ELCA Region 3 Archives Report to 2013 Synod Assemblies

Introduction
This year marks the 25th year of the ELCA and the 25th year of the Region 3 Archives. I continue in the archivist position half-time for the nine synods of Region 3 and half-time for Luther Seminary. This shared arrangement continues to work well, with Luther providing space and access to the student worker pool and Region 3 providing the school a large and useful research collection. We also benefit from the much-needed help of 7 regular volunteers, part of the seminary “friends” group.

Use of the Region 3 Archives
Our website (www.luthersem.edu/archives) presence continues to contribute to high use levels of the collections. Luther Seminary hosts the website and provides technical support for it. The site is regularly updated with new training material for congregational audiences as well as listings of the actual archival holdings. The website remains our “front door”, attracting a growing number of users from within, as well as beyond, the ELCA. In addition to the internet, researchers reach us via phone calls, mailed letters and personal visits.

+The Archives assisted a total of 968 reference patrons in the past year with a variety of research interests. The majority (71%) are congregational committees working on microfilming/scanning projects, anniversary celebration planning, history writing and related questions. Other significant user groups include synod offices and church wide offices as well as individual researchers.
+Daniels worked on-site with all 9 synod offices, gathering permanently valuable office records and assisting with retention plans for each office. He visited each office at least 5 times during the year. These visits were coordinated with 31 on-site congregational visits throughout the three states of Region 3. 
+Daniels spoke at 17 adult forums and study groups in congregations throughout the Region. The main focus of these presentations is the use of memory in the congregation. These sessions also provide an efficient venue to publicize the many congregational services available through the Region 3 Archives.

Collection Growth
+The Archives received 470 linear feet of synod office records from the 9 offices. These included legal, financial, personnel and program files.
+Gathered an additional 289 congregational histories – collection now totals 6,015 histories.
+Received 507 biographical pieces for files on clergy and lay leadership – collection now totals 5,912 files.
+Additional 38 congregations filmed their valuable church records through the microfilming program.
+Collected 15 linear feet of mission photographs, films, papers and artifacts from retired China, Japan, South Africa, Madagascar and Alaska missionaries.

Outreach and Education
+Daniels led workshops on congregational archives at 4 Region 3 synod assemblies in 2012. He also presented Archives services information at 2 fall theological conferences.
+Distributed over 700 copies of “Memory Work: A Guide for Congregational Archives and History” to congregations and individuals.
+Continues off-site storage program for all Region 3 synods for professional and permanent care of sensitive files, including candidacy, camping staff, and financial records using Iron Mountain Co.
+Will launch a new records scanning service for congregations to replace the long-running microfilming program. This new service of digitizing vital church records will begin in March 2013.

Professional Development
+Daniels is an active member of several professional archival organizations, including the Society of American Archivists, the Midwest Archives Conference and the Twin Cities Archives Roundtable.
+Daniels maintains his professional certification in the Academy of Certified Archivists.
+Daniels continues active participation in the Lutheran Historical Conference, a pan-Lutheran group of historians, archivists and librarians.

Respectfully submitted by Paul A. Daniels, ELCA Region 3 Archivist and Luther Seminary Archivist, 2.1.13