

ASSOCIATE OF ADVANCEMENT MINISTRY

STEVE TONNESON

As I think about our advancement process, I am reminded of Exodus 25:1-2.

The Lord said to Moses, “Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from everyone whose heart prompts them to give.”

In our advancement process, we need to share the good news of what God is doing through the ministries of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren. We need to help people understand that when they financially partner with us, they are making a significant difference in our disciple-making efforts. But as the verses remind us, we need to ask the Holy Spirit to prompt their hearts to give.

That is why I am so thankful for my prayer team and others who faithfully call on the Lord to prompt people to give to the CLB. This is the power behind our advancement efforts.

Congregational Engagement:

- During our fiscal year ending 4/30/22, Steve spoke at 16 different churches and regional conventions.
- In December, we mailed letters to our CLB and affiliated congregations in the United States. In the letter, we thanked them for their past donations to the CLB. In years past, several churches have given more after receiving the letters, and we assume that will happen again this year.

SHARED MINISTRY FUND RAISING

During our fiscal year, we did three mailings to our Cornerstone Network (CSN) Members. As part of these mailings, we invite people who are Inactive CSN Members from last year to become active members again by giving \$1,000 or more this year.

We also did three Shared Ministry Fund direct mail appeals to people who have given less than \$1,000 in the past. Our first Shared Ministry Fund mailing was combined with our North American Mission (NAM) Forge Ahead Initiative.

Forge Ahead Initiative

Last fall we tried something new. In addition to our direct mailings and our Lutheran Brethren Seminary (LBS) Giving Hearts Day (GHD) Initiative, we decided to do a NAM **Forge Ahead Initiative** with two main objectives:

1. To create more awareness of what is happening in and through NAM and inform people of the resources that are available to them through the NAM Forge Ahead website.
2. To help raise financial support for NAM with a matching funds initiative.

FORGE AHEAD	# of donations	Dollar amount
Preliminary Funds	15	\$77,376
Individuals	104	\$62,380
Congregations	11	\$21,845
TOTAL	130	\$161,601



Giving Hearts Day

February 10, 2022, marked the third year we have held LBS Giving Hearts Day.

As part of this initiative, we mailed pamphlets to everyone on our mailing list explaining what the LBS GHD fundraiser was about and how they could give. We also sent emails to our churches in North America with videos and material to promote GHD through their social media to people in their congregations. When we called our CLB churches to follow up with them, we were very appreciative and encouraged by the overwhelming support we received from the pastors and churches we contacted.

Each year we have been amazed at God’s blessing through our LBS GHD Initiative. In our first year (February 2020), we were blessed with \$78,111. Last year (February 2021), we were blessed with \$228,232 and this year (February 2022), we were

blessed with \$251,801. We are praising the Lord for all the people who gave to this initiative, making it a huge success! Besides the financial blessing, we are very excited about the added awareness LBS received during this process and the larger donor base which has resulted.

CORNERSTONE NETWORK

We have set two goals for our Active Cornerstone Network Operating Contributions Membership.

1. We will strive to maintain at least an 80% retention rate of our Active CSN Operating Contributions Members between our fiscal year end 4/30/21 to 4/30/22. As of 3/31/22, 235 of last fiscal year’s 339 Active CSN Members have given \$1,000 or more in the first 11 months of this fiscal year. This puts our retention rate at 69% with one month to go. We

anticipate this percentage will be higher by 4/30/22.

2. We plan to increase our Active CSN Operating Contributions by a net of 30 new members between 4/30/21 to 4/30/22. As of 3/31/22, we had a net of (26) members. We have 100 inactive and 74 new members so far this year. We also anticipate this number to be higher by 4/30/22.

As of 3/31/22, we had 309 Active CSN Operating Contributions households who gave \$1,106,951 toward our operating budget

MAJOR GIFTS

With our new Mission Advancement Initiative—Disciple-Making Church—being rolled out at this year’s convention, Steve will be actively sharing presentations with individuals and churches explaining what our CLB Senior Objectives and goals will be for the next five years and how they can financially partner with us to help make them a reality.

In 2021, an endowment we have been working on for three years was finalized. That endowment is now at \$475,000, but over time the endowment has the potential of being over \$3,000,000. The earnings from the endowment may be used for LBS student scholarships, the cost of recruiting new seminary students, training new church planters, or helping struggling pastors with training or counseling.

Steve Tonneson serves the Church of the Lutheran Brethren as its Associate of Advancement Ministry.

