

## **ELCA Region 3 Archives Report to 2026 Synod Assemblies**

### **Introduction**

2026 marks the 38<sup>th</sup> year of the ELCA Region 3 Archives. While the ELCA Region 3 Archives continues to be housed at Luther Seminary and serve the church across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota, it has entered a period of significant transition. This time of change will have its challenges, but it will also include meaningful opportunities for deepening the engagement between the archives and congregations.

### **A Time of Transition**

- In June 2025, Paul Daniels retired from the role of archivist, after 42 years of service. We give thanks for Paul's faithful commitment to preserving and promoting the stories of Lutheran communities with curiosity and care. The new archivist for ELCA Region 3 and Luther Seminary, Caleb Rollins, began full-time in July 2025. As a student in the MA program in History of Christianity at Luther Seminary, Caleb volunteered in the archives for several years and had a months-long apprenticeship with Paul before taking over full-time.
- In June 2025, Luther Seminary announced that they would sell their campus and move to a new location in the Twin Cities. Luther Seminary has indicated their intention to continue serving as the physical home of the ELCA Region 3 Archives. Luther Seminary anticipates remaining on its current campus through the 2026-2027 school year, and has formed a working group focused on finding their new location. As of the submission of this report, the process of finding a new location is still ongoing.
- Preparing for any kind of move takes time, especially when that move requires you to carefully transport over 175 years of Lutheran history! In order to properly execute this move, the archives will have to close to most researchers for a few extended periods of time to allow staff to focus on this monumental task. While this move will take time and energy, it will also provide an opportunity to improve the organization and arrangement of ELCA Region 3 records so that they can be more accessible to synod staff, congregations, and other researchers.

### **Personal Gratitude**

As I finish my first eight months as archivist for ELCA Region 3, I also wanted to express my gratitude to all of the synod staff and congregation members I have met so far. You have been incredibly hospitable and patient as we navigate this period of transition together. Thank you! I look forward to meeting more of you in the coming months and years and collaborating on projects that help congregations preserve and promote stories from the past that propel them into a faithful future.

**Respectfully submitted 3.11.26 by Caleb Rollins, ELCA Region 3 Archivist and Luther Seminary Archivist  
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