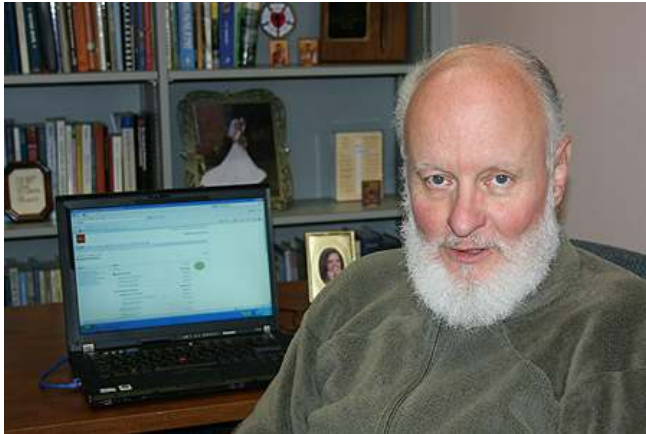


Taking a look at ELCA's Region 9



One of the two ministry emphases highlighted in our synod is that of the ELCA's Region 9. The Rev. Harvey Huntley, Jr., pictured here in his NC Synod office, is the region's coordinator. He offers an overview of the region's ministry and describes a current collaboration of Region 9 with the Southeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church in mission and ministry with Native American peoples in our region.

Region 9 of the ELCA includes the **six synods** in the Southeastern U.S. and the Caribbean: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Southeastern (Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi), Florida-Bahamas, and the Caribbean (Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands). Throughout Region 9 there are approximately 1,000 ELCA congregations, one seminary, three ELCA colleges, five camp and conference ministries, 40 campus ministry sites, and more than half a dozen Lutheran social service agencies (including Lutheran Family Services of the Carolinas and Lutheran Services for the Aging). The region has one full-time coordinator, the Rev. Harvey Huntley Jr., who has two offices—one at the NC Synod office in Salisbury and the other at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (LTSS) in Columbia, SC. The region is also served by a part-time administrative assistant, Ms. Tiffany Pieters, who works out of the Columbia office, and a volunteer treasurer, Ms. Lynne Richards, who also has an office in Columbia.

The region has **varying responsibilities** in three primary areas: candidacy (for clergy, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses), campus ministry, and synodical relations.

In the latter area, a recent development has been an invitation from the Southeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church to collaborate in **mission and ministry with Native American peoples** in our region. The bishops of Region 9 asked the region to enter into this conversation with the United Methodists on their behalf. Beginning in 2011 we have a joint planning committee for Native American Partnership. Serving on that committee from the ELCA are Bishop Leonard Bolick, Regional Coordinator Harvey Huntley, Pastor David Hill of Charlotte, Sister Marilyn Stauffer of Columbia, Mr. Michael Kohn (SC Synod Council Vice President), and the Rev. Gordon Straw (ELCA staff in Chicago). The planning team has met three times in 2011 and developed a mission and vision statement, which is ready for review by the bishops and other regional leaders in Region 9 and by corresponding groups in the United Methodist Church.

The Native American Partnership has also endorsed a joint effort in the Dillon County area of SC with an already established UMC congregation now being served for the first time by a Native pastor. The ELCA will be supporting this endeavor with a grant. There are an estimated

300,000 to 400,000 Native peoples in Region 9. Currently, the only Native congregation related to the ELCA is Living Waters Lutheran Church in Cherokee, NC.

This partnership in mission appears to be the first between the UMC and the ELCA since the establishment of full communion between the two denominations.

For additional information on Region 9 and/or the Native American Partnership, contact the Rev. Harvey Huntley at hhuntley@ltss.edu or at (803) 361-1430.