

Report of the Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM)

Since beginning this position (as shared DEM with the Allegheny Synod), one of my main responsibilities has been implementation of the resolution adopted at the 2023 assembly to *“develop a process to accompany struggling congregations with discerning how they can best ‘Serve God in the World’ using the resources, time, and talents they have available.”*

A Task Force for Congregational Development began the work and Pastor Justin Lingenfelter reported on their progress at the 2024 assembly. Since that time, I have been involved with continuing implementation in the following ways:

- Creating a resource packet of tools to use with congregations in Sustainability Summits;
- Conducting the first Sustainability Summit with congregations of the Middle Creek Conference;
- Beginning a Sustainability Summit series with the Southern Clinton County Parish;
- Convening, at the direction of the synod council, and ad hoc committee to develop policy recommendations for a new synod Mission Fund, funds to come from the Faith Church Loan Fund and ELCA Grants funds.

A second focus has been to provide support to The Table, a Synod Authorized Worshipping Community (SAWC), and its Mission Developer, Rev. Pam Meilands, as they continue to develop their ministry in Bloomsburg. This year, this support has included:

- Conducting a six-month mission exploration with the congregation;
- Attending the ELCA Mission Leader Training with Pastor Pam;
- Weekly conversations with Pastor Pam;
- Submission of materials for the ELCA SAWC grant;
- Conducting a Ministry Review, including conversations with leaders and members of The Table, Pastor Pam, community partners, and members of First Presbyterian Church (also served by Pastor Pam);
- Making recommendations to The Table based on the ministry review team’s observations.

Additional tasks this year include relating with the Bishop’s Discernment Team (BDT); being available to other congregations in transition at the discretion of Bishop Miller or the BDT; serving as the bishop’s appointee to the Camp Mount Luther board.

Congregations wishing for some assistance in reviewing or renewing their mission are invited to contact the DEM by email (sueellen.spotts@elca.org) or phone (570-898-0255).

It continues to be my joy to join the people of the Upper Susquehanna in its mission of supporting one another and serving God in the world.

In Christ,

Sue Ellen Spotts

Director for Evangelical Mission

Allegheny & Upper Susquehanna Synods