

V2A supports **innovative, evangelism-focused ministries** that align with one or more of the Florida-Bahamas Synod's four strategic priorities. Strong proposals grow out of a congregation's context, strengths, and discernment. The examples below highlight current V2A-funded projects that embody each priority.

### **GOAL 1: MAKING DISCIPLES:**

Supporting congregations as they refocus their practices on discipleship and equip people to share the Gospel through community engagement and relationship-building.

#### **Current V2A Examples**

- **Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Spring Hill — Elemental Ministry** Engages children and families through outdoor worship and art while deepening the spiritual lives of older members. This intergenerational approach is forming a new community and strengthening discipleship practices across the congregation.
- **St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Clearwater — The Spirituality Center** Offers contemplative worship, retreats, and prayer opportunities for those seeking to reconnect with faith. As a community resource open to all, it is fostering deeper prayer life and welcoming new members into the congregation.
- **Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Seminole — Messy Church** provides an accessible, sensory-friendly worship experience for families from the preschool and surrounding community. Children and adults are encountering Jesus through hands-on, real-life faith practices.
- **All Saints Lutheran Church, Port Richey — A Space for Grace** Partners with a charter school on campus to build relationships through chapel time, shared meals, and a welcoming worship environment. The project strengthens faith formation and expands the congregation's reach.

### **GOAL 2: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:**

Forming and equipping lay and rostered leaders for evangelism, resulting in ministry teams that recognize and use their spiritual gifts in service to their communities.

#### **Current V2A Examples**

- **St. Mark Lutheran Church, Jacksonville — Community Engagement Initiative** A series of well-attended community events has sparked congregational growth and energized a 15-member leadership team spanning multiple generations. This team is now deeply engaged in shaping the congregation's reach into the community.
- **St. Mark, Trinity, and St. Paul's Lutheran Churches, Clearwater — Lutherans for Love A** collaborative ministry establishing a Lutheran presence of love and inclusion at Pride events.

Each congregation now has a Pride team championing Reconciling in Christ values, strengthening missional clarity and extending welcome.

- **University Lutheran Church, Gainesville — Hospitality and Belonging Ministry** Invites young adults into faith exploration through shared meals, retreats, and spaces for rest. This ministry offers spiritual connections for students who have experienced religious trauma or disconnection.

### GOAL 3: MINISTRY AT THE MARGINS:

Extending God’s grace to people not traditionally engaged in ELCA congregations, including individuals who are unhoused, food-insecure, culturally diverse, or unchurched.

#### Current V2A Examples

- **King of Kings, Port Richey — Food for the Soul** A monthly “Dinner Church” gathers welcoming 60–100 guests, including families, neighbors, and those seeking community or a meal. Faith is shared at the table, relationships are forming, and the ministry is expanding twice a month.
- **Atonement Lutheran, Sebring — Building Bridges** A multicultural coalition offering Spanish/English classes, music, worship, and community support for those facing food insecurity or other essential needs.
- **Palms Deaf Church — Deaf Ministry Collaboration** Three Deaf congregations create accessible resources to equip Deaf lay and rostered leaders. With an estimated 95% of Deaf people in the U.S. unchurched, this project removes barriers to inclusion, faith, and leadership.

### GOAL 4: YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS:

Engaging, encouraging, and equipping young people as disciples of Christ through faith formation, leadership development, and community-building.

#### Current V2A Examples

- **The Hearth Partnership, Orlando** Four ELCA congregations are combining resources to build a vibrant, city-wide youth ministry. The program emphasizes diversity, belonging, and youth-led leadership development.
- **Christ Our Redeemer, Tampa — The Table** A dinner-church ministry and related programs connecting with students at the University of South Florida. These relationships support young adults navigating questions of identity, transition, and faith.
- **Grace Lutheran, Tampa — Youth Wellness and Faith Program** A year-long initiative offering high school youth and their families a supportive community. Monthly gatherings provide faith-based and mental-wellness resources through speakers and relationship-building activities, meeting needs and forming new relationships in the surrounding community.