

Recommendation: ELCA Malaria Campaign



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

Background

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted [CA09.02.06]:

To approve continued development of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in partnership with Lutheran World Relief (LWR), The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), and the United Nations Foundation (UNF);

To join with domestic and global partners to address malaria as a disease intensified by poverty within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development and in close cooperation and partnership with this church's companion churches in Africa and the Lutheran World Federation;

To begin work related to LMI in the next biennium (2009–2011), specifically involving preparation of resources, pilot projects at sites to be determined, solicitation of individual donors, and collaboration with synods and congregations for anticipated LMI fundraising engagement following the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;

To develop the Lutheran Malaria Initiative in ways that reinforce efforts by the World Hunger Appeal to both achieve its \$25 million goal and continue to raise designated funds to address another disease intensified by poverty: HIV and AIDS;

To authorize continued receipt of designated LMI gifts under the auspices of the World Hunger Appeal, with such funds to be allocated through a specific budget for this initiative;

To request that a report and possible recommendations for a possible churchwide campaign for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative be brought to the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly; and

To anticipate that this whole church—members of every age, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, agencies and institutions, the Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, the Lutheran Youth Organization, colleges and universities, seminaries, social ministry organizations, camping ministries, and all others will learn about malaria and other diseases intensified by poverty and prayerfully support the Lutheran Malaria Initiative as it grows into readiness for a possible major fundraising campaign in synods and congregations following authorizing action by the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

At its October 2010 meeting, the Church Council received a detailed report on the work of the ELCA related to malaria. The council voted [CC10.10.36]:

To focus the commitment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to address malaria through a re-branded and prioritized ELCA Malaria Campaign throughout this church;

To acknowledge the enthusiasm of this church to meet this commitment, giving thanks to God for:

1. the energy and commitment of the five current pilot synods and the five additional pilot synods eager to begin in 2011;
2. the generous gifts of donors throughout this church;
3. resources prepared and stories told;

To give thanks as well for the enthusiasm with which companion churches in Africa have embraced and have begun to implement a joint effort with the ELCA to roll back malaria, utilizing their personnel, church programs, health ministries and community development programs in this effort;

To focus and expand the work already begun, anticipating an authorizing action to be taken by the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly;

To reaffirm the ongoing core work of ELCA World Hunger and strengthen its capacity through this special giving opportunity that reaches out to new donors and invites current donors to deepen their commitment above and beyond normal World Hunger giving;

To request that, after donors are informed of this church's refocus of its distribution channels for gifts designated for malaria, funds already held by this church and funds to be received with any designation for malaria be distributed to address issues of malaria through Global Mission's ongoing relationships with partner churches;

To authorize continued receipt of designated gifts for malaria under the auspices of the World Hunger appeal in support of malaria work of this church;

To request that a report and recommendations for a churchwide campaign to address malaria be brought to the April 2011 meeting of the ELCA Church Council for referral to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly;

To communicate to The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and to Lutheran World Relief (LWR), in light of these decisions, the ELCA's continuing desire to work cooperatively on malaria-related efforts with them;

To acknowledge with gratitude the work begun with Lutheran World Relief (LWR), The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), and the United Nations Foundation (UNF) through the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI), and to deepen partnerships with LWR among specific partners and ministries, with the Lutheran World Federation, and with other partners; and

To anticipate that this whole church—members of every age, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization, agencies and institutions, the Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, the Lutheran Youth Organization, colleges and universities, seminaries, social ministry organizations, camping ministries, and all others—will learn about malaria and other diseases intensified by poverty and prayerfully support this commitment as it grows into readiness for a possible major fund-raising campaign in synods and congregations following authorizing action by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly.

The commitment of this church to malaria work continues. The ELCA, encouraged by the vote of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, has developed a strategy to join the global movement to contain deaths from malaria in Africa by 2015. Some changes have been made to the structure of this project, but the ELCA's commitments to global health and to its companions in Africa remain firm.

Late in 2010, mission support and other funding to the churchwide organization had declined significantly. In light of this economic situation, ELCA leadership determined that a \$30 million campaign around malaria, which was to be tested in the current biennium, was not feasible at that time. Therefore, the churchwide organization withdrew this church's grant proposal to the United Nations Foundation, ending the ELCA's involvement in the project called the Lutheran Malaria Initiative.

The ELCA has made commitments to and is continuing to engage with companion churches as they develop and implement strategies for preventing and treating malaria in Africa. The new ELCA effort will carry forward much of the work that the ELCA had been doing under the rubric of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative. The ELCA Malaria Campaign, as it is now known, will direct all of its funds to ELCA companion churches in Africa. (The United Nations Foundation-related campaign that had been under consideration required that 30 percent of the funds raised go to the Global Fund, 20 percent to be used for capacity building to encourage companion churches to participate in Global Fund country efforts, and 50 percent to support companions' malaria programming.)

The proposed goal of \$15 million will be a challenge in the current economic environment but is both achievable and ambitious enough to meet the commitments that the ELCA has made to its companion churches in Africa. The ELCA Malaria Campaign will continue both to work closely with ELCA World Hunger and to underscore the global health connections between

malaria containment and ministry with those living with HIV and AIDS.

The ELCA Malaria Campaign is not intended to compete with essential ELCA World Hunger work, but rather to build further capacity. It reaches out to new donors and also provides an exciting opportunity for current donors to deepen their commitment above and beyond normal ELCA World Hunger giving. Through the ELCA Malaria Campaign this church's commitment to health and hope for its sisters and brothers in Africa is strong, focused, and prioritized.

Recommendation for Assembly Action

To launch the ELCA Malaria Campaign under the auspices of ELCA World Hunger as a major fundraising effort of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, its synods and congregations, and its affiliated ministries, auxiliaries, and individual members, that will encompass the best efforts of this church to join companion churches in Africa to contain deaths related to malaria by 2015;

To join with domestic and global partners to address malaria as a disease intensified by poverty within the context of comprehensive and sustainable community development and in close cooperation and partnership with this church's companion churches in Africa and The Lutheran World Federation;

To invite every congregation, synod, affiliated ministry, auxiliary, and individual member of this church to make a contribution toward the goal of \$15 million over the next four years (2011–2015);

To develop the ELCA Malaria Campaign in ways that complement efforts of ELCA World Hunger to achieve and grow beyond its own annual goals;

To authorize continued receipt of designated ELCA Malaria Campaign gifts under the auspices of ELCA World Hunger, with such funds to be allocated for the purposes of this campaign;

To request that reports be submitted annually to the ELCA Church Council and to each Churchwide Assembly during the duration of the campaign and that public announcements of accomplishments be made as appropriate; and

To give thanks that God's work of bringing healing to the nations can continue to be accomplished through our hands as we share the abundance with which God has blessed us.