



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

NC Synod Staff and Ministry Changes

In early 2008, we began to see cracks in our economic stability. It was not long before those cracks became fractures and we gathered together faithfully and prayerfully to try to make sense of this shift. We have seen the loss of jobs and homes, especially here in N.C. where the current unemployment rate is at a 30-year high. Through these tumultuous economic times, the NC Synod has aimed to remain faithful to our mission.

In May, the NC Synod Council developed a priority plan to help provide guidance regarding our commitments to our ministry partners. This guidance or “belt-tightening”, and a Michael Peeler grant, enabled the synod to continue to meet most of its commitments through the summer of 2009.

Prior to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, the NC Synod saw a decrease in mission support of about 15% as a direct result of the economy. Since the assembly, the NC Synod has seen an additional 15% drop. Currently, receipts are 30% below projected mission support and it is not likely that this number will improve in the coming months.

Through the fall and winter of 2009 and into 2010, as the economic situation continued to deteriorate and congregations began to withhold mission support, the synod has not been able to meet its full commitment to any ministry. For details, see [Outcomes of Redirecting Mission Support](#).

With such a shortfall in mission support, the NC Synod has been forced to make difficult ministry decisions. All of these decisions have resulted in staff and ministry changes.

Since joining the synod staff in 2007, Pastor Judy Klusman has served a dual-role with the synod office and Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas. After prayerful consideration of the current economic climate and her area of ministry, Judy decided to enter the call process. In addition, her position with Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas was eliminated effective Dec. 31, 2009. She is currently in the call process. Pastor Judy's last day in the synod office will be Feb. 1. We pray for her and remain thankful for her faithful service to the synod, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas and all of the congregations in our synod.

In addition, the position held by Charlene Deese Maness has been eliminated effective February 28. Her current position is primarily as Pastor Judy's administrative assistant. Charlene will continue to work through the month of February and will also receive benefits and pay for six weeks after her departure. We thank Charlene for her 11 dedicated years of ministry in the NC Synod and her contributions to synod assembly, synod council, database management and many other areas.

The loss of both Judy and Charlene will inevitably result in a reduction in the ministries of the synod. Currently synod office staff is exploring ways to continue as many areas of ministry as possible. Once decisions regarding the areas of ministry have been made, they will be announced.

Please continue to pray for Charlene and Judy, the synod office staff, our synod and our church. This long journey is far from over as we begin to feel more and more impact from both the economy and congregational decisions to withhold mission support.

The synod office remains grateful for the support of congregations in the NC Synod.

If you have questions about how the economy or the redirection of mission support have affected the synod or led to these decisions, please feel free to contact Ray Barnhardt at 704.633.4861, ext. 114 or rbarnhardt@nclutheran.org.