

**James R. Crumley Jr Archives
2024 South Carolina Synod Assembly**

Administration

Personnel and Hours of Operation

The Archives employs five part-time workers: Shannon Smith, director and archivist; Trudy Bouknight, office manager; Scott Reeves, assistant archivist; Ashley Ragland, archivist aide; and Margaret Mancuso, project specialist.

Accessions

New and reoccurring accessions from Region-9 synods, congregations, and individuals are deposited in the Crumley Archives and are processed by staff.

Special Projects:

“Unsung: A Chronicle of Black Lutherans”

The Crumley Archives, under the direction of Dr. Harvey Huntley and Scott Reeves, is producing another feature film entitled, “Unsung: A Chronicle of Black Lutherans”.¹ Filming began with pastors and laity from the S.C. and S.E. Synods who shared their stories and memories. This film is based upon the scholarship of Dr Huntley, who for more than two years has sought to compile and catalog congregation, mission, and personal records related to African descent Lutherans. These records are preserved in the Crumley Archives. Filming will involve each synod in Region-9. Please check our website for updates as segments are produced.²

If you have a story or record to share, please contact Shannon Smith at crumleyarchivist@gmail.com.

Archives Relocation

After LRU’s decision to move the Seminary to the Hickory campus, the Archives has begun investigating possibilities for its relocation. Discussions among the Crumley Archives board of directors and synods are active and ongoing.

Friends of the Archives Banquet

This year’s banquet will be held in Columbia, S.C. and will honor the Rev. James and Mrs. Celie Addy; St. Michael’s Lutheran Church (Irmo), and the S.C. Synod. It will be held Friday, Sept. 20. Details will follow. Please contact Shannon Smith at crumleyarchivist@gmail.com for more information.

Shannon L. Smith

¹ See trailer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SobFCVCcF0I>

² Crumley Archives: www.crumleyarchives.com

Inclusiveness Network Report 2024 South Carolina Synod Assembly

The Inclusiveness Network was very active during 2023 and early 2024.

In April 2023, four members of the Network participated in a Civil Rights Pilgrimage in Georgia and Alabama with the Southeastern Synod.

Book studies on *The Color of Compromise*, *How to Heal our Divides, (Volume 2)*, and *Dear Martin*, led by various people via Zoom and live. Pastor Leroy Cannon brings together a group roughly every other Tuesday that includes AME and Lutheran Christians for conversation and fellowship.

Orangeburg Lutheran Church has been hosting viewings of movies about racial reconciliation. The Inclusiveness Network advertised for and participated in a viewing of *Four Little Girls* there along with members of the SC State and Orangeburg communities. Pr. Rick Mason has made deep connections in the community there that are opening up healing conversations.

About 30 folks visited the International African-American Museum in Charleston on October 7. We met for conversation afterward at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. The stories of African-American contributions to agriculture, religion, arts, and the cultural life of United States were well told and moving to all who went.

Support for a Watch Night Service on December 31 at Reformation Lutheran Church. This African-American tradition of watching for the new year to begin was a great celebration for all who attended.

The Network participated in a Martin Luther King Jr. Day Service at Ascension Lutheran Church on January 14, 2024. Worship was led by Pr. Jackie Utley and members of the Church of God in Christ.

Took a Civil Rights Walking tour in Columbia (February 10, 2024). This was coordinated through USC's Civil Rights program and Columbia63. About 15 people participated in this tour, which looked at local monuments and sites in downtown Columbia as well as an exhibit at the Columbia Art Museum. Even long-time South Carolinians learned history that they hadn't been exposed to before.

Pastor Christopher Girardeau approached the Inclusiveness Network this year about starting a task force discussing gender justice. That team has met a few times and plans to start a book study in the near future.

Over the last year, the Inclusiveness Network has shown growth in diversity, in numbers, and in experiences. We are grateful to God for these blessings and are eager to see what the Lord has for us in the future. If you'd like to get involved, please reach out to me at pastorbrucekreutzer@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Pr. Bruce Kreutzer

Chair, Inclusiveness Network

Lutheran Disaster Relief Carolinas 2024 South Carolina Synod Assembly

We began our work in both North and South Carolina Synods early in 2023 by introducing ourselves and the work of LDR Carolinas at large group events with a display table, a survey form, and the opportunity for many personal conversations. We attended the Lutheran Men in Mission annual gatherings, Women of the ELCA annual gatherings, and synod assemblies in both NC and SC.

The congregational disaster preparedness survey forms that we received at these events helped us to learn about congregations and individuals, particularly their current levels of preparedness, interest in more information, and desire to help others after a disaster.

After several of those large gatherings, we planned meetings with conference leaders, especially in coastal areas of both synods, to talk with them about our ministry and offer to visit with individual congregations.

We have also been meeting with congregations and congregational councils who want to learn more about disaster preparedness and/or response. Sometimes that has involved temple talks about the work of Lutheran Disaster Response and LDR Carolinas, preaching for a worship service, meeting with an adult forum to talk about individual preparedness, or meeting with congregational leaders who are interested in developing or updating a congregational preparedness plan. We encourage congregations to discuss ways that they are interested in responding to disaster in their communities and beyond.

We have been in contact with conference deans and rostered leaders following events in their congregations or communities from an apparent heart attack during worship to a shooting on the UNC Chapel Hill campus. We responded to the EF3 tornado in Eastern NC by applying for and receiving an LDR Solidarity Grant to assist affected members of the community with unmet short term needs not covered by insurance or other resources.

We have participated in quarterly meetings of both NC & SC VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) to develop relationship with other organizations and individuals providing disaster services. We participated in called meetings before and after major events, including the EF3 tornado in eastern NC in July, Hurricane Idalia, and Tropical Storm Ophelia. We are also serving on the National VOAD Preparedness Committee.

We have shared information with others via our website www.ldrcarolinas.org which includes a resource page and a blog. We also have a Facebook page www.facebook.com/ldrcarolinas which we have used to post information about events and response to disasters, and a YouTube page www.youtube.com/@LDRCarolinas with recordings of our online network meetings and book study.

With financial assistance from the NC Synod Heilig Resource Center, the NC Synod Michael Peeler/Virginia Casey Grant Fund, and the SC Mission Fund, we have planned projects and events for 2024, including a book study on **A Ready Hope**, work to upfit the NC Synod trailer for disaster response, a service trip to assist Craven County (NC) Disaster Recovery Alliance with ongoing recovery work following Hurricane Florence in 2018, congregational preparedness mini-grants, and more.

The Revs. Ray & Ruth Ann Sipe

Planning Team: 200th Anniversary of the South Carolina Synod
South Carolina Synod Assembly
2024

On a cold day in January of 1824, four Lutheran pastors in the Midlands of South Carolina determined they would begin a new Synod for the congregations that had emerged during the previous decades. “Gathering at St. Michael’s Lutheran Church, now in Irmo, to form an independent Synod of their own – the Synod of SOUTH Carolina – and Adjacent States . . . The meeting was opened with “singing and prayer,” exactly as we open our Synod Assemblies today, 200 years later. They elected the Rev. Godfrey Dreher as the first President of the Synod until the next meeting – what we today, would call, a bishop.” (From Dr. Susan McCarver’s presentation for the 175th Anniversary of the South Carolina Synod in 1999)

These facts summarize the rather inauspicious beginnings of our Synod. However, by the end of 1824, Pr. John Bachman of St. John’s Lutheran Church in Charleston had agreed to serve as President of the new Synod and the number of congregations in the Synod had also grown by several hundred percent. In the Synod minutes from 1824, the record showed that the Synod budget was \$34. Much of it came as single dollar contributions, but Pr. Bachman was listed as having given \$20 of that amount. (No wonder they elected him President of the Synod).

During the last two centuries, the South Carolina Synod would grow to include more than 150 congregations and more than 50,000 members. More importantly, by the end of the 19th century, the ministry of the Synod would reach Japan and beyond. God’s actions in this state also resulted in significant social changes in the state and the growth of a wide variety of institutions that would address the needs of education, care for society, environment, elderly people and a host of other issues and concerns. The 20th century brought many these institutions to maturity. And the last decade of that century also brought the Synod into the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

So many things have happened during the last 200 years of ministry that celebrating them all will take more than a year. And our celebration will culminate during the Synod Assembly of 2025. To address the needs of storytelling and history celebration, the Synod Council formed a committee for the 200th Anniversary of the South Carolina Synod. This committee has been diligent during 2024 in planning how we will address the 200-year story the South Carolina Synod and its members throughout the state. Already the planning team has produced a logo and “History Moments” released on eNews, *Lutheran Living*, SC Synod. An Introduction to the 200th Anniversary Year [1824-2024] was released in January. This was followed in February with an African America Focus, and in March “History Moments” on Ladies Sewing Society (1825), Women’s Memorial Lutheran Church, and Woman’s Home and Foreign Missionary Societies. A video will be a part of the South Carolina Synod Assembly on June 8, 2024, featuring interviews with The Rev. Dr. James Aull, The Rev. David Donges, The Rev. Dr. Herman Yoos, and The Rev. Ginny Aebischer. These four bishops have served the South Carolina Synod since the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Because it is so multi-faceted, the story of the South Carolina Synod is not an easy story to tell. Nevertheless, telling it will enable us to find inspiration and hope for our future. Truly the South Carolina Synod has been blessed in many ways. God has been working in our state as we have shared together in witnessing to our faith. And, most importantly, the last two centuries have provided a tremendous foundation for the ministry that will unfold in this century and beyond.

We give thanks for all of God’s blessings and pray that our life together will grow stronger through our celebration events during the coming year.

Yours in Christ,
Th Rev. Dr. Mark Scott
Chair
The 200th Anniversary Committee of the South Carolina Synod



ELCA Foundation

Updates from the ELCA Foundation | Synod Assemblies 2024

The ELCA Foundation doesn't just envision a future; it's building one where intentional generosity and stewardship have allowed the mission and ministry of the ELCA to grow beyond our expectations. Our goal is to create a vibrant culture where intentional giving fuels the expansion of the ELCA's work in the US and around the world.

We're on a mission to grow ELCA ministries by empowering individuals, congregations, synods, and other entities with the tools they need to maximize their financial potential.

But what does that mean for you?

Imagine having a trusted partner who not only helps you navigate the complexities of gift planning and administration but also provides expert guidance on how to invest in the future of your ministry. That's where the ELCA Foundation steps in.

Whether you're considering leaving a legacy through an endowment, navigating estate planning, or exploring creative ways to support your congregation, we're here to make the process seamless and straightforward. Best of all, our gift planning services are completely free for you and your ministry.

Ready to take the next step in growing your congregation's culture of giving? Connect with your local ELCA Foundation representative today and discover how together we can make a lasting impact. Visit Foundation.ELCA.org to get started.

2023 AT A GLANCE

Our gift planning network walked alongside **203 donors/families** in developing their gift plans, which resulted in **\$62.5 million** in future planned-gift commitments. **More than \$17 million** of this will go to provide direct support to individual ELCA congregations.

The network generated **\$116.3 million** in total gifts and investment assets. This includes new planned-gift commitments, **\$8.8 million in current gifts**, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and **\$45 million in new assets** invested in the Ministry Growth Fund.

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL GIFT PLANNER:

The Reverend David C. Shank, CFRE
David.Shank@elca.org
410-716-4204



South Carolina Synod Fund for Leaders (9C) 2024 Annual Report

Thank you to the people of the South Carolina Synod for making an investment in the future of the church through the ELCA Fund for Leaders. We are grateful for your partnership!

In the 2023-2024 academic year, the ELCA Fund for Leaders provided scholarship assistance of more than \$3 million in support of nearly 350 future pastors and deacons. Thank you for your role in ensuring that these future leaders will be freed from the burden of student debt so that they can go and serve as the church needs and the Holy Spirit leads.

Students supported in 2023-2024: Total \$9,696

• Joel Antley	\$1,212	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
• Ben Bernstein	\$1,212	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
• Olga-Maria Cruz	\$1,212	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
• Laura Henrickson	\$1,212	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
• Zachary Lindler	\$1,212	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
• Jace Martinez	\$1,212	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
• Paula Perry	\$1,212	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
• Emily Whitlow	\$1,212	Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary

Additional Information about your fund

Total awarded since inception: **\$67,329.00**

South Carolina Synod Fund for Leaders, E271592

Market value as of 12/31/2023: **\$278,459.97**

New gifts given to your fund in 2023: **\$1,350.00**

Total amount available for you to award for 2024-2025: **\$11,400***

*This number is calculated with a 10% holdback to ensure that all promised scholarships can be paid during both semesters, even if the market fluctuates. Please issue awards in whole dollars.

Documents

2024 Guidelines for Synods

2024 FFL Synod nominations

2024 Instructions for Synod or
Congregation nominees

Process and Timeline

This document contains eligibility criteria and notes on the selection process and timeline.

Synods submit nominee information to FFL by May 1, 2024 using this Excel template.

Synods send to each nominee by May 15. This document assists students registering/applying in ELCA GrantMaker.

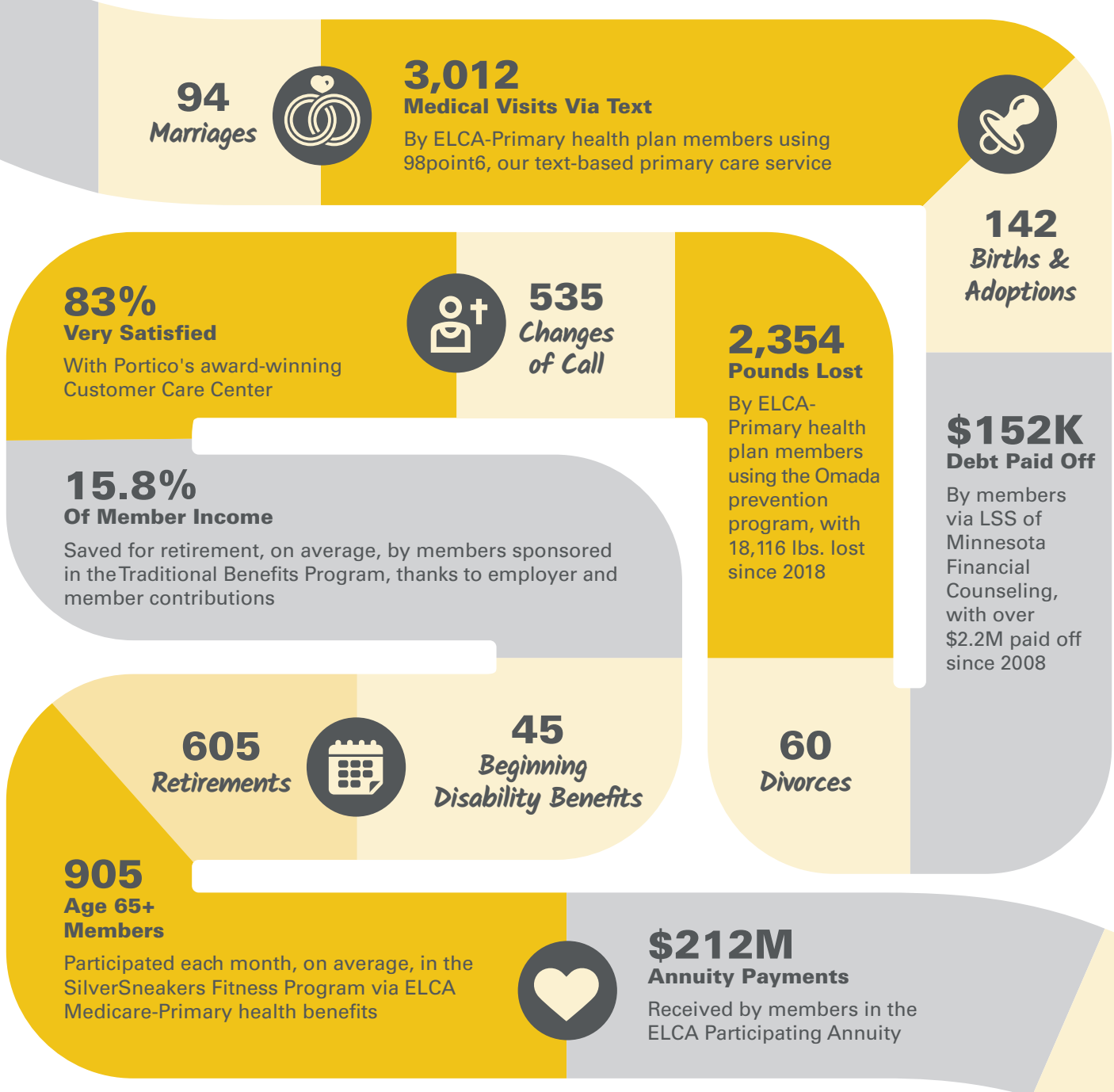
Students register and apply: **May 15 - June 5, 2024.**

Students accept the grant agreement online in **July 2024.**

For more information, please visit [ELCA.org/fundforleaders](https://elca.org/fundforleaders) or call 800-638-3522, ext. 2936.

Benefits Making a Difference

At Portico we strive to offer benefits that make our plan members' lives better, so that they can fulfill their mission of helping others live their best lives. Here is a visual recap of what our community of 45,000+ members experienced in 2023.



Our mission is to serve those who serve — financially, emotionally, and physically. We do this by securing quality, cost-effective, and useful benefits that make a difference for our members and sponsoring organizations. With each new year we continue to grow our pool and affirm the value and importance of church together.

Note: Unless a specific benefit program is mentioned, these numbers and percentages were drawn from across Portico's benefit programs.

**Report of the Necrologist
2024 South Carolina Synod Assembly**

FOR ALL THE SAINTS

Carolyn Crooks Bishop, born April 12, 1934, age 89, died July 17, 2023
Wife of Rev. Henri Bishop

Deacon Thomas Joseph O'Brien, born November 15, 1939, age 83, died July 29, 2023

Rev. Henry N. Brandt, born November 20, 1930, age 92, died September 1, 2023

Rev. Paul Allen Hirth, born October 22, 1938, age 84, died October 10, 2023

Robert Frederick Gay, born May 11, 1946, age 77, died November 14, 2023
Husband of Rev. Mikki Gay

Rev. Kathy Elaine Hall Harris, born August 21, 1957, age 66, died November 13, 2023

Rev. Dr. Carl M. Fischer, born February 4, 1933, age 90, died November 17, 2023

Dell Merchant Gunter, born September 17, 1947, age 76, died February 11, 2024
Wife of Rev. Rodney Gunter

Jerry Dean Jennings, born October 4, 1946, age 77, died February 10, 2024
Husband of Rev. Angela Jennings

Rev. James F. Shealy, born November 3, 1939, age 84, died February 28, 2024

Rev. Robert Earl McCombs Jr., born March 23, 1929, age 94, died March 2, 2024

Rev. James Rudolph (Fox) Fuchs, born July 10, 1931, age 92, died April 1, 2024

Faith Caroline Bunger Connelly, born June 16, 1932, age 91, died April 16, 2024
Wife of the late Rev. James R. Connelly

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Rebecca G. Wicker