



“...God will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.” Jn. 14:16

When Jesus prepared to leave this world he promised his disciples that God would send them the Holy Spirit. The disciples must have been nervous about what would happen next, but as they embarked on new journeys, encountered challenges and responded to the needs in their communities they would not be alone, but have an advocate. How wonderful Jesus included this image of the Holy Spirit as an advocate, supporting us and interceding on our behalf.

Living out of God’s generous love and support for us, we have ministries in our congregations and via the larger ELCA to empower those who face hunger and poverty. Because we cannot diminish hunger on our own, we get involved with our communities and governments in advocacy work. LOPPW is one of the advocacy ministries of our larger church. We directly advocate for people who do not have as much of a voice as they would like or need to affect change. And we seek ways to help others to find their own authority in advocating. We do all of this in partnership with the six synods that cover Wisconsin.

Since the last annual report LOPPW’s ministry has gone through a change in leadership. The former director, Ms. Amy Johnson left for law school after serving the office for six years. Reverend Cindy Crane accepted the position as a call on January 9, 2014. She has more than 10 years of experience as an ordained ELCA pastor and a background in managing secular nonprofits, via which she also did advocacy work. And we have a new logo and website.

Each year the LOPPW Advisory Council and director reflect on scripture, teachings of Luther and the ELCA, our conversations with bishops and other Lutherans, hunger issues in Wisconsin, and current proposed legislation to choose priorities. In 2014 our priorities are the following:

- Continuing our focus on youth experiencing homelessness. In a given year the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction may identify more than 13,000 students as homeless. In the case of youth who are homeless with their families we are tying in other issues related to poverty, for example, joblessness and low minimum wage.
- Addressing the problem of human trafficking. With the rise of youth homelessness in some communities there has also been an increase in trafficking, although traffickers will prey on people who are not homeless as well.

- Encouraging lawmakers to use the projected state tax surplus in a way that will diminish hunger. We keep in mind that at least 12.5% of the people in Wisconsin are living below the poverty line (this includes people working full-time jobs).

LOPPW is your ministry partner. We are an advocacy office and a network of Lutheran Christians focused on legislation and government policies that get to the root causes of hunger and poverty. LOPPW is also an educational resource for congregations and pastors discerning the work of advocacy and what it means to have a public witness.

Together as a synod your support helps to sustain this ministry. We are grateful for the leadership of Bishop Barrow and the synod staff. We are also fortunate to have Pastor Jay McDivitt as a representative to the LOPPW Advisory Council.

Sometimes in our ministries justice work can take a toll on us. Remember that we are not alone. We are part of a greater community, and God also sends us an advocate in the Holy Spirit.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Cindy Crane  
cindyc@loppw.org  
608-270-0201