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Saint Paul Area Synod of ELCA receives \$250,000 challenge grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation

Grant to support Latino house churches, a new congregation and ministries to end poverty

MINNEAPOLIS (May 31, 2007) – The Saint Paul Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) recently received a \$250,000 challenge grant from the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation. The grant, which will be matched by \$250,000 in individual and congregational gifts, supports the synod's "Crossing Bridges—Connecting in Mission" initiative.

Specifically, the grant will:

- Fund ongoing stewardship efforts to support the \$2 million Crossing Bridges mission appeal.
- Support the establishment of up to four house churches for Latino residents on the East Side of Saint Paul.
- Establish a new mission congregation in Dakota County (approximately half of the county's population remains without a church home).
- Initiate outreach ministries among synod congregations to both serve those who live in poverty in Ramsey County and to invite those served into ELCA congregations.

"The Crossing Bridges initiative is an ambitious attempt by the Saint Paul Area Synod to redefine what it means to be God's people in the world," said the Reverend Peter Rogness, synod bishop. "We are grateful to the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation for its support, and we expectantly look forward to the launch of the initiative's new approaches to stewardship, new models for mission and new partnerships to meet the needs of those living in poverty both inside and outside the church."

"The Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation is pleased to support the Saint Paul Area Synod's efforts to grow and strengthen local congregations, foster leadership development for clergy and lay leaders, and bring lower-income families into the life of the church," said Karen Coonen, director of foundation and grant programs. "We are delighted to aid this innovative outreach."

The Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation is a private foundation funded by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. As a 501(c)(3) organization with its own board of trustees, the foundation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, religious, scientific, literary and educational purposes and makes grants and gifts to 501(c)(3) exempt organizations. The Foundation does not provide grants to individuals. To learn more about the Foundation and its programs, visit: www.thrivent.com/foundations.

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