

The VISTA *lite*

DWELLING IN... COLLABORATION

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1



Our synod, like others, has a lot of smaller congregations who struggle with having adequate finances, facilities and leadership for the future. We have been working to increase the sustainability of these congregations and/or help them to make faithful choices about closing and leaving a legacy.

We have a sustainability assessment, paired with a vitality assessment, to help congregations examine their present reality and make faithful plans for the future. We also held a series of events on Cooperating for Mission. Out of these events and other activities there has been a great deal of energy to explore the possibilities of cooperative ministry.

We have the Tri-County Cooperative, where five congregations have banded together to share pastoral leadership. Several congregations along the I-35 corridor between San Antonio and Austin are working together to do joint confirmation instruction. Some congregations are sharing their facilities with other congregations or non-profits.

Congregations in San Antonio have been experimenting with training lay people to preach and to visit, and doing

joint worship, outreach and fellowship. Our newest cooperative parish, Lost Pines Lutheran Ministries, will be part of the Missional River as they seek to connect with their collective communities.

We are experimenting with creative supervision – using interns, with supervisors from other congregations – to explore what cooperative leadership could look like. These new leaders will be equipped to work collaboratively in this new environment.

Check out our newest video on stories of how God is bringing new life to congregations as they cooperate for the sake of mission. God is calling us out of our comfort zones to connect with God, with one another, and with our neighbors trusting in God's grace to transform and connect us, as we learn, love and lead for the sake of the gospel.

Pastor Sue Briner

LUTHERAN LEGISLATIVE EVENT



Bishop Tiemann joined about 70 others for the Lutheran Legislative event earlier this week in Austin. Partnering with the SWT Synod Task Force on Poverty & Justice and Texas Impact, this yearly event brings in ELCA Advocacy and other folks to educate about advocacy and then visits members of congress on various issues.



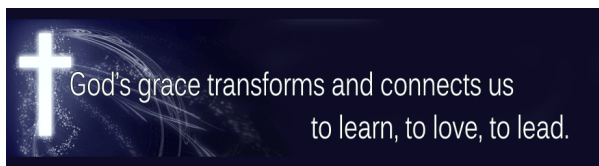
BISHOP'S AWARDS

Katie Ruder and Garrett Dorn from Abiding Presence were chosen for the Bishop's Youth Leadership Award.

Congratulations and blessings!

MEN'S MINISTRIES ALSO COLLABORATE

[Lutheran Men in Mission](#) discovered good ministry for men happening all over the country and decided to collaborate to Lutherans, Methodists, Disciples of Christ and non-denominational leaders have formed [Project 12](#), an initiative that is gathering and collaborating on the best resources/events out there and then creating what is needed and what can be done based on the skills available in the leadership/membership. Great way to share the best and collaborate on the new experiments!





THE TIEMANN ENDOWMENT FUND FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Many people across the Southwestern Texas Synod have made an initial gift to the Tiemann Endowment Fund for Leadership Development. Gifts as of Jan. 31 total \$16,725 to the endowment fund, which includes gifts from individuals, families and several congregations.

The Tiemann Endowment Fund for Leadership Development was created by the 2017 Synod Assembly to honor Bishop Ray and Debbie Tiemann for their 39 years of service in the synod, including the 18 years that Bishop Tiemann has served as the synod’s bishop.

Annual grants from the endowment fund will support the development of congregational lay leaders, pastors and deacons as they continue to build and strengthen the vitality of the synod’s congregations and ministries.

While gifts received by April 30 will be celebrated at the May 4-6 Synod Assembly, the endowment fund will always be open to receive additional gifts of any amount.



Online giving is available at www.swtsynod.org/tiemann. Those wishing to give by check may send their gift to Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest, 103 12th St., Suite 201, Pflugerville, TX, 78660, making the check payable to the foundation and noting Tiemann Endowment on the check.

Congregations are also invited to make a gift to the endowment Fund, either from a special offering, a direct gift from the congregation, or as part of a distribution from a congregational mission endowment fund. Resources for congregational use include a Bulletin Insert and a Poster, available at www.swtsynod.org/tiemann.

LENT—WHAT IS IT TIME FOR YOU TO BE OR DO?

*Lent is a time to take the time, to let the power of our faith story take hold of us,
 a time to let the events get up and walk around in us,
 a time to intensify our living unto Christ,
 a time to hover over the thoughts of our hearts,
 a time to place our feet in the streets of Jerusalem or walk along the sea and listen,
 a time to touch his robe and feel the healing surge through us,
 a time to ponder and a time to wonder...*

Lent is a time to allow a fresh new taste of God! Poet Ann Weems

MARCH HAPPENINGS

Mar 3	Cross Trails Gift of Hope Gala	New Braunfels
Mar 18	Installation of Pastor Jessica Cain	Living Word Lutheran, Buda