

CELEBRATING SEED SOWERS

By: Chuck Thomas, NGLS Vice President

Religious nonprofits like the Northern Great Lakes Synod (NGLS) are completely dependent on the generosity of donors to accomplish their ministries. The NGLS is in the second year of a three-year theme centered on Seed Sowers. The scripture basis for the theme is 1 Corinthians 3:6. ***“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.”*** In her recent Bishop’s Report to congregations, Bishop Finegan aptly articulated what Paul says in chapter 3, verses 6 to 9 of his letter to the Corinthians. “Paul says that all believers are part of the life cycle of ministry; one planting seeds for the next one to nurture and for the following one to enjoy the growth that is given by God.”

We are all Seed Sowers; we are planting seeds that grow into ministries throughout the NGLS and beyond. The seeds we plant need to be watered. One way to water and encourage growth is to acknowledge the generosity of those who have made a planned gift, also called a legacy gift. The NGLS did just that at Synod Assembly in 2023 with an inaugural Seed Sowers Luncheon. And based on the success of that first luncheon, we plan to celebrate legacy givers again at this year’s Assembly with a second Seed Sowers Luncheon. In addition to those who have already made a legacy gift, this second luncheon also celebrates potential givers who have planned a legacy gift or are in the initial stages of considering a legacy gift.

You may ask: what is a legacy gift? According to *nonprofithub.org*, “a legacy gift is a donation made by an individual through their will or other formal estate planning designation and bequests are the most common type of legacy gift.” The appeal of making a legacy gift is it provides a means for the receiving organization to have a sustainable resource supporting its mission for many years after the gift has been donated. As is evidenced by some of the existing NGLS designated endowment funds, legacy gifts are often made during a donor’s lifetime, not just after they have passed on.

You are invited: If you have made a legacy gift, are planning to make a legacy gift, or are thinking about making one and want to learn more about it, you are invited to this year’s Seed Sowers Luncheon at 12:30 PM eastern time, Saturday, May 17, 2025, at Northern Michigan University. However, **this is important:** you must call the synod office at 906-228-2300 to reserve a spot at the luncheon by May 2025.

I sincerely thank all who have made a legacy gift to the NGLS or have made plans to do so and I look forward to meeting many of you at the upcoming Seed Sowers Luncheon.