



**Indiana-Kentucky Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

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*Dear Leaders, I encourage you to share this letter with your congregation and ministry members. The quarterly letters are easily accessible on the Synod's Facebook page and website, making them easy to distribute to your community. I have also included the latest report, "What Does My Offering Do," which outlines how your donations are distributed throughout the ELCA. This report serves as a valuable resource and discussion point for your lay members, helping everyone understand the impact of your generous support.*

## **2025 Third Quarter Mission Support Letter**

**Date: 11/10/2025**

Dear Rostered, Lay, and Congregational Leaders,

The peace of Christ be with you always!

I write with gratitude, hope, and trust in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now, after a year in this role, I am deeply grateful for how the Spirit is moving among us. The small steps we take following Jesus are like a rudder guiding a ship. We have seen new relationships form, old relationships renewed, new leaders emerge, congregations experience new life, and trust rebuilt; and this is only the beginning, as there is still much work to be done. New gifts are emerging in our work together, reflecting the many blessings we've received and the remarkable progress we've made as a Synod of the ELCA. Although mission support has decreased recently—similar to what many congregations have faced—we remain hopeful through God's grace. What unites us all is our commitment to walk together—journeying in gratitude, hope, and trust—as we seek to serve both God and neighbor, for the life of the world and for the sake of the gospel. Yes, I believe this!

Whenever I write mission support letters, I am reminded that such support—our collective effort to share resources and blessings for ministry—is a profound act of discipleship. This effort reflects our shared values of grace, hope, and trust, grounding our lives and work as the body of Christ. In our journey, we do not pray for specific results; instead, we pray for God's will to be done among us. We leave the outcome to God! By grace, we strive to live into what God is already doing for us and through us, trusting in God's ongoing work in our lives.

At the heart of mission support is grace, grounded in the love and generosity we first receive from God. This love starts with the air we breathe, literally, and is reflected in the crucified and risen Christ. It is renewed daily by the Holy Spirit through our baptisms. In response, we are thankful for God's incredible grace in every part of our lives. By focusing on the good—even amid challenges—and showing gratitude through our giving and partnerships, we cultivate a lifestyle and a lasting mindset of thankfulness and grace. These practices strengthen our community of faith and remind us that every offering, whether big or small, is meaningful in God's hands.

To illustrate this, consider Zacchaeus, the tax collector. He climbed a tree out of curiosity, but what truly changed his life was Jesus seeing him, calling him by name, and offering grace. Zacchaeus's response—generosity and restitution—stemmed from a heart transformed by undeserved love. Similarly, our mission support isn't merely a duty; it's a heartfelt response to God's abundant grace—an act of reflecting Christ's love through tangible actions that restore lives and communities.

Along with grace, hope is also essential to our calling. Mission support elevates ministries that serve, teach, and bring hope to others. It represents an investment in the future, showing faith in what God will still accomplish in and through us. Our support today becomes a promise of hope for tomorrow's leaders, worshipers, and communities. Cultivating hope in Christ as a daily way of living through prayer, mission, and generosity helps us endure trials, rejoice in blessings, and stay confident in God's promises.

One example that comes to mind is last August at Cross of Christ Lutheran Church in Crown Point, IN. Their mission support gift was given to me in person after a difficult season and a renewed sense of hope. It was more than just a financial gift; it was a sign of the resilience of faith and hope in the Spirit's work among the congregation. Each gift, like theirs, acts as a thread of hope woven into the fabric of our shared ministry, even in small yet impactful churches and places where God is active. The moment this gift was handed to me was truly touching, highlighting the deep connection and heartfelt faith of Cross of Christ Lutheran Church and its leaders, and serving as a powerful reminder of the strength of community and life-giving hope.

Just as hope sustains us, trust grounds us. Mission support is an act of trust—trusting our resources to God's work, trusting our partners in ministry, and trusting that God multiplies our gifts for purposes beyond our imagining. Trusting God is not the way of the world. As Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 1: The cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who



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believe/trust it is the power of God. Choosing the way of love, choosing to be vulnerable rather than appear strong, choosing the harder right over comfort, we are called to act with trust: to give and serve whether the way forward is clear or uncertain, assured that God is faithful.

Building on this trust, we sincerely thank our congregations for their kindness and generosity, knowing that every gift, no matter the size, helps further the mission of Christ's church. We warmly invite those who haven't yet given to find new ways to trust in God's everlasting grace and to share their blessings generously, just as God has blessed us. We also lift up in prayer those who feel hesitant or hold back their gifts, asking God to touch their hearts and bring comfort to their worries.

While we remain committed to our witness of Christ and express our gratitude, we also pray that hope and trust continue to guide our collective efforts. Looking ahead, our shared vision stays rooted in gratitude for what God has already done, hope for what is yet to come, and trust that God walks alongside us. As we build communities where these values influence every decision and act of service, our mission support becomes more than just a transaction — it becomes a living testimony to our unity. We are called and sent for the life of the world and the sake of the gospel.

Let us move forward with gratitude, hope, and trust in God's promises. May our shared journey, strengthened by mission support, bring lasting transformation through Christ our Lord.

God's peace be with you always.

Bishop Timothy Mark Graham,