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Northern Illinois Synod 2020 Annual Report from Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

Dear Valued Partners in Ministry:

It is with gratitude that I share annual accomplishments and updates from Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) with members of the Northern Illinois Synod. Like congregations, businesses, and organizations across Illinois, recent months have found LSSI dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite these challenges, LSSI's staff has risen to the occasion to provide vital services to children, adults, and seniors throughout our state. We've made great strides in providing new services prior to the pandemic. Last year, we served more than 50,000 children, adults, and seniors—one out of every 250 people in the state!

During this time of pandemic, it's important to remember that LSSI was formed in 1867 to help children orphaned by a cholera epidemic in western Illinois. In response to their need, Lutherans in the area worked together to establish an orphanage. From that single act of generosity was born 153 years of ministry to our Illinois neighbors. What an example our ancestors left us! They did more than survive. In the midst of their own fear and apprehension, they reached out to others whose lives had been devastated by cholera.

To this day, LSSI continues to be a vital resource for our communities, thanks in large part to similar acts of generosity, including the ongoing support of congregations and individual members of the Northern Illinois Synod. You continue to be crucial advocates of our services and mission.

Foster care and child welfare programs, mental health services, alcohol and drug treatment, affordable senior housing, residential programs for people with developmental disabilities, and programs that help individuals impacted by incarceration—all of these ongoing efforts build and enhance lives in the Northern Illinois Synod and throughout Illinois.

To strengthen our ministry, LSSI embarked on a new three-year strategic plan in July 2019 with a continued emphasis on Whole Person Care. We will strive to listen with empathy and compassion, promote people's dignity, value the diversity of human life, and help people realize their full potential. As an organization, LSSI is accountable to excellence—effectively problem-solving, finding solutions in flexible and agile ways, and being good stewards of the resources provided to us. We look forward to sharing our progress in the future.

Over LSSI's 153-year history, we have learned that we are far more successful when we provide our services proactively. In this context, we're pleased to highlight some of those programs here:

- In late April, LSSI was one of 18 nonprofit organizations to receive round 2 funding from the Illinois COVID Response Fund (ICRF). LSSI received \$350,000 and the grant money provided basic needs support to our clients in communities throughout northern, central, and southern Illinois.

- Beginning July 1, LSSI will be expanding child welfare services at its Galesburg office to include an Intact Family Services caseworker. The Intact program offers support for families who have come to the attention of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). These services are designed to stabilize, strengthen, enhance, and preserve family life by enabling children to remain safely at home.
- Project IMPACT (Immediate Multidisciplinary Pre-Screening Assessment Crisis Team) grew to include a fifth hospital emergency department site at Weiss Hospital in Chicago. Project IMPACT is a creative wrap-around behavioral health model that uses trained counselors to assist adults and children who are experiencing a behavioral, psychiatric, or addiction crisis. LSSI is embedded in these hospitals' emergency departments 24/7 and served 13,043 people there last year.
- In March 2020, LSSI opened its Healthy Start Recovery Home West at its Addiction Treatment Center-Elgin for adults receiving treatment for opioid addiction. The recovery home is part of the state's Opioid Action Plan, providing housing for up to a year for 22 residents while they receive medication-assisted treatment, peer support, case management, on-site outpatient treatment, and gain employment. Case managers help create individual plans for each resident's next steps, ultimately preparing them for sober living in the community.

We express our gratitude to Bishop Jeffrey Clements for his leadership of the Northern Illinois Synod, as well as his service on the LSSI Board of Directors. We extend our thanks to the following individuals from the Northern Illinois Synod who served on the LSSI Board of Directors this past fiscal year: John W. Countryman, Karen L. Dowsett, Linda Miller, and Randall L. Mullin, MD.

We are grateful to the trustees of LSSI's Cornerstone Foundation who are from Northern Illinois Synod: Susan Bernardi, Rev. Michel Clark, and Leona Peterson-Spear.

As I reflect on the support of the Northern Illinois Synod, I am reminded of Paul's words to the Thessalonians, where he says, "Encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing."

As we work together to build up the lives of children, adults, and seniors, LSSI remains grateful for your ongoing involvement and support of our mission.

In faith,



Mark A. Stutrud
President and Chief Executive Officer