



## Frequently Asked Questions for Rostered Leaders

**Q:** What is the Crossing Bridges appeal about?

**A:** The shortest answer is “mission.” Crossing Bridges is a three-year financial appeal to raise \$2 million from individuals and congregations in the St. Paul Area Synod to advance the mission of Jesus Christ inside our synod and beyond.

**Q:** What is the origin of the appeal?

**A:** Following the success of an appeal in the late 90s called “Making Waves,” the St. Paul Area Synod Assembly enthusiastically asked for a second appeal. The Synod Council endorsed this effort and planning began shortly after the election of Bishop Peter Rogness. Crossing Bridges was officially launched at the May 2006 Synod Assembly.

**Q:** Was a feasibility study conducted?

**A:** Yes, 48 people were interviewed by representatives of The James Company in the summer of 2004. The complete study report recommended moving ahead with an appeal seeking \$2 million over three years. The study results also strengthened and clarified the appeal’s goals.

**Q:** Who is leading the appeal?

**A:** While many people are involved, primary leadership comes from a 12-person steering committee. Pastor Mike Foss and Janet Thompson are co-chairs. Pastor Gary F. Anderson, recently retired after serving Incarnation, Shoreview and then serving as interim campus pastor at Luther Seminary, was asked to serve as director. Additional teams involving dozens of people are carrying out various roles supported by the synod staff and the leadership of Bishop Peter Rogness. Names of all steering committee members can be found on the web site.

**Q:** What will “Crossing Bridges” accomplish?

**A:** The four primary goals for the appeal, all in close harmony with our synod’s vision, are:

- to help raise up new leaders who will challenge and strengthen this church in the future,
- to reach those who thirst for meaning and purpose with the good news of Jesus Christ,
- to embrace the vulnerable and uplift the marginalized and to invite all to share with us the abundance of God’s grace,
- to extend our ministry in the Iringa Diocese of Tanzania.

More specific information about how the funds will be used can be found in the brochure as well as at [www.spas-crossingbridges.org](http://www.spas-crossingbridges.org) The appeal will also allow us to make a much greater impact together than we ever could separately.

**Q:** How much of the money raised will directly impact the beneficiaries?

**A:** As most of us know, it takes money to raise money. However, ninety percent or more of the funds raised will be used to cross bridges to the many people who will be impacted by our efforts. The synod has made the decision not to engage a professional development or fund-raising firm to manage the appeal.

**Q:** Are foundations being asked to contribute?

**A:** Yes, foundations are being invited to participate. The steering committee is approaching various foundations to ask for support.

**Q:** Are individuals and congregations both being asked to contribute?

**A:** Yes, individuals may wish to give directly to the appeal while others will prefer to give through their congregation or do so as part of their congregation's budget.

**Q:** Can gifts be designated to a specific area?

**A:** Yes, designated gifts for one or more of the four areas or "bridges" are welcomed as are gifts given to Crossing Bridges in general. Undesignated gifts, however, are encouraged. They help assure that no one area is over-funded while another goes under-funded.

**Q:** Why is the Church always asking for money?

**A:** There are many reasons: 1) the needs are so great, 2) thriving, dynamic synods and congregations are always in need of more resources, 3) most congregations and denominations struggle with inadequate financial support. The average ELCA Lutheran gives approximately 2% of household income per year to the church; far below the biblical ideal of a tithe, or 10%. While there may be a perception that the Church is always asking for money, the reality is that the church does not ask any more often, and perhaps even less often, than other organizations. It has been six years since our synod's last major appeal.

**Q:** How can I help make this appeal successful?

**A:** Your support is critical to the success of the appeal. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Pray for this appeal and all those whom it will reach in the name of Jesus Christ both personally and in prayers of the congregation in worship.
- Identify a leadership group in the congregation to spearhead the Crossing Bridges appeal. The group could be made up of people who have passion or experience in one or more of the four areas of mission: new mission, poverty work, seminarian support, Iringa.
- Invite a representative from the Crossing Bridges appeal to meet with a leadership group in the congregation, to preach at your congregation, to give a temple talk, and/or host a coffee hour.
- Make use of the print and video resources that you receive.
- Make a personal pledge directly to the St. Paul Area Synod by filling out a pledge forms today.

- Get involved in a leadership position for the appeal. Positions are still open for those who want to help carry this appeal to its full success. Contact Pastor Gary F. Anderson, director of the appeal, through the synod office.
- Pick one the “bridges” as a focus for your congregation each year over the three years of the appeal. (*for example, in 2007 you might emphasize the Bridges to Ending Poverty, in 2008 Bridges to Future Leaders, etc.*)
- Be a vocal advocate for the appeal inside your congregation as well as outside your congregation.
- Identify potential major donors and share information with Pastor Gary Anderson or Bishop Peter Rogness.

**Q: How can my congregation make a commitment to the appeal?**

**A.** Your congregation can make a commitment in one or more of the following ways:

- Make the Crossing Bridges appeal a budget-line item in any one year or over each of the three years of the appeal (2006-2008).
- If your congregation is planning a capital fund campaign, include a tithe to Crossing Bridges as one of the campaign’s components.
- Take up a special offering on a given Sunday or over a season; such as Lent
- Encourage members to pledge individually either as part of the regular pledging program or by making copies of the Crossing Bridges pledge card available.
- If your congregation conducts fundraisers, gift part of the proceeds (*e.g. a tithe*) to Crossing Bridges.
- *Using your imagination, do what works best in your congregation.*

**Q: Where can I get more information about Crossing Bridges—Connecting in Mission?**

**A.** You can refer to the Crossing Bridges brochure, the web site ([www.spas-crossingbridges.org](http://www.spas-crossingbridges.org)) or by calling the synod office at (651) 224-4313.