



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

# NetworkKonnector

The monthly e-publication of Christian Education



Issue 6 November 2008

## The Handiwork of God..



### Scripture for reflection...

Read Mark 3:1-6. *Look at your hands. Reflect on why Jesus might have used the withered hand to teach the high priests about law in the new church.*

*The man "stretched out his hand" and was healed. How many times have you stretched out your hands in Christian education? Pray for all those that feel healing from the gift of outstretched hands.*

### Konnecting with the ELCA

**Celebrate Thanksgiving or Christmas** by sharing a gift in the name of family and friends through an ELCA "Good Gifts" donation to support ELCA ministries or through a donation to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

Christian Educators work with people of all ages. Children, youth and adults are all part of a vast outpouring of programs created and implemented by gifted Christian Educators.

The basis for all work in Christian Education is the developmental process. Our senses, bodies, and brains all move together in a unique dance as we develop into human beings. This wonderful developmental process is the handiwork of a loving God.

As you work in ministry this month, remember the handiwork of God is in that wiggly two year old, the questioning youth, and the analytical adult.

Blessings on your ministries,

**Diane Monroe**

[Diane.Monroe@elca.org](mailto:Diane.Monroe@elca.org)

**Christy Olson**

[olson.christy@gmail.com](mailto:olson.christy@gmail.com)

### **The Living Faith of Children and Youth**

Carole Joyce, AiM  
Congregational Coach, SE MN Synod

Often when people think about education ministry in the church, they think of Sunday school and Bible studies. What important information are we going to teach our learners? As a Christian educator for the past 25 years I have spent many, many hours working those issues. Telling God's story is an important part of passing on the faith.

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## Connecting with the ELCA

"Native Nations: Standing Together for Civil Rights" – this video tells the story of justice and civil rights surrounding the 1862 trial of the Dakota Sioux. Native Nations is being aired on ABC affiliate stations through 2008. For information or to purchase, visit

<http://www.elca.org/churchwide-organization/communication-services>

## What is Social Media?

The question intrigued me enough to join colleagues in a recent Webinar produced by the Associated Church Press. It was a fascinating look at the impact the Internet has on every aspect of life when people interact and share their thoughts, values, and creativity with others on-line. The 21<sup>st</sup> century vehicles for socializing come with a whole new vocabulary like "blogs", "wikis" or "nings". For an innovative and entertaining look at the evolution of social media, go to "Youtube" and key in **Social Media in Plain English**. Tell me you don't think of good 'ole 'flannelgraph' when you watch this?

~ Diane Monroe



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Last year, I had the privilege of visiting congregations which had exemplary ministry with children and youth. I asked children to draw a picture of the things they do at their church. They drew themselves worshipping, learning, playing, praying, eating, reading the Bible, participating in Holy Communion, helping others, and singing. When asked what they like to do at church, they gave the same answers. The children eagerly told stories about people they helped, studying the Bible, listening to the sermon (Yes, believe it or not; some kids do listen to the sermon!), serving as usher or lector, singing and praising God and what receiving Holy Communion means to them.

Children in these congregations are integrated into the life of the congregation. Notice how their activities parallel the classic faith practices of didache (learning), koinonia (fellowship), leitourgia (worship), diakonia (serving), kerygma (proclaiming), and doxologia (praising), which shape the life of a faith community. Children and youth are connected members of the Body of Christ!

What would the children or youth in your congregation draw? Are they learning **about** faith or are invited to participate fully in the life of the congregation and **live** their faith?

## Connecting with Ministry Partners

Twice a year the Southern Poverty Law Center, publishes a free magazine called Teaching Tolerance. There are also free materials available for all age groups. Visit [www.tolerance.org/teach/magazine/index.jsp](http://www.tolerance.org/teach/magazine/index.jsp)



**Konnecting with  
Augsburg Fortress**



Want to stay informed about everything happening with the Book of Faith Initiative? Augsburg Fortress and the ELCA have built an online community to support Book of Faith. Educators will find out what others are doing, can gather creative ideas about engaging children, youth, and adults, and can share their own ideas with the community. Over 1,000 members have signed up in the first two months! You can join the conversation at [www.bookoffaith.ning.com](http://www.bookoffaith.ning.com)

**Give Thanks for Wisdom**

Christy Olson

The world takes a respite in mid November. The hurricane season in the south winds down as the north prepares for blizzards. Programming takes a breath, in anticipation of the season of Advent. Children and youth have the school daily schedule figured out and start to relax into the rhythm of their lives.

This November, I give thanks for wisdom. I ended October with a group of six gifted Christian educators whose wisdom was that of the book from the Apocrypha *Wisdom of Solomon* (7:22). These fellow pilgrims on the journey of faith formation were “intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, mobile, clear, unpolluted, distinct, invulnerable, love the good, keen, irresistible, beneficent, human, steadfast, sure and free from anxiety”. We laughed, we learned, we shared, we cried and most of all we prayed.

Wisdom is the unique way in which God’s people translate day-to-day life and faith into new information to the glory of God’s world. This new information becomes applicable to situations that help more people learn. Wisdom connects the past and present to become the future.

In this time of respite, know that wisdom is in the background working with God to further the place of faith formation in the ELCA. These are not always the names you see in front in big ways, but the wise people who from behind the scenes work towards our common goal in Christian education. Give thanks for wisdom.

**Quotable**

“For without any effort on the soul’s part, true Wisdom has taken away the mind’s dullness and leaves a certitude, which lasts for some time, that this favor is from God.

The Interior Castle, Teresa of Avila