

Social Ministry, Justice, and Advocacy Committee May 2019

The SMJA committee has experienced many first this year that will hopefully not be the case in the coming year...

The first first was a new, and I believe good, process that came out of the ELCA headquarters. Each synod was tasked with speaking directly to the people in its synod who had applied for a Domestic Hunger Grant. Pastor Elise Rothfusz connected with our committee to do the work, since it tied in well with our mission. This allowed the ELCA to get a more personal feel for the thousands of applicants. We had the opportunity to speak with three different organizations in our synod, and I'm pleased to report that one of the applicants did receive a grant from the ELCA.

Our next first was technologically related. I could not log into our email account. The former chair, who was elected a dean, gave me all the information, but for some reason, I was locked out. Now, I know a lot of us have had that happen, I could have handled it on a personal account, but the difficulty came with this being a long standing, group account. I had no access to a recovery account or phone to have a code sent. Needless to say, the committee has a new email with the synod account as it's back up! If you need to contact us, please use CentralSouthernSMJA@gmail.com.

Our final first was the inability to get the Synod website updated. You might have guessed, computers are not my friends. Tucker, the synod tech guru, and I must have sent about 50 emails and spoke several times, but for some reason, the documents never took to the website before he moved. I did reach out to several people about grants, and we were eventually able to have people fill out the old paperwork to apply for grants. This will be an ongoing project with the synod when a new tech person comes on board.

All this to say, that possibly for the first time, there is not a list of the grant awardees for the Assembly report. We have awarded some grants, and we have a few more in process, but it has been a long road this year. My first year as chair has yielded far too many firsts!

We would like to thank everyone for their patience, and encourage people to continue to apply for grants. And I would like to thank the committee for their work, and for putting up with chaos!

Priscilla Geerdes
Chair SMJA Committee