



Stories of Faith in Action

YOUR OFFERING AT WORK



Reflection:

Preserving the collective memory of this church

At the ELCA Archives, we routinely receive phone calls or emails from ELCA congregations or their members. The requests are varied but members are usually seeking guidance, advice or information about either their congregation's history or its own records and archives. The reasons they contact us are as varied as the questions they ask: their congregation is celebrating a milestone anniversary and needs information on its history; a congregation is merging or closing and has questions about what to archive; staff call with questions about recording information in the parish register or how long they need to retain offering envelopes. On occasion, a member has a historical record—a book, pamphlet or photograph—to donate because it's

something that documents the history and ministry of one of the ELCA's predecessor church bodies.

Connecting with ELCA congregations is one of the best aspects of my work. Providing information, advice or guidance, or accepting a donation of historical material to add to our collection represents a partnership we have with congregations and their members. I see us working toward the same goal—to preserve the collective memory of this church. **These records are a witness to our joys and sorrows, our faith stories, our mission at work in the world, our beginnings and endings, and ultimately our hopes and aspirations for this church. Together we continue our work of sharing a message of God's grace.**

— *Cathy Lundeen,*
ELCA archivist, Chicago

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.