



# Southeastern Minnesota Synod

## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Dear SEMN Synod congregation leadership,

We invite you to participate in the ELCA *Welcoming Congregations Network of AMMPARO* (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities). In obedience to Matthew 25:35, *Welcoming Congregations* agree to welcome migrant children and families, listen to their stories with respect to receive the divine blessings that they bring, pray for and share the gospel, provide emotional and spiritual support, accompany migrants to access local and institutional services as needed, and advocate for justice for and with migrant families and children.

*Welcoming Congregations* make four commitments:

- welcome and minister to migrants, and identify a contact person in the congregation who has the language skills necessary for basic communication;
- physically accompany migrants as they make new lives in local communities;
- pray for justice for migrants; and
- advocate for public policy that will positively impact the current immigration crisis.

*Welcoming Congregations* will be invited to:

- attend occasional meetings of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod *AMMPARO Welcoming Congregation Network* for mutual support, fellowship and training;
- participate in the ELCA national AMMPARO network conference calls to be updated on the current situation of the migration of children and families and receive policy updates.

Becoming a *Welcoming Congregation* may not require a commitment by the whole congregation but rather a commitment by the pastor, lay leadership, and a small team of members. *Welcoming Congregations* are not required to offer shelter, employment or other financial support but simply are willing to be a church home for migrant children and families in the same way that congregations generations ago welcomed Lutheran migrants from Europe and helped them navigate life in their new home.

Joining the *Welcoming Congregations Network of AMMPARO* provides congregations with a concrete and feasible strategy for connecting local and global mission while increasing their witness and capacity for ministry to the immigrant community. It is also a powerful way to respond to God's call in Matthew 25 – to welcome our Lord Jesus as he comes to us in the stranger.

Thank you for prayerfully considering participation in this effort. For further information, contact:  
Kathy Chatelaine, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry at [chatelaine@semnsynod.org](mailto:chatelaine@semnsynod.org).

Peace and Joy in Christ,

AMMPARO Ministry Team  
Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA