



2022  
REPORT OF THE  
ENDOWMENT FUND  
POOLED TRUST

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ELCA   
Ministry Growth Fund

**SUSTAIN YOUR CONGREGATION.  
GROW YOUR CHURCH.  
SUPPORT GOD'S MISSION.**

THE MINISTRY GROWTH FUND OF THE ELCA ENDOWMENT FUND POOLED TRUST WAS ESTABLISHED TO ALLOW FOR THE COLLECTIVE, LONG-TERM INVESTMENT OF FUNDS BELONGING TO THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (ELCA) AND ITS CONGREGATIONS, SYNODS, SEMINARIES AND OTHER ELIGIBLE AFFILIATED ENTITIES.

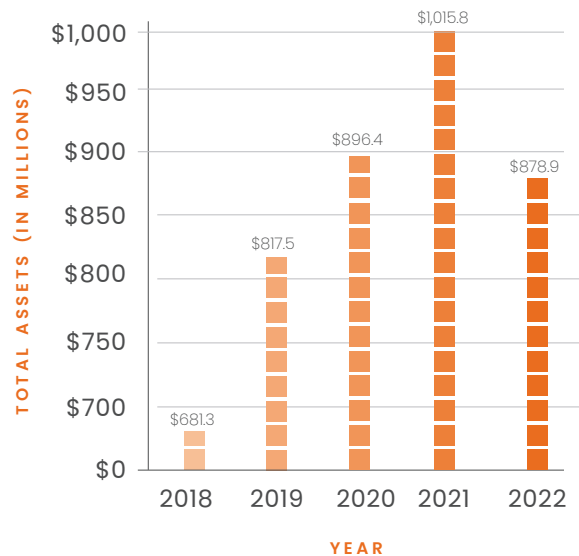


**WHO'S PARTICIPATING?**

**DOLLARS INVESTED**

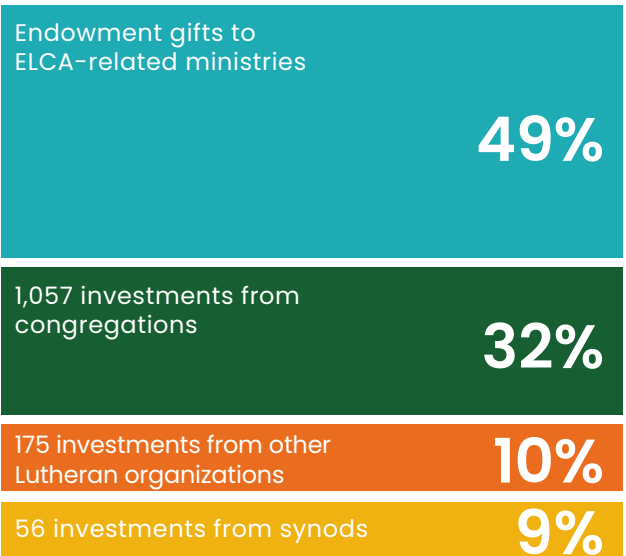
**\$878,993,484**

**5-YEAR GROWTH OF ASSETS**



**MAKEUP OF INVESTED ASSETS\***

\*As of 12/31/2022



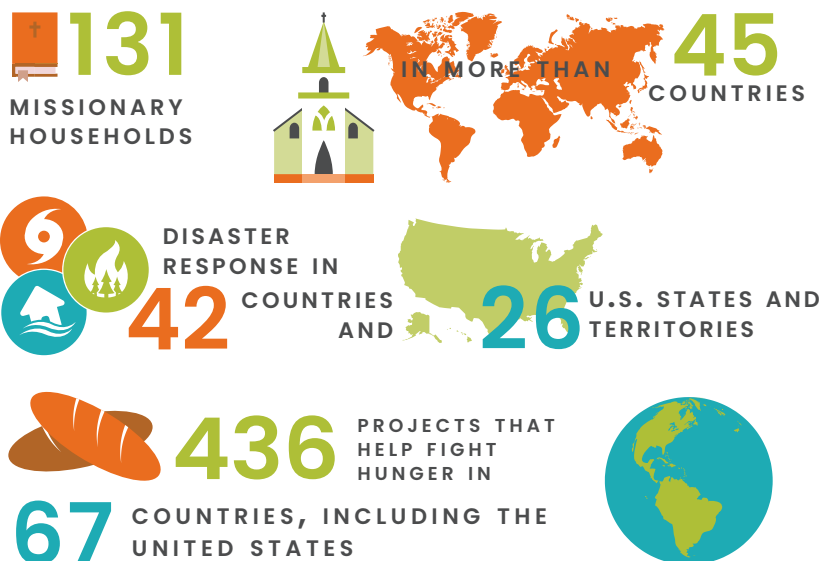
■ Includes funds invested by outdoor ministries, colleges and universities, seminaries, campus ministries, social ministry organizations and others.

**WHO BENEFITS?**

**\$36.1  
MILLION**

**DISTRIBUTED TO PARTICIPATING CONGREGATIONS, SYNODS AND OTHER LUTHERAN ORGANIZATIONS AND MINISTRIES IN 2022.**

**IN 2022, DISTRIBUTIONS MADE TO THE ELCA CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION SUPPORTED:**



## SMALL BUT MIGHTY

Good things can come in small packages.

Or, in the case of St. James Lutheran Church of New Wehdem, Texas, in small congregations.

St. James, a congregation in rural Texas, sees 50 to 60 worshipers each Sunday — an impressive roster considering New Wehdem has a population hovering around 100.

Despite its size, the 154-year-old ELCA congregation has taken steps to create opportunities for impactful financial giving within its synod, such as aiding Lutheran camps and helping community members.

In September 2018, during the Rev. Evan Cameron's first week at St. James, he received a call from Lizbeth Johnson, a gift planner for the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest, which partners with the ELCA Foundation.

Johnson suggested that the congregation explore the ELCA Foundation's Ministry Growth Fund, a growth-oriented fund invested in equities that provide a stable, quarterly distribution to participants.

**“I'm not a business major,” Cameron laughed. “I just thought, ‘This sounds like it's too good to be true.’ It's the easiest way to invest money ... and do something with it without it being locked away and inaccessible.”**

Cameron shared the news with his congregants, and before long, member Gary Weiss and others decided they wanted to establish an endowment fund.

The congregation not only approved of the new committee, Weiss said; it also approved utilizing the funds from one of the church's existing certificates of deposit to start the endowment fund.

Both Cameron and Johnson said they were struck by how willing the congregation— most of whom are fourth- and fifth-generation members of St. James — was to try a new way of investing.

“When it comes to their finances, very often they will have left their money the same way their parents did: under a mattress or in a CD,” Johnson said. “For [this congregation] to think about investing for the purpose of earning more to do more [is] actually a new concept. ... [They] took that in stride to understand the market goes up and goes down, you have good years and bad years, [but] ultimately [an endowment is] a good way to prepare to make more than you would if you kept your money in the bank or non-interest-bearing account.”

St. James now has three separate endowment funds, and it has chosen several ways to award the distributions, or investment earnings.

Its first distribution — plus its Wednesday Lent offerings that year — went to Lutherhill Ministries, a summer camp and year-round retreat center of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, with locations in both Galveston and La Grange, Texas.

Most recently, St. James chose to award its 2021 distribution to Unbound Now Bryan College Station, which supports survivors and helps fight human trafficking in the Brazos Valley. Its 2022 distribution went to a local family with significant, long-term pediatric medical care costs.

“We don't have massive endowments,” Cameron said. “I think sometimes people think you need \$100,000 to have an endowment. We created three endowments that each started with \$20,000 or \$30,000, and the outward mission benefit has still been significant.”

**TO OPEN AN ENDOWMENT ACCOUNT, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL GIFT PLANNER OR VISIT [ELCA.ORG/ENDOWMENTINVESTING](https://elca.org/endowmentinvesting) FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Ministry Growth Fund is the only endowment fund following the ELCA guidelines for socially responsible investing. Portico Benefit Services, which serves as the investment manager for most assets in the Ministry Growth Fund, is a pioneer in social-purpose investing strategy, with over 30 years of experience in this area. Through Portico, Ministry Growth Fund accounts benefit from three primary areas of socially responsible investing:

### SHAREHOLDER ADVOCACY

Ministry Growth Fund participants have contributed to positive commitments and changes in publicly traded companies such as Home Depot, United Airlines, CVS Health and General Motors, among others, to address issues in the areas of lobbying, human rights, sustainability and diversity.

### POSITIVE INVESTING

Where possible and feasible, a portion of assets is invested in companies and projects demonstrating measurable social impact in alignment with ELCA social teachings and policies.

### SCREENING

Through our partnership with Portico, companies whose business practices conflict with the eight ELCA social criteria are excluded from the Ministry Growth Fund. This screens out companies with histories of egregious damage to the environment and some of the largest fossil-fuel-producing companies.

## AN INVESTMENT IN YOUR CONGREGATION, THIS CHURCH AND THE WORLD

The Ministry Growth Fund of the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust is designed to serve all the ministries of this church, allowing congregations and other entities to retain ownership of their funds while participating in balanced, socially responsible investments to ensure the long-term sustainability of their ministries.

Your congregation's investment is pooled with the investments of more than a thousand other congregations and ministries of the ELCA. Working together, we can do so much more than we can working alone. With a strong, growing pool of funds, we increase our ability to diversify our investments and maximize our impact in the world.

The Ministry Growth Fund is one of the many ministries provided by the ELCA Foundation to serve your congregation. The ELCA Foundation is here to help you increase the impact of your endowment through the growth of your investment and the development of new current and planned gifts to support your ministry. With a nationwide network of regional gift-planning staff, the ELCA Foundation is here to serve your congregation, free of charge. For more information on how you can schedule a consultation to help your congregation grow its culture of giving, visit [ELCA.org/foundation](http://ELCA.org/foundation) to connect with the regional gift planner nearest you.



ELCA  
Foundation

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*The Ministry Growth Fund is not a mutual fund, though it has similar features — including unitization, diversification among many securities, and professional investment managers. This is an investment and, as such, it may lose value. Past performance is no indication of future results. For additional information, contact the ELCA Foundation for a Ministry Growth Fund disclosure statement.*