

# A Lay-Focused Ministry of the Northwest Washington Synod

Annual Report for 2023-2024



**THE LIVE PROJECT**  
living into vocational engagement

Rev. Dr. David Hahn, Dir. Of Formation & Learning  
Mandy Neill, Communications/LiVE Admin.

*in generous partnership with the Trinity Education Foundation*

# The LiVE Project is...

- A synod-wide ecosystem of shared learning
- A free-range learning community for local churches
- A community for lay learners and leaders
- An extended adult faith formation opportunity for congregations
- Expanding imagination by integrating shared conversations and new information
- Challenging leaders to grow theologically, culturally, and communally



# The LiVE Project cultivates...

Theological Thoughtfulness—exploring and expanding understandings for who, where and when God is showing up in our world.

Cultural Responsiveness—encouraging self awareness and challenging persons to embrace the difference of others

Communal Engagement—connecting across congregational-ministry divides

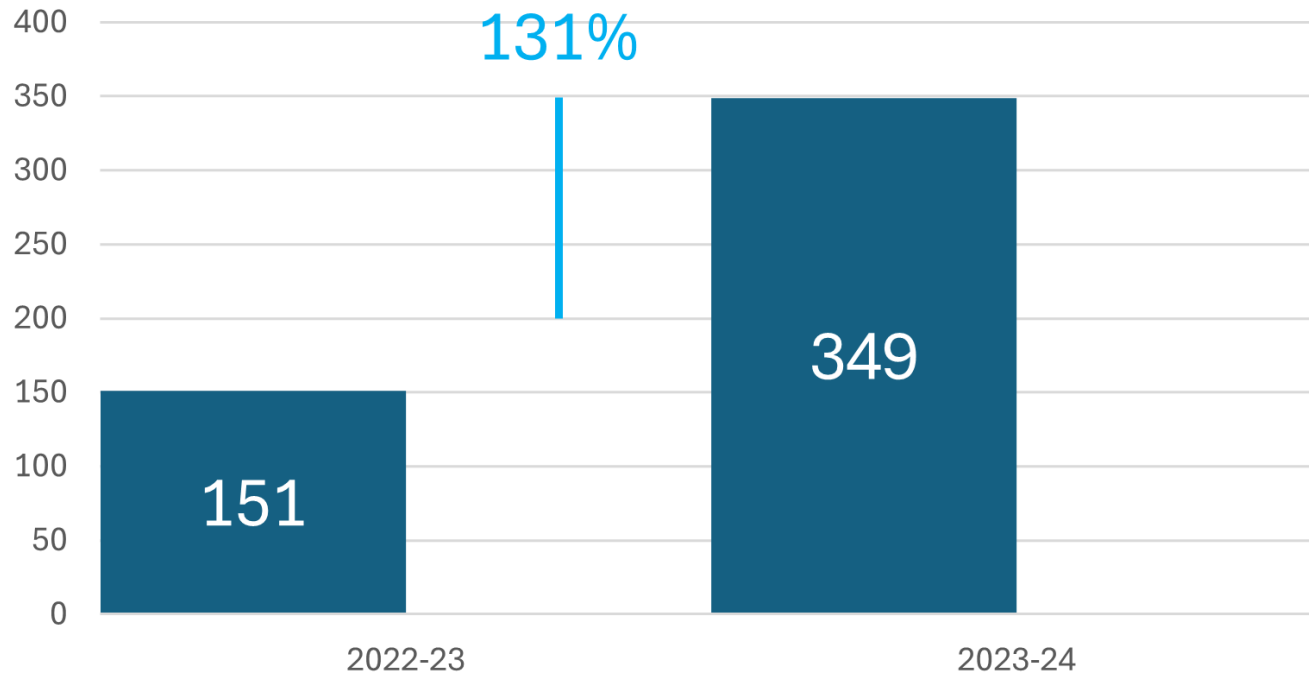


# LiVE Participant Increase

In 2022-23 we had 151 people who had been involved in the LiVE Project since its inception.

One year later, we now have reached 349 people: a 131% increase in just 1 year!

Percentage Increase of LiVE Participants  
from 2022-2023

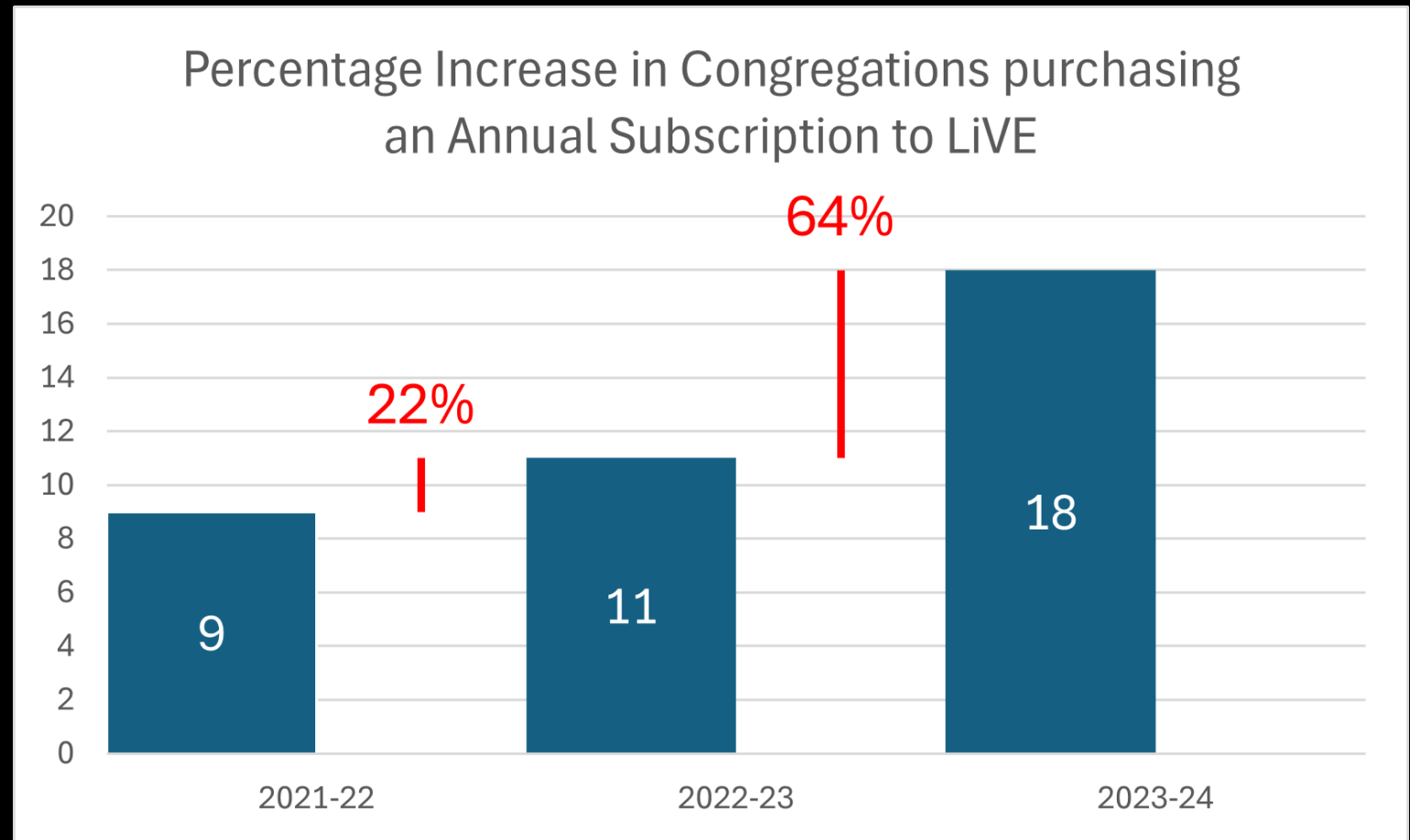


# Increased Congregational Involvement in LiVE

Each year, congregations can purchase an annual subscription\* ("congregational bundle") for all members to participate in ANY of the LiVE Offerings for FREE.

This year the percentage of subscribing congregations increased by 64%.

*\*The TEF grant helps us subsidize participation! We also offer scholarships for smaller churches.*



# 18 Congregations "Bundled" to Participate in LiVE for 2023-2024

Queen Anne Lutheran Church, Seattle

Camano Lutheran Church

Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Everett

Nativity/Cross & Crown Lutheran,  
Renton

First Lutheran Church, Bothell

Central Lutheran Church, Seattle

Trinity Lutheran, Lynnwood

Immanuel Lutheran , Seattle

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Mercer  
Island

Our Redeemers Lutheran Church Seattle

Faith Lutheran, Seattle

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Arlington

Pointe of Grace Lutheran Church, Mukilteo

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Renton

Bethlehem Lutheran, Marysville

## Faith Communities Outside of the NW WA Synod:

University Congregational UCC, Seattle

Hope Lutheran Church, Enumclaw

# Participating Congregations in the NW WA Synod (51 congregations total)

Advent, Mill Creek	Faith Lutheran	Nativity Lutheran/C&C,	Salem, Mount Vernon
Anacortes Lutheran Church	Marysville	Renton	Shepherd of the Valley
Bethesda Lutheran,	Faith Lutheran, Everett	Northlake Lutheran,	Startup
Mountlake Terrace	First Lutheran Bothell	Kenmore	Snohomish Lutheran
Bethlehem Marysville	Grace Lutheran, Des	Oak Harbor Lutheran	St Lukes Lutheran,
Camano Lutheran	Moines	Our Redeemers, Seattle	Bellevue
Central Lutheran	Holy Spirit Lutheran,	Our Savior Lutheran	St Matthews, Renton
Christ Lutheran Church,	Kirkland	Church, Everett	St Peter's
Ferndale	Holy Trinity, Mercer	Our Saviors Arlington	St. John United, Seattle
Christ the King Lutheran,	Island	Phinney Ridge Lutheran	Sunnyvale
Snohomish	Hope Lutheran, Lynden	Point of Grace Mukilteo	The Gathering/ Zion
Christ the Servant,	Immanuel, Seattle	Point Roberts Lutheran	Everett
Bellingham	Kent Lutheran	Prince of Peace Shoreline	Trinity Freeland
Cross and Crown, Renton	Lord of Life, Renton	Queen Anne Lutheran	University Lutheran,
Edison Lutheran, Mt. Vernon	Lutheran Church in San	Saint Andrew's Lutheran	Seattle
Emmaus Table, Seattle	Juans	Church	
Faith L, Seattle	Magnolia Lutheran		
	Mt Si Lutheran Church		

# Participating Congregations outside the NW WA Synod (16 total)

University Congregational United  
Church of Christ, Seattle

St Thomas Episcopal, Medina

Bailey AME Church, Everett

Our Savior Lutheran, Tacoma

Agnus Dei Lutheran, Gig Harbor

Pilgrim Lutheran, Puyallup

Mountain View, Edgewood

Hope Lutheran, Enumclaw

Harbor Lutheran Church, Phoenix  
AZ

Cumberland UMC Indianapolis

St John Lutheran, Abingdon VA

Holy Cross Lutheran, Herndon VA

First United Lutheran, Dallas TX

Graham, WA

Redding, CA





# Initiatives Launched in 2023-2024

(Because of the Trinity Education Foundation's Grant...)

- Part-time communications assistant hired
- Increased program outreach
- Launched a new Lay Ministry Formation initiative
- Started 3 new Cohorts
- Subsidized cohort leaders for CYF cohort
- Increased participation and developing leadership capacity across the synod/region



**THE LIVE PROJECT**  
living into vocational engagement



# Communications Assistant Hired

New Communications Assistant, 15-hour/ week. Mandy Neill has broadened our reach by...

- Creating LiVE's social media presence
- Equipping every church in our synod with pre-made publicity materials for all LiVE offerings
- Improved communications to individuals involved in LiVE.

## What is LMF?

- *Do you have a desire to discern where God is already at work within your life context/ ministry and to join God there?*
- *Are you hearing a call to grow deeper in ministry that you would like to explore in a tangible way?*
- *Is your church in transition with a need for lay people to be empowered and equipped for leadership roles?*

Lay Ministry Formation (LMF) is a 2-year, cohort-based educational and training program for lay leaders seeking to deepen their call to ministry.

## Lay Ministry Formation



# First-Year (of two-year) Program

9 participants – 9 Churches in 8 of 11 Clusters

John Bumanglag, Nativity-Cross & Crown, Renton

Melissa Marzolf, Christ the King, Snohomish

Marissa Singleton, St. Matthews, Renton

Rebecca Keith, Faith Lutheran, Seattle

Gaye Rodriguey, Oak Harbor Lutheran, Oak Harbor

Jean Rud, Shepherd of the Valley, Startup

Steve Olson, SALM, St. Peters Lutheran, Clinton

Cori Myka, Central Lutheran, Seattle

Edward Reyes, SALM, Hope Lutheran, Lynden

## Lay Ministry Formation



# LiVE Annual Offerings: Three Intersecting Opportunities

You can join one, or all of, the following  
the LiVE offerings:

- (1) cohorts
- (2) courses
- (3) retreats



**THE LiVE PROJECT**  
living into vocational engagement

# 3 New Cohorts for 2023-2024



1. Children, Youth & Families (CYF)
2. Changing Church Cohort
3. Becoming an Anti-racist Church Cohort

# What do Cohorts do?



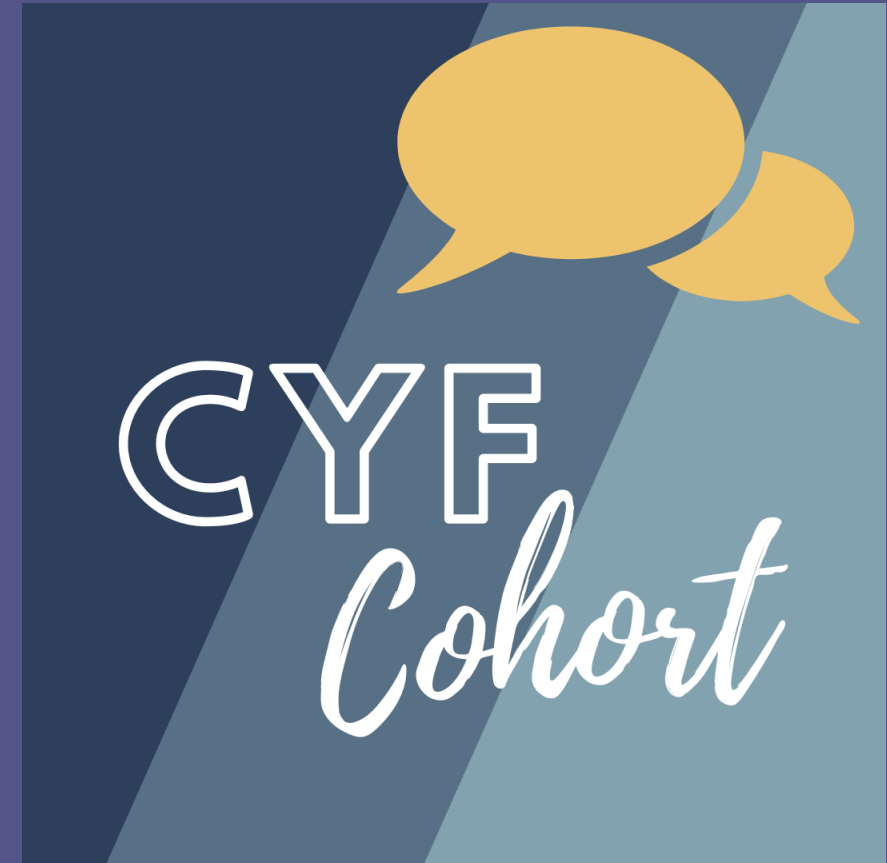
Cohorts BUILD LEADERSHIP CAPACITY in our system by ENCOURAGING PARTNERSHIPS across the region to UNDERSTAND and INTERPRET their contextual realities for today's world given the challenges and opportunities before us.

# CYF Cohort

*A Cohort for anyone ministering to Children, Youth or Families. (Facilitated by CYF practitioners)*

Met 5 times through the year for discussion, to share resources, encourage one another in the CYF ministry essentials, such as:

- Volunteer recruitment and training
- How to engage the Bible with various ages
- Ministering in today's climate of anxiety and mental health challenges





# Changing Church Cohort



*A cohort for lay (and rostered) leaders to discuss how the church is called to respond to this changing time of decreased resources and congregational anxiety.*

Met monthly for a book study on Andrew Root's "When Church Stops Working"

# Becoming an Anti-Racist Church Cohort

*Cohort formed for folks who completed the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to progress in their growth. (Facilitated by one of the pastors on our synod Strategic Team for Authentic Diversity –STAD)*

*A local church also partnered with us to host a conversation on the book the *Call to Allyship: Preparing Your Congregation for Leaders of Color**

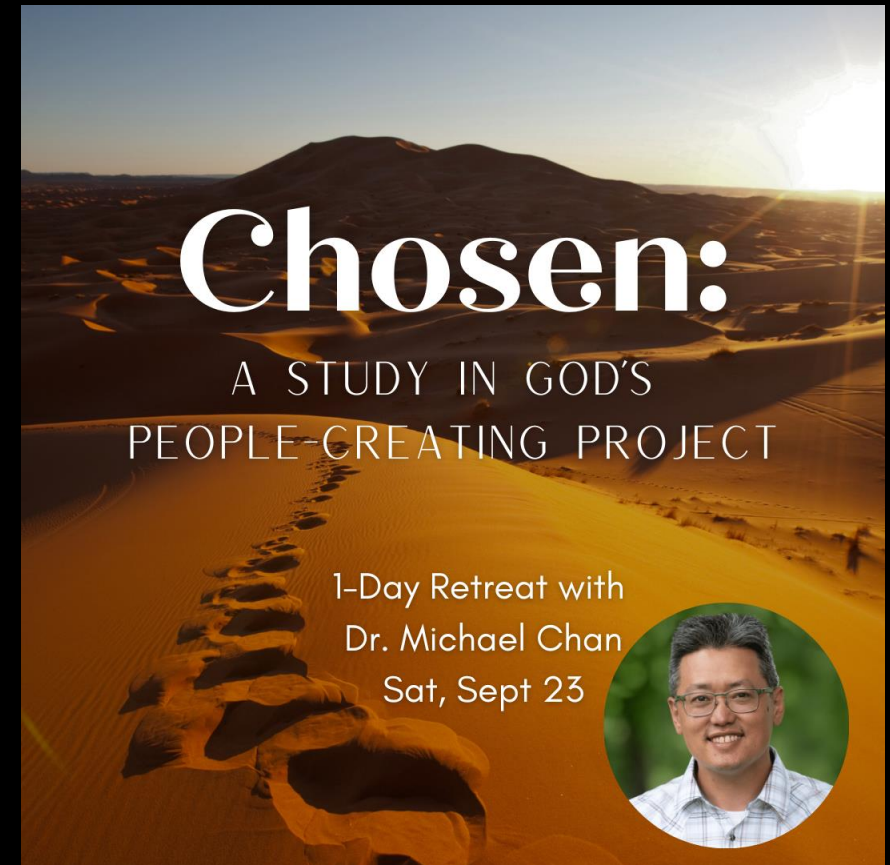


# Chosen Retreat

*"I really appreciated Dr. Chan's insights, enthusiasm & wisdom shared. The entire day kept me engaged!" -Retreat Participant*

Saturday Retreat with Dr. Michael Chan (Executive director of Faith & Learning at Concordia College, Old Testament scholar)

Explored God's ongoing work to shape a people, starting with Abraham and Sarah and continuing in our lives and contexts today.



# Waiting for God Retreat

**Waiting for God:**  
*Reimagining  
Church Vitality*



Saturday, One-Day Retreat

In an age of anxiety given church decline, how do we reimagine what it means to be church created in God's image?

*"I loved the focus on loss vs longing. I appreciated the structure with scripture passages – I want to do it with my community back home!"*

*"I realized that all congregations share similar struggles, losses/ anxieties...we are not alone."*

# Rest & Renewal Retreat



Saturday, One-Day Retreat  
Facilitated by rostered leaders  
and certified mental health  
professionals.

How is the Spirit calling us,  
and those we minister alongside  
of, to wholistic healing for the  
body, mind *and* spirit?

# Fall Course: Sovereignty Spirituality

Explored spirituality from a place of reclaiming one's Christian identity in light of one's ethnic identity, as led from an Indigenous and Womanist/black perspective.

5-Week course facilitated by Dr. Beverly Wallace & Dr. Kelly Sherman-Conroy.



# Lenten Course: Bonhoeffer & Baldwin

## Lent with Baldwin & Bonhoeffer



What might Dietrich Bonhoeffer and James Baldwin together prophetically speak to our current time?

Facilitated by Rev. Dr. Edward Donalson III and Rev. Dr. Dan Peterson

6-week online course

130 participants from across the synod and several from out of state!



# Weekly Synod- Wide Bible Study

Free Bible study each  
Tuesday via zoom- discussing  
that week's Lectionary texts.

Led by both synod rostered  
and lay leaders.





**THE LIVE PROJECT**  
living into vocational engagement

## Future Goals and Objectives

- Exploring and deepening cohort engagement around action-reflection models of engagement
- Inviting more lay-congregational and ecumenical leaders into this movement that we are cultivating
- Reaching out and working to involve and connect with churches in rural contexts