

LUTHERAN SERVICES CAROLINAS
South Carolina Synod Assembly
2023

Dear Friends,

The year of 2022 continued to be a challenging one for Lutheran Services Carolinas, your health and human services social ministry of the South and North Carolina Synods of the ELCA. Ongoing pressures with the COVID pandemic and unprecedented worker shortage were stressful, but our teammates rose to the occasion with grace and compassion.

Last year, more than 2,200 LSC teammates, along with 2,940 donors, 4,733 advocates, and more than 1,200 volunteers, improved the lives of more than 6,300 Carolinians. Chief among those volunteers are Bishop Aebischer and her designee, Pastor Mary Finklea, and 19 other dedicated board members who lead this ministry. In South Carolina, LSC improved lives through:

- Dedicated foster parents and case workers served 152 children.
- Refugee and Immigrant Services assisted 1082 people on their path to new lives in the U.S., including 935 new arrivals.
- the Transitional Foster Care for Unaccompanied Children program helped 84 children.
- The Strengthening Families program helped 130 people develop more cohesive family units.
- Recovery housing programs assisted 31 people and serviced 756 throughout the community.
- LSC provided residential living options to 60 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in host homes and in nine group homes.

LSC expanded its Columbia refugee services, now called the New Americans Program, to new offices in Greenville and Charleston in 2021, and recently expanded to Myrtle Beach. The new programs serve legal refugees from around the world including Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders from Afghanistan, the allies who supported U.S. troops. In collaboration with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), LSC has a long history of supporting refugees on their journey to self-sufficiency in this country, including welcome at the airport upon arrival, food and shelter, transportation, medical care, school enrollment, employment services, and cultural assimilation.

Officially opened in 2022, WeCo Cottage is a new addiction recovery program for college students in Columbia. The development of WeCo Cottage continued through the collaborative efforts of LSC, Gamecock Recovery, Columbia College, and The Courage Center.

Also established in 2022, Trinity Recovery is a faith-based Recovery Community Organization that serves Greenwood, Lexington, Newberry and Richland counties in South Carolina. Staff provides training to other faith providers to become "recovery-friendly congregations" and reach out to individuals, who may be unhoused, and who are seeking services to provide referrals and assistance.

Despite COVID and inadequate government funding, LSC child and family services loses money on its services but ended the year stronger thanks to your contributions of \$944,763. Because LSC's overall financial health remains strong, we can continue to serve in challenging times with your prayers and support.

We are the church together. When many Lutheran organizations are taking Lutheran out of their name and taking Christ out of their mission statement, LSC has passionately lifted up our Lutheran Christian name and roots, actively seeking collaborations and closer partnerships with the Synod and congregations. Thank you to the South Carolina Synod and to the congregations for ministry together.

Yours in Christ,



Ted W. Goins, Jr.
LSC President



MISSION

Believing in the presence of God, the value of human life and the dignity of the individual, the mission of Lutheran Homes of South Carolina, as a ministry of the church, is to promote the well-being of older adults by providing residential, healthcare and hospice services.

- All LHSC campuses and programs were in good standing during the year from a regulatory standpoint and continue to recover operationally from the effects and challenges of the COVID virus.
- Lutheran Homes of South Carolina provided employment for 1,000 full or part-time TeamMates to fulfill our Mission serving our older adult resident, patient and client Priorities.
- Residential and healthcare services were provided for 2,804 independent, assisted living, memory support, skilled nursing long-term residents and short-term rehabilitation patients across our five continuing care retirement communities:
 - Franke at Seaside, Mount Pleasant
 - the Heritage at Lowman, White Rock
 - Rice Estate, Columbia
 - RoseCrest, Inman
 - Trinity on Laurens, Aiken

- LHSC's annual satisfaction survey received very high marks from our residential and healthcare resident and patient Priorities and family members about their perception of aspects that affect life at their residence such as direct care and services, staff, meals, life enrichment activities, buildings and grounds. 90.5% of survey respondents would recommend LHSC to others.

The Heritage at Lowman initiated Phase 2 of the 18 unit expansion of the Courtyard pocket neighborhood apartments in the fall of 2022. Development plans are also underway for the addition of 18 new Courtyard apartments at RoseCrest to be built concurrently with a multi-purpose wellness center and dining expansion which also will include dedicated chapel space. Rice Estate completed renovations for both assisted and independent living dining rooms.

- Rice Estate and the Heritage at Lowman Rehabilitation and Health Care Center received High Performing short-term care ratings as recognized as the Best Nursing Homes from US World & News Report. RoseCrest Rehabilitation and Healthcare maintained a Five Star Rating from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services throughout the year.
- Lutheran Hospice supported 559 patients and over 1,667 family caregivers during their end-of-life journey. The program ranked higher than the national averages for all quality measures and 90% of patients and families were willing to recommend Lutheran Hospice to others.
- Across the state, BeWell Home Services caregivers helped 151 clients remain at home with non-medical, supportive services through its Midlands/Aiken, Lowcountry, and Upstate offices.
- BeWell@Home provided continuing care at home wellness programs for 111 members.
- Due to the generosity of 1,791 donors in 2022, the Lutheran Homes of SC Foundation:
 - Provided \$431,186 to help subsidize the care of residents, clients and hospice patients served in our ministries of care.
 - Funded \$980,825 in capital improvements to enhance and expand facilities, and \$665,153 to support community programs and services.

As always, we remain most grateful for your partnership in ministry,

Mr. Jack Balling
Chair of the Board

Mr. Frank T. Shepke
President and CEO



2023 Report to the Synod Assemblies of Region 9

Greetings from Seminary Ridge, in the name of the Holy Trinity!

I am grateful for the call to serve as Rector and Dean at this time in our seminary's story. After serving across the global Lutheran communion, it is a joy to join our mission to "teach, form and nurture" leaders for public ministry. Theological education has always been a driver of the Lutheran tradition. LTSS continues to cultivate new fruit as our vibrant faculty and staff implement the revised curriculum according to our strategic plan.

New MACM track for ELCA Deacons

In Fall 2023, we will launch a new MACM track designed particularly for ELCA Word and Service candidates. Students will complete a 22-hour core, followed by a 27-hour track for Lutheran formation, contextual education, and ministry specialization. We are pleased to introduce this path to Word and Service ministry.

New "Explore" Program

Beginning in Fall 2023, LTSS will offer innovative one-hour elective course opportunities. Explore courses will invite students to explore interesting topics and gain valuable ministry experience not otherwise covered in the curriculum. This program will be open to LTSS alumni for continuing education credit, creating opportunities for intergenerational learning between current students and alumni, and may expand in the future. Please watch for announcements about this program, so that you can share the opportunity within your networks.

New Concentrations and Cognates

LTSS will offer concentrations that recognize a student's academic achievement in a particular area of study, such as Biblical Studies, Theology, and Faith Formation. Seminarians will be able to take specialized courses (cognates) through the LRU graduate faculty in the areas of Leadership, Counseling, and Sustainability. A student who completes nine credit hours in one of these designated areas will graduate with a concentration.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

LTSS continues its theological, pedagogical and practical commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion across the curriculum. Lifelong Learning opportunities embed our students and the wider LTSS community in dynamic partnerships with local partners such as Koinonia and the International African American Museum, and engaging events such as Dr Willie Jennings' lecture "Overcoming Racial Faith". These innovations equip our church for critical, constructive, courageous, creative theological engagement across cultures and contexts.

Cultivating a Christ-Centered Community of Education and Formation in an Age of Hybrid Learning

Seminaries are seedbeds. LTSS cultivates a Christ centered community of Columbia and Connect (online) students. We are gathered in First Week Immersions to start each semester, formed in regular rhythms of Word, sacrament, prayer, and spiritual practice, enriched through ecumenical learning (such as Methodism 101), and embodied through relationships of mutual care and conviviality, including a new Hammock Hang Out.

I want to say a special word of gratitude to LTSS colleagues, the Advisory Committee and LR leadership for tending to extra tasks throughout the leadership transition. We are all grateful to our Bishops for their visits and their ministry among us. We are grateful for the financial support of our Synods, faithful congregations and individuals in Region 9 and beyond. And we are grateful to you who encourage the faithful to consider their vocation to public ministry. As we look with faithful imagination to the future of theological education, your prayers and participation sustain our mission and strengthen our capacity to respond to the Spirit's call.

Peace be yours,

Rev. Dr Chad Rimmer
Rector and Dean

NovusWay Ministries
South Carolina Synod Assembly
2023

Mission: The ministries of NovusWay provide experiences for all people in God's creation that inspire faith, build relationships, and transform lives.

Vision: Trusting in God's promises, lives are transformed to love and serve as part of inclusive communities.

We Value: Inclusion, Renewal, Stewardship, Hospitality, Formation, and Discipleship

Throughout 2022, NovusWay Ministries—Lutheridge, Lutherock, Luther Springs and Lutheranch—worked to serve more youth, adults and families after several years of significant financial and operational challenges. We served more than 2400 campers of all ages in our summer camp programs. We visited 26 congregations through our Lutheroad Day Camps. Our facilities were opened over 560 times for guest groups, and we worked alongside 100 college age students who served on our summer staff.

The program, hosted ministry attendance and income increased at all sites, but we were still below the last pre-pandemic year of 2019. Overall, 2022 summer income increased by 20% over 2021, which was a recovery year after the Covid shutdown of 2020.

Operationally, your faithful Board of Trustees continues to refocus the ministry's efforts and provide greater structure and direction through a series of new documents: the Strategic Plan with the Mission, Vision, and Values as quoted above; revised By-Laws; updated Board Policies; and revised Personnel Policies for year-round staff. In all our efforts, the active participation by the four supporting synod Bishops on the Board has been significant and gratefully acknowledged.

A major accomplishment of this past year was the hiring of several executive staff members. In January, new Executive Directors at Lutheranch, Clair Marie Hannon, and Lutheridge, Van Van Horne, joined long-serving Craig Reiger at Lutherock, and Sarah Anderson and Sue Mendenhall at Luther Springs. In March, Richard D. (Dick) Peterson began his service as Intentional Interim CEO. Dick brings many years of experience in outdoor ministry and non-profit program development. In June, Kristen Williams became the Executive Director for Financial Development. In October, LaToya Ellis was named Director of Human Resources, a new and much needed professional position. While our leadership team and year-round staff are strong, staffing summer programs was a challenge in 2022, with some program sections limited or cancelled due to the inadequate staff numbers. Summer staffing remains a major challenge in 2023, which is a problem for most camps around the country.

We continued to improve our program facilities. The Atonement Chapel was dedicated at Luther Springs which provides significant new programming opportunities. Barn renovations and a new mounting ramp that facilitates accessibility were completed at Lutheranch. A new porch was added to Founders Lodge at Lutherock. At Lutheridge, long overdue refreshing projects were completed. Looking ahead, we are working on a variety of short- and long-term facilities repairs and upgrades necessary to continue to make the camps relevant and attractive for campers, conferences, and special events.

Financially, we continue to enjoy wide support. In 2022, we were blessed with 2,778 individual gifts totaling \$1,070,018. These donations came from people in 27 states throughout the United States. Giving Tuesday proceeds brought in \$35,730 to support the ministry. Total synod benevolence support from the four synods totaled \$115,800.57. We are grateful for all this support that allows us to provide valuable programming for youth and families.

The hard reality of the year was that growing inflation hit our budget very hard, with many areas showing significant price increases, especially food and supplies, equestrian costs, utilities, and insurance. Investments in much needed property repairs and staff salary increases to be competitively attractive also increased costs. We also saw that ongoing Covid concerns kept some groups away from camp early in the year, reducing overall attendance and income from what we budgeted. With all these factors, along with the long-term effects of the pandemic that masked some underlying problems that we have worked to resolve these last 18 months, the combined operations of NovusWay incurred a loss of \$1,119,458.67 in 2022 that was covered by internal borrowing that we expect to begin to repay with interest beginning in

2024. This year, we are very focused on improving our financial operations and reporting accountability while increasing attendance in all programs to help increase our revenues while also expanding giving opportunities.

For 2023, our priority remains on providing faith-filled camps, retreats, and hosted ministry opportunities for young and old. We are offering many tried and true, favorite programs such as our music and art, family, equestrian, and adventure camps. We are also providing new programming, including our Southwest Florida Disaster Relief program in cooperation with the Florida-Bahamas Synod and Luther Springs. Groups from throughout the country will come to spend a summer week in service working out of a congregation either in Sarasota or Ft. Myers. Increased summer and year-round programming will extend our reach to more individuals and families throughout the southeastern United States.

We are grateful of our partnership with our four supporting synods, our many donors, and those congregations that allow us to be a part of God's great work of forming and expanding faith for all ages. To learn more about this exciting and growing ministry that you support with your prayers, your financial gifts, and faithful participation, please visit our website: <https://novusway.org>.



Charles R. Bridgers
Intentional Interim CEO



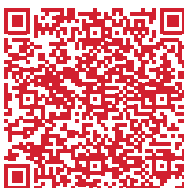
Richard D. Peterson, CCD
President, NovusWay Board of Trustees

How are the Wolves? The Wolves are well! As a college, we approach the concept of an interconnected community. When one hurts, we all hurt. When one wins a conference championship, we all win. We are interconnected as the faculty, staff and coaches, making a difference in the lives of our 1,300 students. We are meeting combatting food insecurity on campus through the Wolves Pantry, and helping Polish Lutherans tend to Ukrainian refugees. We are connecting with students' spiritual journeys with a spring emphasis on prayer life. We sincerely thank our church partners for their continued support, including \$34,476.80 in synodical giving last year. May we continue to see Jesus in each other.

— The Rev. David Coffman '97, campus pastor

Wolves Pantry seeks to relieve food insecurity on campus

Approximately 29% of students at four-year colleges nationwide report experiencing food insecurity. Through a combination of financial insecurity, demanding schedules and lack of transportation, just to name a few, food insecurity and inaccessibility exist on campus. In September, Campus Ministry and Student Affairs partnered to open Wolves Pantry in the College's Weber Campus Ministry House. The pantry served over 60 individuals in its first three months. In March 2023, the pantry gratefully received \$1,100 from the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Newberry, S.C., providing reusable cloth bags and three months of breakfast and snack items. To give directly to Wolves Pantry, scan the QR code or visit newberry.edu/campusministry.



Newberry adds second master's program, new undergraduate majors

Sport management & leadership will become the College's second graduate program. Like the M.S. in organizational development & leadership, the new online program can be completed in as few as 12 months, equipping students to succeed in professional sports, education, recreation and more. The College plans to add master's degrees in criminal justice, education and public administration in coming years. On the undergraduate level, the College will launch majors in nutrition and special education this fall.

Newberry helps Ukrainian refugees find work in Poland

Through financial contributions, members of the Newberry College community have helped the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland's parish in Radom in their refugee relief efforts. The church provides free Polish language classes to Ukrainian refugees to allow them to find work and support their families for as long as they are there. Newberry College sophomore Kornelia Rudkowska calls this parish home. Donations collected and sent through Newberry College have directly allowed the program to add a third class to meet demand.

Nursing program enters two clinical partnerships

Last summer, Newberry College signed partnership agreements with Newberry Hospital and J.F. Hawkins & Springfield Place. The hospital has funded and will operate a 1,200-square-foot urgent care center to adjoin the Darby Nursing & Health Science Center, now under construction. The daytime clinic will serve students, employees and members of the surrounding community, while giving nursing students hands-on experience without leaving campus. The partnership with J.F. Hawkins & Springfield Place will offer students experience in geriatric care settings for the first time and with a community-oriented element.

SCWELCA supports nursing education with scholarship

In July 2022, the South Carolina Women of the ELCA established an endowed scholarship for nursing students at Newberry College. The organization pledged to raise \$10,000 to start the endowed award by last year's convention. When all was said and done, the group had more than doubled its initial goal, now with \$25,285 in the fund. The funds will hopefully alleviate the shortage of qualified nurses in South Carolina, the fourth largest deficiency in the nation.

Students to visit Holy Land in 2024

Next January, Newberry College students will have the opportunity to journey through the Holy Land, touring biblical sites and seeing the work of the Lutheran World Federation. If you would like to lessen the cost for students with scholarships, scan the QR code above or visit newberry.edu/campusministry.

Synodical gifts support Lutheran education

As your Lutheran college, we greatly appreciate the prayers and support of our partner churches, rostered leaders and individual Lutherans. As a tuition-driven institution, the generous financial support of our church family is instrumental in helping Newberry College provide a quality liberal arts education rooted in our Lutheran values. If you would like to make an individual gift, please visit newberry.edu/giving, or contact Whitney Mitchell '09, assistant vice president for institutional advancement, at Whitney.Mitchell@newberry.edu, or at 803.321.5694.

I See Jesus at South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers

South Carolina Synod Assembly

20223

The theme of this year's synod assembly, "I see Jesus," surely reflects the past year in the ministry of South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers. After more than two years of limited guests and mostly empty buildings at our holy spaces, 2022 and 2023 have been times of great rejoicing! We have definitely seen Jesus as our guests and groups have returned to Camp Kinard and Coastal Retreat!

This past year has been a time of revitalization for our retreat center ministry as we added new staff and new programs. We welcomed Nevin Rodgers as the new director of Camp Kinard. We were blessed to welcome three new board members: Martie Newmyer, Fred Klinker and Robert Kneece. We added new overnight retreats at Coastal, including "Holy City Spirits," "Coastal Crafting," "Charleston Lights," and "Wholly." We added day events at Camp Kinard, including "The Jesus Way," "In Our Own Backyard, the Story of Isaac Woodard," and "Distilling Faith." Our hearts were warmed, and we felt the presence of Jesus at tea parties at both Camp Kinard and Coastal Retreat.

God has been at work changing lives in these holy spaces this year with groups that have been partnering with us for years. Our WELCA, LMM, SCLCY and congregational retreats continue to be our mainstays. Of particular note is Camp HUGG, our LCY-led camp for young people with developmental disabilities. Time and again we hear stories of how this camp has made a real difference in the lives of both the campers and the staff. We rejoice with our long-standing ecumenical partners, especially Roman Catholics, Methodists and Baptists. Our community partners, including *Teen Pact* and *Leadership Lexington*, continue to be blessed and to be a blessing by their presence. We have seen people find solace and comfort at bereavement retreats such as *Camp Hands of Hope* and *Jacoby's Shield*.

We saw Jesus last year at Assembly when we kicked off our ***Building+Renewing+Believing: Holy Spaces*** Capital Campaign! Jesus was present as we heard stories from guests who heard their call to ministry, who grew in faith through WELCA, who had their first experience camping, who experienced the love of God in a congregational retreat, and many others. We were excited to announce plans to build a brand new, fully accessible swimming pool and bath house for the summer season of 2023. By the time we gather at Assembly in 2023, this pool should be a reality!

We have seen Jesus in special gifts that were made to our retreat centers. Huge thanks to: All Saints, Mt. Pleasant, for a generous grant towards replacing air conditioners; St. Paul's, Columbia, for the gift of six mini fridges for the rooms at Coastal Retreat; the SC Synod Mission Endowment for the funds to replace bedspreads and purchase tools to be used by volunteers; and to Grace, Rock Hill for a grant to purchase kayaks for Camp Kinard.

Christ has been made known through the financial gifts in support of our campaign and our operations from the following congregations:

All Saints, Mt Pleasant	Bethany, Lexington
Cedar Grove, Leesville	Corinth, Saluda
Faith, Batesburg	Good Hope, Ward
Good Shepherd, Columbia	Good Shepherd, Walterboro
Grace, Rock Hill	
Holy Trinity, Anderson	Macedonia, Prosperity
Mt. Hermon, West Columbia	Orangeburg, Orangeburg
Our Savior, West Columbia	Pilgrim, Lexington
Pisgah, Lexington	Pomaria, Pomaria
Redeemer, Newberry	Redeemer, Columbia
St. David, West Columbia	St. James, Graniteville
St. James, Lexington	St. Luke, Columbia
St. Luke, Prosperity	St. Mark, Leesville
St. Matthew, Lexington	St. Michael, Greenville
St. Paul's, Columbia	St. Paul, Pomaria
St. Peter, Batesburg	St. Phillip, Myrtle Beach
Summer Memorial, Newberry	Transfiguration, West Columbia
Union, Leesville	Wittenberg, Leesville

It is truly a blessing to have these wonderful ministry partners!

And were not our hearts burning within us as finally the phones started ringing and the emails and text inquiries started coming as congregations and groups and camps returned to making reservations for retreats! Thanks be to God, the reservations at Camp Kinard and Coastal Retreat have returned to and will likely surpass pre-Covid numbers! The staff, Board of Trustees, guests and volunteers eagerly look forward to the next steps in our campaign to build a new entry way and a wonderful new Chapel! Thanks to all who are a part of South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers as we provide holy spaces for God to change lives!

In Christ,

Deacon Dallas J. Shealy
Executive Director

Jane G. Holmes, Chair
Board of Trustees