



THE BRIDGE

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR
CONGREGATIONS OF THE
SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD, ELCA

CONNECTING THE
CONGREGATIONAL, SYNODICAL, AND
CHURCHWIDE EXPRESSIONS OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA.



WHY THE SYNOD? - PART 2: SYNOD MINISTRY PARTNERS

What do you know about the Southeastern Minnesota Synod? Do you know what it does or what the money your congregation designates for it is used for? This issue is the second in a series designed to help answer those questions for you.

What are "Synod Ministry Partners"?

Part of your congregation's offering goes to the synod. From Southeastern Minnesota Synod, approximately 15% goes to support our ministry partners. These are ministries that are not operated by the synod but that the synod supports monetarily. These include campus ministry, Luther Seminary, our companion synods (Colombia and the Central Diocese of Tanzania), Christ Through Hands Ministry, church colleges, Minnesota Council of Churches, Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy in Minnesota, and Region 3. We're going to focus on the Christ Through Hands ministry as one of the less known ministries.

Christ Through Hands

Most of us listen to our pastor preach and take in the words of the Bible through our eyes. Have you ever wondered what your faith experience would be like if you were deaf or blind? Christ Through Hands Ministry (CTHM) is an ecumenical organization devoted to bringing the word of Christ to the deaf and blind. CTHM offers weekly religion classes at the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf and the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind and works with local congregations to provide First Communion and Confirmation classes. At the Academies, the students study the Bible, participate in hands-on activities to reinforce the lessons, and provides full participation opportunities for the students. In our synod, CTHM also leads a youth and adult sign choir at Our Savior's in Faribault. In addition, Debbie Timmers, the CTHM Director, provides interpreting services for Sunday worship services at Our Savior's and for ecumenical services in the Faribault area.

What Does This Mean?

CTHM is one specialized ministry that allows even those often forgotten by society to receive the Good News. Your hands can be ministers too - by giving your offering you are able to reach out and touch the deaf and blind, college students, seminarians, people in Colombia and Tanzania, Christians throughout Minnesota, and all Minnesotans. Our synod minister partners enable us to help support a variety of ministries that we could never offer on our own.

FEATURED RESOURCES

Visit these web sites to learn more.

- Colleges, Lutheran Campus Ministry, and Seminaries - www.elca.org/vocationeducation
- Companion Synods - www.semnsynod.org/globalmission.html
- Minnesota Council of Churches - www.mnchurches.org
- Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy - www.lcppm.org
- Region 3 - www.elca.org/synods/region3.asp

MONTHLY BIBLE VERSE

We are a synod joined in Bible study. This Bible verse was selected by Harold Usgaard, bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, for everyone in the synod to study.



From the story of Jesus curing a deaf Man:

"Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened.'"

MARK 7:34

ABOUT OUR SYNOD

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of 130,000 baptized people in 184 congregations as well as related institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Its geographic area includes 15 counties in the southeastern corner of Minnesota.

The Bridge is a monthly publication of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. For more information, contact the synod office:

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