two or more from your setting (clergy, musicians, lay leaders and worship and adult faith formation staff) and will provide you with the background and resources you need to begin a catechumenal process.

The theme for this training is "Becoming the Story We Tell," highlighting how the catechumenate provides an immersion into the Christian story as an alternative to the dominant culture's story. The keynote speaker is the Rev. Dan Benedict, former Resources Director for the Worship Office of The United Methodist Church. His books include "Patterned by Grace: How Liturgy Shapes Us" and "Come to the Waters Baptism and Our Ministry of Welcoming Seekers and Making Disciples." Other leadership will be provided by pastors and lay leaders from around Washington.

The cost for the training is \$100/person. Housing is on your own. Registration will be available soon – contact PRLC at office@prlc.org for more information. This event is co-sponsored by Journey to Baptismal Living: The North American Association for the Catechumenate.

The catechumenate is an enlivening journey of spiritual formation for people exploring Christianity or seeking to renew their faith. Based on ancient practices, it goes beyond the traditional study of “what Christians believe.” Through worship, prayer, small groups, Biblical reflection, sponsors and ministry in daily life, it creates a journey to baptismal living which changes lives and makes disciples. For more information on the catechumenate visit: <https://journeytobaptism.org>.



Call Process Status

A Process beginning/congregational study	I Interim	AP Associate/Assistant Pastor
B Names received or on-site visits in process	P Pastor	VP Visitation Pastor
C Call in process/issued	CP Co-Pastor	D Deacon
NV New Vacancy	LP Lead Pastor	L Lay Position
TC Term call	SP Supply Pastor	TM Transition Minister (available for the open-ended call)
VP Visitation Pastor		

POS	LOCATION/CONGREGATION	STATUS	PASTORAL CARE	
P	Boise, ID – King of Glory	B	John Hergert	I
P	Chelan, WA – Holden Village	A		
P	Cheney, WA – Emmanuel Lutheran	NV		
P	Cheney, WA – Campus Ministry EWU	NV		
P	Chewelah, WA – St. Paul Lutheran	NV	Bob Edwards	SP
P	Colville, WA – St. Paul Lutheran	A	Doug Stensby	I
P	Davenport, WA - Zion	NV	Stacey Friedlein	TEEM
P	Davenport (Egypt), WA – Christ Lutheran	NV	Roger Bruggink	SP
P	Ephrata, WA - Holy Trinity	A	Karen Edwards	I
P	Genesee, ID - Genesee/St. John	C	Supply	
P	Goldendale, WA – Christ the King	NV	Mary Johnson	SP
P	Kennewick, WA – First Lutheran	NV	Kristen Kuempel	
P	Leavenworth, WA - Faith	A	Misael Fajardo-Perez	I
P	Lind, WA – Good Hope Lutheran	NV	Ginny Johnson	SP
P	Mattawa, WA – Grace Lutheran	NV	Ginny Kreckling	I
P	Otis Orchards, WA – Peace Lutheran	NV	David Olson	TM
P	Quincy, WA - St. Paul Lutheran	A	Karen Edwards	I
P	Spokane, WA – Messiah Lutheran	NV	Betty Krafft	SP
P	Spokane, WA – St. Mark's Lutheran	B	Eric Dull Kate LePard	CP
P	Twin Falls, ID – Our Savior	NV	Dick Sansgaard	SP

Calls Accepted

Pastor Joel Skindlov has accepted the call to serve at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church-Spokane. His first Sunday will be July 23, 2017

Pastor Helga Jansons has accepted the call to First Lutheran Church-Pasco.

Installations

Pastor Helga Jansons will be installed August 6th at 4 pm at First Lutheran Church, Pasco, WA.

Mountain View Lutheran Church - Edgewood, WA is hiring a 3/4-time Music Director,

The position is part-time (30 hours per week) with benefits, including: medical/dental, paid vacation/sick/holidays, etc. Some of the schedule will be negotiable, but we will definitely need the person here on Sundays and Wednesdays to play for services.

Phil Edlund
Church Administrator
Mountain View Lutheran Church
253-863-5171, ext. 104

pedlund@mtviewlutheran.org

Tree of Life Lutheran Church - Terrace Heights, WA has stumbled upon file cabinets full of choir music (SATB) which is of no use to them any longer. It is free for the taking.

If interested, contact Pastor Ron Nitz at 509-453-7294 or thls@nwinfo.net

Please plan to join ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton on Tuesday, Oct. 31, as she co-hosts a commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

The event, which will include speakers and a service, will be at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Bishop Eaton will be joined by co-hosts Indiana-Kentucky Synod Bishop Bill Gafkjen, ELCA Vice President Bill Horne and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Bishop Dick Graham. The event is open to the public and will be available online via livestream. All are invited to participate and honor the Reformation anniversary as we bear public witness to Christ, who frees us to love and serve our neighbor, and as we look to the future to which God is calling us.

Please note this date on your calendar. More details will be available in the near future. Stay up to date on event changes at the event calendar posts.

Blessings to you as we commemorate this historic occasion in our church.

Planning on Attending the Synodical Women's Gathering and the Idaho Discipleship Conference?

What About the Time Between?

The 2017 ELCA Eastern WA-ID Synodical Women's Gathering will be held Sept. 29-Oct. 1 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Nampa. The very next weekend, Oct. 6-8, the Idaho Discipleship Conference will be held at the Nampa Civic Center. You could spend the week exploring ministry, culture, industry, and wilderness in the Treasure Valley.

A possible itinerary:

Sunday: Go to Brick 29 in Nampa for brunch following closing worship at Trinity Lutheran Church

Monday: Join the quilters at Faith Lutheran Church in Caldwell from 9-11 a.m.

Tuesday: Visit Boise's Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial, Basque Museum, and Idaho Botanical Gardens

Wednesday: Wine Tasting in Snake River Valley Wine Country

Thursday: Make stoles (no experience necessary) for Grace Episcopal Church's House Next Door from 10-noon

There are many wonderful restaurants in Nampa, Caldwell and Boise

Other Options:

Golfing • Warhawk Air Museum • Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge • Nampa Greenbelt
Tour Northwest Nazarene University and/or College of Idaho

Pastor Meggan Manlove, Trinity Lutheran Church

Pastor Justin Tigerman, Faith Lutheran Church

Deacon Kat Tigerman, The House Next Door

Canyon County Rostered Leaders

Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Kennewick, WA is a vibrant, musically talented congregation seeking applicants for Organist/Pianist/Musician, Choir Director, and Music Coordinator. These positions could be combined, depending on the gifts of the applicants. We are seeking passionate, musically gifted persons for these roles who have experience both as a musician and as a music leader. Church music experience not necessary, but helpful. We are looking to grow our music ministry, especially for our children and youth. Interested persons should contact the church office for job descriptions and to submit a résumé. Job descriptions can also be found on our website at www.thelordoflife.org.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church (ELCA)
(509) 783-5222

640 North Columbia Center Boulevard
Kennewick, WA 99336

**EASTERN
WASHINGTON
IDAHO SYNOD**

of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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**July 2017
Newsletter**

Let Down the Nets
Lifting Our Vision
Jesus First, Last, Always
God's Grace, Our Gratitude
The Spirit Powers Us
No Fear! Transformation
Connections Multiply Miracles
Go, Tell & Serve



Please reproduce any and all articles for publication in congregational newsletters or bulletins.
The **Cross Connection** is also available on the synod website at
<http://www.ewaidsynod.org/synodpublications.html>.
Deadline for articles is the 5th of each month.

Synod Calendar

July 2017

3-4 Synod Office Closed Fourth of July

August 2017

7-10 Rostered Minister Gathering - Atlanta, GA
20-26 Abriendos Caminos at Holden Village

September 2017

4 Office closed Labor Day
15-16 Synod Council
16 Bishop Installation at St. Mark's - Spokane, WA



Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our Hands

Staff

Bishop The Rev. Martin Wells
Director for Evangelical Missions .. The Rev. Helga Jansons
Program Administrator Cathy Steiner
Assembly Manager Julia Bennett
Communication Director Gib Dominguez
Net-Worker Rev. Phylis Stromme
Net-Worker Rev. David Kappus
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THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

EDITOR: CYNTHIA WOOLEVER—WWW.THEPARISHPAPER.COM

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HOW CAN WE HELP IMMIGRANTS?

A new church member—a recent African immigrant—described what his Christian mother taught him: “When someone comes to you and needs food and shelter, you give it to them. The next day you can ask them: What is your story?” The immigrant story touches every community and congregations have always welcomed newcomers. Typically, one in ten people attending a worship service in the US are immigrants—they were born outside the US. Further, one in five worshipers are children of immigrants because one or both of their parents were born in another country.¹

Do Labels Matter?

Conflating the categories of immigrant, migrant, and refugee reaps serious consequences for the health and safety of these newcomers. When considering issues related to the movement of people between countries, disagreement and confusion abound around the correct label. For the purposes of this issue, “immigrant” is the umbrella term for persons who moved from their country of birth to a new country. Migrants and refugees are terms for particular types of immigrants.

What is an immigrant? In the broadest terms, an immigrant is a person, born in one country, who chooses to make a home in another country. In most instances, they seek a better life with more opportunities—education or work—for themselves and their children. Because this is a planned choice, the individual or family is more likely to have saved funds, explored locations and jobs, and brought some necessary personal possessions. They may even have a network of family and friends who previously immigrated who are ready to assist them as they settle in a new country.

What is a refugee? Forced to leave their birth country, these individuals and families fear for their safety. In some cases, they risk their lives to escape a horrific situation such as torture, war, starvation, or violation of their human rights. Often they flee without much notice and leave behind almost all their possessions. Before arriving in a new country, they may spend time in an intermediary

country or a refugee camp, waiting for legal clearance to resettle in a host country. Refugees typically cannot return to their home country unless political and economic circumstances change dramatically. Recent crises provide a window into conflicts worldwide that have forced people to leave for a safe haven. The United States admitted 85,000 refugees in 2016 with the largest numbers coming from six countries: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, Burma (Myanmar), Iraq, Somalia, and Bhutan.²

What is a migrant? People who seek work or educational opportunities for a limited amount of time are free to come and go between their home country and host country. Migrants include agricultural workers, students, educators, health care professionals, and a variety of other occupational groups.

For each category of immigrant, specific legal requirements and protections are in place. Confusing the groups takes attention away from the needs of these individuals and families. For example, international law defines “refugee” and spells out how they are to be protected. One



“DON’T FEEL BAD, LOU...
YOU’RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO THOUGHT EATING
LASAGNA AT THE CHURCH LUNCHEON
MADE US MULTICULTURAL.”

of the most crucial principles of international law is that refugees cannot be removed from the country providing asylum or returned to situations that might threaten their life. The appropriate legal response always depends on the individual's immigration status.³ Obtaining and processing the proper documents for legal status within the US is complicated, prolonged, and often expensive.

Will We Choose Welcome?

Whether an individual or group of church members wants to reach out to immigrants, they must do so with plenty of background information. Do we know the country of origin for immigrants currently in our community? What do we have to offer as a faith community?⁴ Do we see ourselves as allies rather than the ones in charge? Are we paying attention to who is asking for what? Can we listen to newcomers' stories about their background and journey without pre-judgment? Can we learn about their dreams?

First, learn about local immigrant groups and existing non-profit organizations. Use "immigrant and refugee ministries" as search terms to discover services and agencies already assisting in your area (see <http://www.americanacc.org>). Search your judicatory and denominational websites for information and updates (e.g., <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/>). Check out these additional resources:

- For worship resources: Church World Service founded by 17 denominations (<https://cwsglobal.org/our-work/refugees-and-immigrants/>)
- For ideas about how churches can help immigrant neighbors and fellow churchgoers: The Matthew 25 Movement (<http://matthew25pledge.com/toolkit/immigration>)
- For information about defending immigrant rights: American Friends Service Committee (<https://www.afsc.org/key-issues/issue/defending-immigrant-rights>)
- For laws, forms, and steps toward citizenship: US Citizenship and Immigration Services (<https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian>)
- For access to finding assistance organizations near you: Catholic Charities USA (<https://catholiccharitiesusa.org/find-help>)
- For locating local legal assistance: Immigration Law Help (<https://www.immigrationlawhelp.org/>)

Second, let what you learn lead you to discern the next steps for yourself or the congregation. Most communities

already have organizations with decades of experience assisting immigrants. Consider volunteering with or donating to a reputable local or national group. Local agencies often need help with job networking, tutoring children or adults, or basic items (shelter, food, and clothing) in the early months of resettlement. Legislative advocacy and local organizing efforts are additional options for supporting immigrant rights. Recognize that some assistance comes with zero risk for the volunteer or organization. However, the degree of risk falls along a continuum from no legal risks to possible violation of US law (such as providing sanctuary to undocumented immigrants, refugees, and unskilled workers with temporary visas).⁵ Whatever actions you or others might take, should be done with eyes wide open.

Third, assess the opportunities or barriers for your congregation to be more multicultural. Many churches are already worshipping communities composed of multiple cultural groups. Unfortunately, the tendency is for the largest or dominant cultural group to believe that the minority cultures should give up their unique cultural identities and practices once they become part of the congregation. Finding points of commonality, such as children's education, support for families, or shared experiences in ministry with Christians in a sister church in another country, increases the chances of a congregation becoming more multicultural over time.⁶

From Africa to America

An African proverb says: "If you want to go fast, walk alone. If you want to go far, walk together." Responding to the complexity of immigrants' needs requires many, many caring partners and a long-term commitment.

1. Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce, *A Field Guide to U.S. Congregations*, Second Edition (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 19.

2. "Most refugees who enter the U.S. as religious minorities are Christians," Pew Research Center, (<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/02/07/most-refugees-who-enter-the-u-s-as-religious-minorities-are-christians/>).

3. See the Refugee Council USA, a coalition of twenty-four US-based, non-governmental organizations (<http://www.rcusa.org>).

4. Explore biblical texts and theological interpretations, such as Ched Myers and Matthew Colwell, *Our God is Undocumented: Biblical Faith and Immigrant Justice* (New York: Orbis Books, 2012).

5. "The roots and branches of the sanctuary movement," *The Christian Century*, February 15, 2017 (<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/roots-and-branches-sanctuary-movement>).

6. See "Multiple Roads to a Multicultural Congregation," *The Parish Paper*, Volume 24, Number 8 (August 2016).