

April 2020

Program Profile & Numbers

Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta

Region 9 (D)

The Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta (LTCA) was born of a desire to prepare leaders for a diverse church and to expose these leaders to a new context within existing circumstances. This new context is multicultural, and ecumenical. In 2020 the Center will celebrate thirty-two years of ministry and theological education. LTCA as a community works to bring to fulfillment the Lutheran desire and expectation to make a difference in the world, through the practice of our theology.

Where Is the Lutheran Center Today?

Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta (LTCA) was established in 1988 when Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary and Trinity Lutheran Seminary created an opportunity for students to take courses at several seminaries in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1997, LTCA joined a consortium of predominantly African American/Black seminaries in Atlanta known as the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC).

Although initially established by Southern and Trinity, LTCA became a program of the wider Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in 1998. Following a shut-down (2009-2011), LTCA was re-opened under a Covenant of Agreement between the Congregational and Synod Missions Unit, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary and Southeastern Synod. Southeastern Synod became the administrator for LTCA.

In the past five years the Center has served diverse participants from 5 synods and 7 states.

Appeal and Support for the program

The Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta enjoys support from a large number of agencies, congregations and institutions as evidenced by the wide-ranging partnerships allowing it to do theology and the work of the church in congregations, in public places and in the classrooms. Indeed **“God often calls us to things we cannot do alone.”**

- **People Served by Lutheran Theological Center and participants** Between September 2011 and May 2019: **5,664**

- **African Descent Lutheran Association, Atlanta**-The Association has written “support for the Center” and especially the Sending of the Seventy initiative into its goals. The program has been initiated in NE Ohio Synod at New Covenant Lutheran Church.
- **African Descent Pastors in Atlanta** – have a strong affiliation with the Center, either having attended or participated in one of its programs or leading workshops or conferences for LTCA; many of the pastors have taken courses at the ITC through LTCA
- **Multicultural Ministries, ELCA**
- **Southeastern Synod**
- **Domestic Mission, ELCA**
- **Congregations and Individuals**
- **Communion Partners**
St. John’s Episcopal Church, College Park
Poplar Springs United Methodist Church

ELCA Strategic Directions and Goals

LTCA work supports the Five Strategic Goals of the ELCA in the following ways.

- **Identity:** LTCA provides a Lutheran witness and presence in areas of US where there are few Lutherans; it is located in the midst of the Atlanta University Center, which has over 11, 000 students, faculties and staffs in 6 independent colleges, a graduate school and a medical school. The Center has offices on the Interdenominational Theological Center, an Ecumenical consortium of Historical Black Denomination seminaries. *The Center provides, in addition, liturgical worship experiences. To the AUC center.*
- **Strengthens evangelism:** Through its programs such as the Sending of the Seventy, and special gathering such as the Lutheran Day of Service, LTCA shares the gospel through community projects and prayer services making the ELCA known in various communities.
- **Provides Leaders** who are formed and developed to do theology in special contexts and who will help develop **congregational vitality**. In 2017 LTCA assumed administrative and ministry/program responsibility for the **Atlanta University Lutheran Campus Ministry**, also located on the ITC campus. Especially leaders of color.
- **Baptismal Vocation:** LTCA’s provides opportunities for lay and rostered leaders for education, faith formation; provides space for faith formation and enrichment studies; for all the Baptized.
- **Works in** ecumenical ecologies, and through the ITC in African Descent Communities with the Historical Black Church, routinely 6 denominations representing some 24 million Black Christians.
- **Church Profile:** *LTCA is one of the few ELCA programs and/or agencies* which reaches vast numbers of African Descent communities through the

LTCA-ITC affiliation and at the same time, does its work in a multicultural ecology.

- **Communication:** LTCA communicates the gospel through its unique pedagogy based on the three expressions of the ELCA and civic and community agencies and their resources and partnerships to do outreach and work on behalf of the church for the sake of the gospel and for the sake of the world.

Focused Areas

The work of LTCA is focused across four areas.

- **TEEM** (Theological Education for Emerging Ministry)- There are currently 4 candidates for word and sacrament ministry in partnership with Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. The program has graduated 6 ordained pastors since its establishment in Atlanta.
- **Sending of the Seventy**, a certificated program, and Lay Theological Education program supports lay evangelizing and outreach efforts on behalf of congregations.
- **Lutheran Studies** supports students and candidates for ordination at the ITC and other seminaries in both the Metro Atlanta area and throughout Region 9. In 2018, seminarians from North Carolina Synod, Southeastern Synod and Florida-Bahama Synod participated in our summer class intensives.
- **Lutheran Identity and Public Theology**- this area is lay driven: the center organizes efforts of lay teams and partners with them to offer special worship services such as the commemoration of the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Reformation services in ethnic communities; Lutheran Day of Services and the Talking Together As Christians Cross Culturally, to name a few initiatives.

People Who Participate in LTCA Programs

*Sending of the Seventy	7 <i>Certificated earned</i>	21 <i>Attended or currently enrolled</i>
		11 Congregational Leaders
		3 Outreach Teams
		7 Currently Registered
Synod Assembly Workshops		Average Attendance/ year
		75-110
Special Workshops in Congregations (4)		120
Conferences (4)		
God's Work in the World (Faith/Science) 2		24
ELCA Polity		5
Lutheran Worship		10
*Urban Plunge		8

Partners: Rock of Ages LC | St. John’s LC | LC Redeemer | Inspiritus | Christ LC | St. Mark LC
 The ITC | Christ Our Hope LC | District Attorney’s Office, Dekalb County
 New Covenant LC | Southeastern Synod | Domestic Mission, ELCA | Emmanuel LC
 St. John’s Episcopal Church, College Park | Faith & Grace LC | Poplar Springs UMC
 St. | Good Shepherd L M | Holy Trinity

- Number of Persons Reached**

2015	725
2016	815
2017	904
2018	615
2019	667

African Descent	39%	European Americans	53%
African Nationals	2%	Latino Americans	1%
Asian Pacific*	(2%)		

By Activity

TEEM	4 Students (28 classes)
Gatherings & Special Worship Services	370
Classes & Workshops	364
Sending of the Seventy* (A Certificated Program) and Lay Ministry School	38

The Working Budget is shown in another report

