

EWA-ID Synod Assembly – May 2019

By Mary Morrow, Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM)

Think of a circle divided into 3 parts. The role of the DEM is about connecting these three parts together. Sound familiar? Our three expressions of the church: congregations, synods, and the wider church, can all seem disparate and VERY far apart. The DEM helps lift up ministries of congregations to the synod and ELCA churchwide office. And then continues sharing stories and information around the circle!

In these first 10 months as DEM, your “connector” on this circle, I’ve started to know many of you in our congregations and ministries, our synod (the Office of the Bishop as well as our geography) and our churchwide expression (the ELCA office, ministry partners and global missions). You cannot imagine the pleasure of seeing God at work in, with and among us! Some days I wish you all could spend a day, or week in my shoes seeing all that I see happening with the Holy Spirit moving among us. Here are some of the things I’ve participated in, alongside many of you throughout our synod.

Gatherings with ministry partners, such as: Rural Ministry Network, WELCA meetings, Lutheran Community Services, Cluster retreats and meetings, Synod Council meetings, Cluster Dean’s retreats, visits to congregations, ministry partner’s events, and churchwide sponsored conferences. There is so much happening! And since you cannot spend a week in my shoes, how DO we manage to spread the news about what’s happening in our synod and throughout the ELCA?

We use our **Mission Interpreter Ministry**. Working with Deacon Dave Hellerich, our Mission Interpreter Coordinator, we help others communicate stories from all 3 expressions of our church. [Visit the Mission Interpreter information table or attend an Assembly workshop lead by Dave to learn about this ministry.](#)

A **Synod Vitality Coalition (SVC)**, made up of synod staff and leaders, attended 2 conferences put on by the ELCA Congregational Vitality team to build a synod vitality strategy. We meet regularly to work on communication with and resources for our congregations. [Learn more at the SVC information table. Sign up for a one-to-one visit with an SVC member to share ideas about ways we can create vitality.](#)

Here’s some of my work responsibilities:

- ❖ I oversee the Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWC), and specialized ministries of our synod, and help form/initiate both. Let me know what’s happening in your Cluster and share ideas for new ministries or worshipping communities.
- ❖ Supervise Mission Developers for these new ministries and SAWCs; they are the support staff for God’s work in our synod. We look to replace and add Mission Developers for Latino ministries and new starts in our fast-growing and diverse areas. Again, share your ideas for new ministry with me or the Synod Vitality Coalition.
- ❖ Report to our bishop, Synod Council and churchwide staff, including Pastor Ruben Duran, Director for Congregational Vitality, and others in the Domestic Mission unit of the ELCA, about new initiatives in our synod, grant requests and resources for new opportunities to serve those in need. This year the EWA-ID synod will receive grant money from the ELCA to further the work of New Day Lutheran Church in Idaho Falls. This newly formed congregation of believers in Jesus Christ, diligently minister to the marginalized in an area where few believe “All are Welcome”.

Thank you for welcoming me as DEM and continuing to welcome all into our church!