



How two congregations explore Renewing Worship

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The ELCA's Renewing Worship project began in 2001 as a response to the emerging changes in the life of the church and the world. The goal of the process is to renew the church's worship as Christ's mission is carried out in a new day.

Many congregations have been exploring the provisional worship resources in their worship. Here are some examples of how those materials are being used by congregations.

St. John's Lutheran Church Stamford, Connecticut

St. John's has taken active steps in making the *Renewing Worship* resources a vital part of their worship life. St. John's has a current membership of 600. There are many families with young children. The congregation currently has *Lutheran Book of Worship, With One Voice*, and the *Renewing Worship Songbook* in the pew.

The congregation's worship and music committee has studied all of the resources as they have become available. A different lay member volunteers to review each resource for the rest of the committee. Their presentations include reading and/or singing significant portions of the material at hand and lively discussions. These are a great aid to staff members who can sense how they can best shape the liturgy to reflect the parish.

In February the seminarian at St. John's, Karyn Bodenschatz, and the director of music Stephen Rapp led an adult forum in a study of *Renewing Worship*, including the singing of hymns from the *Renewing Worship Songbook*. The congregation plans to have an informal hymn sing with a potluck supper this summer. They have run brief articles in the congregation's newsletter to introduce members to the *Renewing Worship* materials.

Music director Stephen Rapp said, "The end result is that much of what is offered in these resources has become a part of our

worship. We have sung hymn paraphrases from *Congregational Song: Proposals for Renewal* as the liturgical setting during the summer months the past two years as well downloading several of the hymns and printing them in our bulletins. We have printed out copies of the surveys for the *Renewing Worship* materials, as well as encouraging members to go online to fill them out."

When the parish took up a collection to purchase the *Renewing Worship Songbook*, they found that they had some funds left over, so they offered to purchase copies of the songbook for St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bridgeport, Conn.

Faith Lutheran, Glen Ellyn, Illinois

At Faith Lutheran Church the conversation around *Renewing Worship* predates the use of the materials, but as they have proceeded, they have begun using some of the materials in the process. Pastor James Honig said, "Faith has a longstanding reputation for good worship, so it wasn't a matter of fixing something that was broken. The oft-repeated phrase was to take what was good and make it great. It also was aimed at asking questions and providing experiences that would help the members to be participants in worship rather than spectators. One of the first things our Worship Renewal Task Force did was to read the *Principles for Worship*."

Honig also asked all of the assisting ministers to read the *Principles* document and used some of that material for a three-hour training session for them.

According to Honig, at Faith, "We no



Members at St. John's Lutheran, Stamford, Conn., study *Renewing Worship* materials

longer use the baptismal rites in *LBW*, but have moved exclusively to the rites in the *Renewing Worship* materials. During the recent season of Epiphany, and now during Lent, we have put together a new Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness based on the confessional material in the *Renewing Worship* volume on Baptism."

In November, Faith hosted the *Renewing Worship Day* for their area. They asked members of their worship renewal Task Force and the worship team to attend the day. Most of them did. Pastor Honig said, "They came away so excited with the material and with the process that they are now planning a congregational *Renewing Worship* Event for the fall, with the goal of having 100 members of the congregation participate."

Renewing Worship needs you

It is critical for the *Renewing Worship* process that congregations across this church test and evaluate the provisional materials. Join the conversation! To learn more, go to www.renewingworship.org

Also see page 2 of this issue to find out about the latest resources and how you can use them in your congregation.

Ways to use *Renewing Worship* resources in your setting

With the publication of the *Renewing Worship Songbook* and *Holy Communion and Related Rites*, congregations have an enormous amount of new material from which to choose.

Worship planners need to be attentive when introducing this new material in worship so that worshippers are not overwhelmed with too much unfamiliar music and texts. Every congregation will not be able to test all provisional materials available.

Make wise decisions about what is most important for your congregation to test, then prioritize. Do not feel like you have to try everything at once, but introduce the settings of *Holy Communion* and the service music over a period of time.

It is very important to sing the same liturgical music for many consecutive weeks to give the congregation time to learn it, before evaluating. Some liturgical music selections will be more difficult to learn than others. Sometimes these challenging pieces end up as

congregational favorites while more easily learned music may not stand up to repeated use over time.

Here are some ideas as you plan to introduce the provisional *Holy Communion* rites in your congregation.

During the spring

- Pastors, musicians and worship leaders should study the new *Holy Communion and Related Rites*.
- Develop a plan to gradually introduce the provisional *Holy Communion* rites in the fall.
- Musicians should begin rehearsing the new liturgical music.
- Teach new liturgical music to choirs and other small groups before introducing it in worship.

During the summer

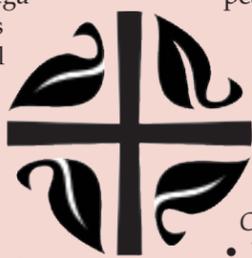
- Begin using the provisional *Holy Communion* liturgical terminology, headings, and texts in worship folders.
- Have soloists or summer choir sing portions of the new liturgical music (to be introduced in fall) as a prelude, an offering, or during *Communion*.
- Begin to introduce the new liturgical music to small groups.

During the fall

- Begin using the provisional prayers of the day from *The Church's Year: Propers and Seasonal Rites*.
- Begin using the new liturgical music.

Participate in *Renewing Worship*

Help determine which hymns from *Lutheran Book of Worship* and *With One Voice* will be included in the next worship resources by completing the *Renewing Worship Hymn Survey*. Download the hymn survey at www.renewingworship.org/participate/hymns.html



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New resources from the Renewing Worship project

There are plenty of exciting resources to help your congregation participate in the Renewing Worship project. Here are some things you should know about. (Note: items with ISBN numbers can be ordered from Augsburg Fortress by calling 800/328-4648 or at www.augsburgfortress.org)

Holy Communion and Related Rites

The Lutheran Confessions state that “among us the Mass (the service of Word and Holy Communion) is celebrated every Lord’s day and on other festivals.” The ELCA statement on the practice of Word and Sacrament, *The Use of the Means of Grace* (1997) affirms this practice and says that “this confession remains the norm for our practice.” Even though every ELCA congregation does not celebrate Holy Communion each Sunday, this service stands at the center of our worship life as Lutherans.

The sixth volume of the Renewing Worship materials includes provisional rites for Holy Communion and a Service of Word and Thanksgiving. In addition to core and supplemental texts for the liturgies, the volume includes two examples of the Communion liturgy with new music.

A detailed introduction highlights the features of the provisional services, and another section offers models for how the liturgy can be shaped for different seasons and contexts.

Basic accompaniments are included for new music written for Renewing Worship by Marty Haugen, Joel Martinson, and Per Harling, along with a selection of service music items from ecumenical sources. ISBN 0-8066-7006-1; \$15 plus shipping.

Renewing Worship Liturgies

This pew version contains texts and melodies for the liturgies of *Holy Communion and Related Rites*. In addition, a congregational Order for Baptism is included, along with selected musical acclamations for baptism and life passages (marriage, healing, funeral).

The resource offers a readily accessible way for congregations to participate in exploring and evaluating the provisional materials for the weekly gathering. ISBN 0-8066-7025-8; \$3 (\$1.75 each for orders of 50 or more) plus shipping.

Renewing Worship Liturgies, Accompaniment Edition

This landscape accompanist’s edition contains complete musical options for *Holy Communion and Related Rites* and for *Renewing Worship Liturgies*. Some of the newly commissioned Renewing Worship music is designed with melodies that can be accompanied in a variety of musical styles, such as: organ; organ with instruments and vocal descants; piano; piano with bass, guitar, and drums; and gospel piano.

This edition, containing all the varied accompaniments for the music in these two volumes, is an important tool for trying and evaluating the Renewing Worship proposal of “multipurpose melodies.” ISBN 0-8066-7026-6; \$30 plus shipping.

A recording of music from *Holy Communion and Related Rites*, illustrating the variety of musical styles, is planned for an early summer release. Many of the text and music resources from these volumes will be available for download from the Renewing Worship Web site during the time of provisional use.

Additional supplemental materials (such as seasonal prefaces with music and examples of how the communion liturgies can be shaped for various seasons and contexts) will also be posted on the Web site on a periodic basis. Plan to visit www.renewingworship.org regularly for additional resources.

Join the Conversation

Although at the heart of Renewing Worship is the development of a new worship book with a constellation of supporting resources, to be delivered in print and electronically, the primary goal of the project is to encourage conversation and dialog about worship, resulting in honest renewal appropriate for a particular worshipping community.

In anticipation of the 2005 Churchwide Assembly acting on a Renewing Worship proposal, many people have been hard at work developing provisional materials for use and evaluation by local worshipping communities. This initiative’s goal—to renew worship—is about much more than new resources. It is about working together locally and throughout the church to bring our faith to rich and varied expression when we gather around the means of grace.

As much as our churchwide work will benefit from comments, concerns, evaluations, and new ideas from all across the church, local groups and congregations have much to gain from being intentionally involved in renewal.

The video and resources featured below are a great opportunity for engaging in this conversation.

Introductory video

Renewing Worship: Join the Conversation, a 45-minute introductory video is now available. This video is both an introduction to Renewing Worship and an invitation to be part of this initiative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Who should see the video and join the conversation?

- congregations
- synodical meetings
- conference/cluster gatherings
- pastors and musicians
- worship committee members
- assisting ministers and acolytes
- lectors and ushers
- altar guild members
- choir members

Everybody’s perspective is valued and a necessary part of the conversation.

How can this video can be used?

- It can stand on its own and simply be shown as an introduction to the Renewing Worship process.
- Viewing of the video could be followed by informal conversation about the information presented.
- Viewing the video can be the beginning of a fuller, more organized conversation about the process itself, the foundational *Principles for Worship*, and/or any of the provisional liturgical and musical resources that are currently available.
- A time of singing from the *Renewing Worship Songbook* could be included with any of the options above.
- Any conversation about worship should include a time of actually worshipping together, preferably using some of the provisional Renewing Worship resources.

Posted on the Renewing Worship Web site are various resources that can be downloaded and reproduced to help you plan these conversations. These resources include:

- An article about the vision of Renewing Worship by the Rev. Michael Burk, ELCA director for worship.
- Excerpts from the *Principles for Worship*, along with practical examples of the principles at work from the provisional resources, with commentary for conversation facilitators.



Choir members at St. John’s Lutheran in Stamford, Conn., using the Renewing Worship Songbook (see page 1)

- Practical suggestions about how congregations can engage and manage the many provisional resources in a realistic way.
- A brief musician’s guide to the repertoire in the *Renewing Worship Songbook*.
- A worship service using materials from *Holy Baptism and Related Rites*, with song suggestions from the *Renewing Worship Songbook*, that could be used to open a Renewing Worship conversation.
- An extensive collection of frequently asked questions with responses from the Renewing Worship staff.

To order the video: Call your synod office or resource center to borrow a copy or, to purchase, contact Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0002-1071-X; \$15 plus shipping).

To download resources, see www.renewingworship.org/resources/video. To join the churchwide conversation, send your comments, concerns, suggestions, ideas, and evaluations to: Renewing Worship, 8765 W. Higgins Road Chicago, Illinois 60631 or via e-mail at renewingworship@elca.org

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www.elca.org/co/seeds

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E-mail kelliott@elca.org

LutherLink: kate.elliott@ecumet.org

Editorial Staff: Kate Sprutta Elliott, editor; Paul Edison-Swift, Kristi Bangert.

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Ways you can use the May issue of *The Lutheran*

The May issue of *The Lutheran* magazine was sent to all ELCA congregations in late April.

Members of congregations with group subscriptions to *The Lutheran* will receive the issue at home as usual. Non-subscribing congregations will receive a shipment of *The Lutheran* based on their average worship attendance. Suggestions for handling the free copies of the magazine include:

- Hand out copies of the May issue of *The Lutheran* after worship or mail them to members.
- Distribute leftover copies of *The Lutheran* to those who were absent from worship.
- Invite those who subscribe to *The Lutheran* magazine to give their copy to someone who didn't get one.
- Announce the special issue.

The entire May issue of *The Lutheran* will focus on mission support of churchwide ministries. The purposes of this issue are:

- To give a glimpse of the breadth and explain the benefits of ELCA ministries;
- To be honest about the reduced levels of funding for these ministries;
- To help members understand that their money makes a difference in people's lives.

Editor of *The Lutheran*, the Rev. David Miller said, "This issue focuses on the important question: What good is my

giving? What good does it do for me, the giver, to share my time and money? What good does it do for other members of the ELCA and for others we do not know, but to whom we are connected as children of God?"

Don't forget to check out *The Lutheran's* online study guides for each issue at www.thelutheran.org

Vision for Mission

A related emphasis in the May issue of *The Lutheran* is the ELCA Annual Churchwide Offering through Vision for Mission. Invite members of your congregation to participate. The suggested date for this special offering is May 16, though you may change the date to accommodate your congregation's calendar.

The ELCA is a partnership of congregations, synods and churchwide organization. Your congregation can offer worshipers the opportunity to participate fully in this partnership through ELCA Annual Churchwide Offering in a variety of ways:

- Use the Vision for Mission envelope included in *The Lutheran* magazine.
- Use electronic giving through the Giving Basket on the ELCA Web site at:

www.elca.org/scriptlib/dcm/giving/giving.asp



- Invite others into conversation about ministries we share as a whole church and about who we are as the ELCA together. Accomplish this through small groups, Bible studies, new-member classes, and in worship.

- Thank your congregation for its partnership and support. Use this opportunity to strengthen the relationships between your congregation, synod, and churchwide organization.

For additional resources about Vision for Mission, contact Kathie Hetland at 800/638-3522, ext. 2563; khetland@elca.org. To view all the online Vision for Mission resources, visit www.elca.org/dcm/stewardship/vision.html. To order Vision for Mission materials from Augsburg Fortress, call 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0002-1149-X).

For a single copy of the May issue of *The Lutheran*, call 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0001-0367-0; \$2, includes shipping). To see it online, go to www.thelutheran.org

Learn about the latest from Multicultural Ministries

Check out this exciting gathering and new resource from the ELCA Commission for Multicultural Ministries.

Multicultural gathering in July

Lift Every Voice: A Multicultural Gathering—In Praise, In Song, and In Dance will be held July 9-11 at the Sheraton World Resort in Orlando, Fla., sponsored by the ELCA Commission for Multicultural Ministries.

Participants will get a chance to talk about the future of multicultural ministries in the ELCA, learn about ministry opportunities, experience multicultural worship, take advantage of learning opportunities, enjoy multicultural music and dance. Children, youth, and young adults will participate in learning and creative activities.

Participants of all ages will celebrate the diverse gifts of many cultures at the Multicultural Gathering Family Night. The standard fee for people age 19 and older is \$200 (includes six meals). Youth and children will pay a reduced fee. To learn more, go to www.elca.org/cmm or call 800/638-3522, ext. 2787.

'Breaking the bonds' internalized racial oppression workshop resource

Here is a new Christian resource dealing with internalized racial oppres-

sion. The *Breaking the Bonds* workbook can help your congregation engage in the process of dealing with this issue. The workshop is a resource designed to be led by skilled facilitators. Facilitators lead individuals through a process that will help them get in touch with the negative messages they have internalized about themselves and others over the years from the oppressive system of racism.

The material should be presented by three facilitators, but can be done by two.

Participants are not expected to have a copy of the workbook resource; however, it is expected that each facilitator have a copy. The resource is separated into two sections: 1) Facilitator instruction and guide, and 2) Participant handout section that may be copied. This resource is available from Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0001-7445-4; \$19.95 plus shipping for the first copy; there are discounts for additional copies purchased on the same day).



Looking for a resource?

Looking for resource ideas? There's a treasure trove of resources on the ELCA Web site, but you may need help in finding the exact ones you're looking for. So where do you begin?



Go to www.elca.org/resources.html and click

on the ELCA Resource Finder magnifying glass. This feature can quickly search the items in the ELCA resource database and help you get what you need.

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Accessibility Award contest

The 2004 Accessibility Award contest is open until May 31. Any ELCA congregation that has been doing ministry with individuals who have disabilities may enter the contest. The winning congregation will receive a monetary award and a plaque. Entry forms are available by going to www.elca.org/dcs/epr/disability/annual.html. Fill out a form and send it to the attention of the Rev. Lisa T. Cleaver in the ELCA Division for Church in Society, 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631, before May 31.

If your congregation is beginning a ministry with people who are differently-abled and is looking for suggestions, there is a resource that may be just right for you: *Toward the Goal* is a video and guide that provides direction to begin an effective ministry with people with disabilities. To order a copy, call Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0001-6928-0; pay only shipping).

Gathering for young men

The Young Men's Leadership Council of Lutheran Men in Mission will host "Road Trip," a churchwide gathering for young men, ages 18 to 34. Road Trip will take place at the YMCA of the Rockies near Estes Park, Colo., September 24-26. The YMCA is located at the base of Rocky Mountain National Park.

Men will participate in hiking, bike riding, rock climbing, rafting, and much more. The event will provide a good balance between men's spirituality and love for the outdoors. Encourage young men to pool their resources for a spiritual weekend of fun and fellowship. It will also provide time to reflect while enjoying breathtaking surroundings. The YMCA has reasonable room rates of \$45 to \$65, including meals.

Participants will be given tools and resources that will help them better connect with God and their congregation. Men will also be equipped to start or maintain men's ministry in their congregation. For more information, go to the Lutheran Men in Mission Web site at www.elca.org/lmm or call Sean Forde at 763/506-8132, or e-mail SForde@luthersem.edu

Pastoral care and HIPAA

A new resource is available from Lutheran Services in America (LSA), an alliance of the ELCA, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and their 280 social ministry organizations. *Questions and Answers: Pastoral Care and HIPAA* will answer common questions and provide helpful suggestions for meeting pastoral care needs under the new federal health information privacy regulations. HIPAA is the "Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act," which deals with privacy

issues related to medical patients. Many pastors, chaplains, and other rostered leaders, as well as congregation members, have expressed frustration with the regulations and feel thwarted in their attempts to provide pastoral care to those receiving health care services. LSA, in partnership with social ministry organizations providing health-care, the Chaplains Network, parish pastors, and HIPAA experts, has developed a short, simple resource to provide information and ideas.

The resource document will be available for download on LSA's Web site at www.lutheran-services.org or call 800/664-3848 to request a copy of the document.

New resources about Africa

Two new resources explore the third emphasis of Stand With Africa: building peace. The first is the 17-minute video, "Peace to This House," produced by



Lutheran World Relief as

part of the Stand With Africa campaign. The video begins at the 2003 Youth Gathering in Atlanta and travels to the Kilosa District in Tanzania, where herders and

farmers are building peace after deadly conflict in December 2000. The video explores the complicated relationship between hunger and conflict and the complementary relationship between development work and peacemaking. The video is available for loan at no cost. Call Lutheran World Relief at 800/597-5972 to request a copy.

The Stand With Africa "Peace" bulletin insert (ISBN 6-0001-7780-1) tells the story of the video and lists ways to help. Fifty bulletin inserts come in a package and are free on request. Request the number of packages you need by calling Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648. Learn about and request other Stand With Africa resources by going to the Web site at www.standwithafrica.org

Stand With Africa is a campaign of the ELCA World Hunger Program, Lutheran World Relief, and LCMS World Relief to support African churches and communities as they banish hunger, withstand AIDS, and build peace.

How to prepare for disasters

Lutheran Disaster Response has revised the booklet "Prepared to Care," a resource for pastors and their staff to use in the aftermath of a disaster. This booklet has two versions; one addresses human-caused disaster (ISBN 6-0001-7446-2), the other relates to natural disasters (ISBN 6-0001-7447-0). "Prepared to Care" walks through the various stages of disaster where functions and roles for the pastor are identified. The importance of self-care is a consistent message in the booklet as are various spiritual and emotional issues people affected by the

experience of a disaster. There are also several glossaries of national resources and Web sites to assist a congregation in building a preparedness plan. Call Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 to order (pay only shipping).

Seeing Beyond the Wrinkles

Written by the Rev. Charles Tindell, an ELCA chaplain, *Seeing Beyond the Wrinkles* tells the real-life stories of "ageless courage, humor and faith," based on the people he has encountered while working as director of pastoral care at a home for the aging. This book not only captures the trials and tribulations—as well as the joys—of growing older, it also gives helpful insight for those who are caregivers or ministering to the elderly. It can help people talk about their fears and hopes about growing older. There's a companion study guide for personal reflection that could be used in adult education or small group setting. Order from Studio 4 Productions, www.studio4productions.com or call 818/700-2522. The book is \$12.95 and the study guide \$4.95 (plus shipping).

New video on building

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) of the ELCA has produced a video that will help congregations prepare for renovation, expansion or relocation projects. In "Designing Effective Church Buildings," Mission Investment Fund staff architect Peter Norgren examines the key preparatory steps and highlights four principles for designing a church building or addition that will meet a congregation's needs for years to come. Norgren said that the video "will be especially useful for members of building or finance committees before a congregation begins to build or renovate."

The 10-minute video is available free of charge to all ELCA congregations. Call MIF at 800/638-3522, ext. 2943, or send e-mail to mif@elca.org to request a video.



New discussion guides

Augsburg Fortress now has downloadable, reproducible "Up for Discussion" discussion guides to help small groups tackle important timely topics. The first guides, already available, are for the best-selling book *The Da Vinci Code*, and for Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* movie. Priced at \$4.95 each, purchase of any guide includes local-use photocopying rights—so a single purchase will provide copies for everyone. These are just the first of a new ongoing series of downloadable discussion guides that will help adult small groups engage with current issues and cultural trends.

You can find these guides online at www.augsburgfortress.org

Network helps with adoption

Adoption brings children and parents together to create lifelong bonds that transcend cultural and ethnic differences. Over three years ago the first official Lutheran Adoption Network meeting was convened and sponsored by Lutheran Services in America (LSA). Lutheran Adoption Network (LAN) is now a national collaboration of 30 Lutheran social ministry organizations that are actively engaged in international adoptions. The network has both local or "direct service" agencies and placement agencies. All of the LAN members share a reputation for ethical practices on adoption, as well as extensive history.

As a faith-based network, these agencies are motivated to service on behalf of those without a voice—children who need permanent families. The Lutheran Adoption Network places children from 10 different countries, among them China, Russia, and Colombia. Each year, hundreds of babies and young children are adopted by families using the Lutheran adoption system. Most LAN agencies also work diligently in their communities to find families for foster children needing adoption, as well as coordinating infant adoptions.

For more information, visit the Web site at www.lanadopt.org or contact Susan Myers at myers.lan@comcast.net.

Family peace resource

Peacemaking Begins at Home is a new and exciting electronic resource for both the church and the home to engage families with growing children in considering a pledge for nonviolence. During this Decade for Nurturing a Culture of Nonviolence (designated by the United Nations), it is important for the church to nurture God's love and peace. The Web site at www.nccusa.org/nmul/mcelfamily2004.html provides ready access to *Peacemaking Begins at Home*, including a promotional flyer that you can use to engage families in your congregation. This resource is a joint offering with other communions within the National Council of Churches.

Reflections on social ministry

Focus on Mission: Reflections and Meditations on Mission in Lutheran Social Ministry is a new resource that explores Scripture and Lutheran theology to encourage social ministry, define its service, and describe the particular character of Lutheran social ministry. The booklet is published by the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society and written by James M. Childs Jr., professor of theology and ethics at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio. Designed for use by groups in congregations and social ministry organizations, the booklet

is organized in 15 sessions. Discussion questions are provided for each session. The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, with headquarters in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, is the largest ELCA-affiliated social ministry organization in the United States providing services to seniors in 240 locations. To obtain free copies, contact Rita Timmer by e-mail at rtimmer@good-sam.com or call 605/362-3100.

Interfaith 'Vote 2004' resources

The Interfaith Alliance (TIA) is sponsoring a 2004 election-year program: *One Nation, Many Faiths, Vote 2004*. The project is helping candidates, voters, houses of worship and the media navigate the waters at the intersection of religion and politics. Here are some of its resources:

- *Media Roundup: A Report of the Use of Religion in the 2004 Elections* e-newsletter tracks religious issues.
- *Cast an Informed Vote* helps people to understand issues of religious liberty in elections.
- Online voter registration will ensure that people of faith have the opportunity to exercise their right to vote. TIA can help lead people through the process. Go to www.interfaithalliance.org/elections
- The Interfaith Alliance's *Election Year Guide for Houses of Worship* offers counsel on how clergy, congregations, and religious institutions may participate in the electoral process.

For more information, contact Kim Baldwin at 202/639-6370 or e-mail kbaldwin@interfaithalliance.org or go to www.interfaithalliance.org/elections

TIA is non-partisan, grassroots organizations dedicated to promoting the positive and healing role of religion in the life of the nation.

Theologians at global event

Theological reflection matters—and it's really not that hard! That's the conviction of 24 teaching theologians taking part in the Milwaukee Global Mission Event (GME) this summer. Classes team-taught by pastors and laypeople



"will make connections between how we think about our faith and how we practice it," says Mark Wilhelm, associate director for Theological Education in the

ELCA Division for Ministry. We're all theologians, whether we know it or not, Wilhelm says. "Every day we decide to do things that are deeply informed by how we think," he says. "At the GME, we hope to create plenty of 'aha' moments that bring a fresh understanding to our daily practice of Christianity." Which international church leaders will present at the GME? Which missionaries can you meet? What are those teaching theologians up to? Go to the Web site at www.elca.org/gme for the latest developments.

Tool kit to help those in need

People of faith are called to help those in need. But it's hard to know who needs help or how to help. A new interactive "tool kit" from Just Neighbors can help you educate members of your congregation about poverty, spur them on to greater service, and empower them to be advocates for neighbors in need. Just Neighbors is dedicated to helping communities of faith help people in need. The tool kit includes a facilitator's guide, five videos, a CD, decision-making booklets, and children's blocks. It has nine sessions and could be used in adult education classes, confirmation classes, or at a weekend retreat. It is produced by a nonprofit interfaith organization called Family Promise. The tool kit is \$150 plus \$5 shipping. To learn more, e-mail info@familypromise.org or go to www.familypromise.org

Student prayer resource

Many people think of Lutheran Student Movement USA (LSM) only around the New Year's holiday, when students gather nationally to share in worship and fellowship. But LSM and its members are active throughout the year. LSM has created a worship book for corporate and private prayer called *Oremus*. The new third edition is *Oremus III+*. This is a great resource for all settings of worship, retreats, Bible studies, devotions. Each book costs \$2.50 plus shipping. To order, call 800/638-3522, ext. 2852, or e-mail lsmusa@elca.org.

ELCA Health Assessment

Nearly 4,500 ELCA pastors, rostered laypeople, lay employees, seminarians and their family members completed the Mayo Clinic Health Risk Assessment between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday on www.elcaforwellness.org part of the Healthy Leaders Enhance Lives initiative, a collaboration of the ELCA Division for Ministry and Board of Pensions. Group results show the four most prevalent medical conditions cited are allergies, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and arthritis. These and other group results will help the ELCA better address the health issues of our leaders. The Mayo Clinic Health Risk Assessment will be available again at www.elcaforwellness.org in January 2005.

Today, 7,000 ELCA pastors, rostered laypeople, lay employees, seminarians and their family members access reliable health information and encouragement at www.elcaforwellness.org provided by the Mayo Clinic. Register today at www.elcaforwellness.org This feature-rich Web site brings the news, information, interactive tools and support our leaders need to take charge of their health, including ELCA-related resources.

See what's new and helpful on the World Wide Web

New site for AIMs, Diaconal Ministers, Deaconesses

The ELCA Department for Synodical Relations, Division for Ministry and Department for Information Technology have launched a new Web site called People and Places On-line at www.elca.org/peopleandplaces. This site is dedicated to greater national coordination for Associates in Ministry, Diaconal Ministers and Deaconesses who are seeking a new call. Information posted on the site will be accessible to staff members in all synods. They will use information submitted by rostered lay leaders in the ELCA to make connections with those congregations, institutions, and agencies that have positions available.

Associates in Ministry, Diaconal Ministers and Deaconesses of the ELCA can use this database to submit the Availability for Call form. Selected information from the form will be used to create a brief personal resume. Congregations, institutions and agencies of the ELCA can use this database to submit information about their organization and the kinds of positions they are trying to fill.

Check out Global Mission site

The ELCA Global Mission Web site has a new look, with the continued commitment to provide a wide range of resources and information for users. Global stewardship, mission service opportunities, information about countries, stories, and worship materials are only a part of what you can find at www.elca.org/dgm. Other links are provided to mission history (archives), World Hunger programs, and other ways in which you can be a part of the global mission story.

ELCA Social Statements get new look

Learn what the ELCA says about various issues in public life at www.elca.org/dcs/socialstatements.html. At this site you'll find a fresh new look and explanations of what social statements are in the ELCA and how they are developed. There are links to the documents so that you can read or download these for discussion in your congregation or educational setting.



Higher education and schools

The Division for Higher Education and Schools (DHES) has launched a series of Web sites to assist its users in navigating over 400 pages of content.

Visitors will find information on the three major ministry areas within DHES: ELCA schools and early childhood centers, colleges and universities of the ELCA, and the work of campus ministry, including Lutheran Student Movement (LSM).

The new sites are specific to the individual ministries within the division, but are seamlessly interconnected to one another. The sites also take advantage of the new ELCA global banner that will soon be seen on all elca.org Web pages.

An increased emphasis on content dealing with the foundations of Lutheran education, vocational opportunities look-up systems, and introductions to all of the ELCA's 28 colleges and universities highlight this new series of Web sites. Visit www.elca.org/education, www.elca.org/schools, www.elca.org/colleges, and www.elca.org/campusministry.

Conference to bring new energy to church libraries

The Lutheran Church Library Association (LCLA) is planning its annual conference, and you won't want to miss it. "Church Libraries ALIVE!" will be held November 4-6, at the Sheraton Minneapolis West Hotel, in Minneapolis. Two major speakers have been announced: Walt Wangerin Jr., as Friday morning keynote speaker, and Ann Tatlock as the Saturday evening Celebration Dinner speaker.

Walt Wangerin Jr., is a master storyteller and award-winning author of deeply spiritual books for adults and children, including *Water, Come Down*; *Potter*; *Thistle*; *Whole Prayer*; *In the Days of Angels*; *This*

Earthly Pilgrimage and *The Book of God*. He hosts the radio show, *Lutheran Vespers*, and is professor and occupant of the Jochum Chair at Valparaiso University.

Ann Tatlock has authored four novels, including *All the Way Home*, winner of the 2002 Adult Fiction Award from the Midwest Independent Publisher Association and a 2003 Christy finalist for Adult Contemporary Fiction. She wrote *A Room of My Own*, winner of a Silver Angel Award in 1999. She also served as assistant editor of *Decision* magazine.

Conference workshops will offer a variety of educational and inspirational

opportunities for beginning and experienced librarians alike. Topics being developed include a look at periodicals and reference materials, the latest computer applications for church libraries, summer reading programs, cancer-support ministry, journaling, archiving, how to involve youth, and more.

The conference offers the opportunity to learn about the latest trends, products, services and resources available to support your church library ministry.

For the most up-to-date information on details concerning the conference, check online at www.lclahq.org

Resource centers look at planning for mission trips

In every issue of *Seeds*, ELCA resource center staff pull together a "Q&A" on topics that they discuss in their meeting on LutherLink. To find the resource center near you, go to www.elca.org/co/centers.html

Q What's the best way to go about planning a mission trip or service outing for congregation members?

A Start with the ELCA's Division for Global Mission (DGM) Web site at www.elca.org/dgm. You'll find a wealth of good resources there. Their *Policies and Guiding Principles* (choose *Resources* then *DGM Policies*) have lots of helpful information on the status of global mission in the 21st century. DGM videos—such as *Walking Together in Global Mission*, *Weaving a Global Neighborhood* and *Tanzania: the People, the Land, the Church*—as well as Global Mission Tool Kits, are great for introducing adults and kids to missions. The DGM staff does not set up trips for groups, but can be helpful with planning in order to avoid common pitfalls.

—Dolores Wright, director, Sierra Pacific Synod Resource Center, Fresno, Calif.

A Check out the *Mission Trip Prep Kit* from Youth Specialties (www.youthspecialties.com or 800/776-8008). The kit comes with a leader guide and student journals, and features helps for getting ready, along with a six-session curriculum for use before, during, and after your trip. Also, don't forget the ELCA video "Servant Events: Live What You Believe." Resource centers have this older video, which is still quite timely for today.

—Bonnie Weber, director, NW Synod of Wisconsin Resource Center, Eau Claire

A One good resource is *Journeys for Youth and Young Adults*, a directory produced by the ELCA Division for Congregational Ministries. Its purpose is to assist people in locating information on programs for servant learning events,

volunteer community service, hunger and justice programs, and high adventure camps. Find it on the Web at

www.elca.org/dcm/camps/journey/journey_search.asp

—Kim Bailey, assistant, Eastern North Dakota Resource Center, Fargo

A The Sister Parish Program is touted as being "beyond tourism and mission projects." This organization offers incredible opportunities for youth and adults to connect with Christians in Central America and Mexico. Also, Sister Parish helps establish linkages between churches in the U.S. and churches in Latin America. Go to www.sisterparish.org

—Pam Drenner, director, Lower Susquehanna Synod Resource Network, Harrisburg, Pa.

A Some folks from our synod have done trips with high school students through YouthWorks (www.youthworks.com), and say they do an excellent job of organizing the trips. However, I would encourage the involvement of both adult and youth participants. When youth work alongside adults, they see that service projects are not just another "youth" activity—like bowling or skiing trips. Some congregations have worked with Habitat for Humanity (www.habitat.org) and sent groups to various sites in the U.S. Also, groups can make contact through Lutheran Disaster Response (www.elca.org/dcs/disaster) to help rebuild following disasters.

To help prepare, try talking to returned missionaries from the area; even if they weren't exactly where your group is going, they can help with general advice about

getting to know people from a different culture. I also recommend the secular Lonely Planet guides (www.lonelyplanet.com) to find out more about where you're going.

—Sara Johnson, director, Southwestern Minnesota Synod Resource Center, Redwood Falls

A Copies of a Presbyterian resource, *People, Places, and Partnerships: A Workbook for Your Mission Trip Abroad*, are available for \$3 each. Call the ELCA Division for Global Mission's resource desk for your copy—800/638-3522, ext. 2642. Potential travelers should check the DGM Web site (choose *Resources*, then *International Travel*) for information regarding visas, health insurance, safety concerns, and the U.S. State Department. Also on the site—under *Frequently Asked Questions*—is a helpful comment about the theology of accompaniment.

—Anne Basye, associate director, Global Resources, Division for Global Mission

A Servant trips for youth groups can provide a combination of challenge, learning, and fun. Often leaders are looking for a way to show youth what the church is all about—living together and caring for others, as well as broadening their perspective. Youth With a Mission (www.ywam.org) can coordinate these opportunities for youth groups. A good article on mission trips and how *not* to do them can be found at www.youthspecialties.com/articles/topics/missions/theend.php

—Ann Hafften, coordinator for Middle East Networking, Division for Global Mission

Joined in our calling: Lutheran Services in America

Lutheran social ministry organizations serve children, the elderly, and people with developmental disabilities. These services are financed by reimbursements from federal, state, and local governmental agencies. Despite constant efforts to ensure high quality care for these vulnerable populations, Lutheran social ministry organizations struggle daily to recruit, train, and retain direct care workers, without whose hands and hearts such care would be impossible. Those who provide hands-on care for young children, people of advanced age and infirmity, and people with developmental disabilities become, in a sense, the hands of God.



cal tasks with people who depend on them for assistance to make their circumstances livable. This work can be thankless and exhausting. It is work that often requires odd shifts, weekend work, and

extreme patience. These hands-on caregivers are usually employed through state government reimbursements that set salary levels that are often at—or slightly above—the minimum wage. Turnover rates are high as they seek employment in less demanding environments.

Because those who serve and those who are served merit better than our current situation provides, the ELCA Division for Church in Society (DCS) provided a research grant to Lutheran Services in America (LSA). LSA, in turn, conducted research and produced “Joined in Our

Calling: People Who Serve, People Who Care, A Direct Care Workforce Shortage Resources Report.” This document is intended for use by several distinct groups. Congregation members seeking to link with others in their advocacy initiatives for children, the elderly, and people with developmental disabilities can find a wealth of information to help them speak out for just, fair wages for direct caregivers.

Together we can work to overcome the shortage of direct care workers by addressing the issues of just wages and working conditions in care-giving agencies.

The report is available in either hard copy or electronic format. Order one free copy from Lutheran Services in America by calling 800/664-3848 or download the electronic version from the LSA Web site at www.lutheranservices.org



It's not too late to join in the Youth Challenge²

“To help end hunger, I will... PRAY... LEARN... REFLECT... ADVOCATE ... SERVE... GIVE”

These are the commitments offered on the great new Youth Challenge² Web page found at

www.elca.org/hunger/youth/challenge2.html

The commitments come with helpful information and Web links. Head to the Youth Challenge² Web

page now and accept the challenge, whether or not you are a youth and whether or not you attended the 2003 Youth Gathering in Atlanta (TAG).

The 46,000 TAG participants received a

Youth Challenge² packet in February. The packet includes a Youth Challenge² resource (find a readable and printable PDF version by going to www.elca.org/hunger/youth). For a single copy of the packet, while supplies last, contact Stephen Taylor at 800/638-3522, ext. 2764.

Youth Challenge² focuses on personal (rather than group) commitments and encourages individuals to donate \$40 or more (\$1 for each day of Lent). Youth Challenge² donations are split between Stand With Africa and the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. It's hoped that most of the donations and commitments to Youth Challenge² will be made in May, so sub-totals can be announced on the Day of Pentecost, May 30. Some may want to start

their Youth Challenge² emphasis with Pentecost, or rally day, or during a Stand With Africa focus. It's never too early or too late to take up the challenge.

Youth Gathering participants and their congregations raised over \$720,000 in quarters—17 tons—for Stand With Africa and the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. As Presiding Bishop Hanson and Heidi Hagstrom, director for the Youth Gathering program, wrote in their cover note for the Youth Challenge² packet, “From water and word to the world, the spirit of Christ lives in us and through us... The quarters you brought to Atlanta as part of the Youth Challenge are making a great difference in the lives of neighbors in need, especially those living in Africa, and we thank you.”



Learn about resources that help with stewardship

Looking for ways to educate and motivate your members about stewardship? Here are resources, some brand-new and some tried-and-true.

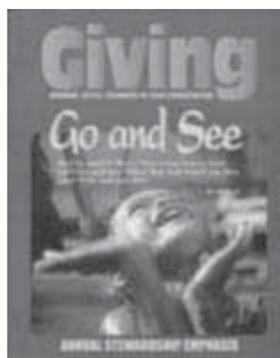
New stewardship magazine

Your stewardship and finance committees may find the new issue of the stewardship magazine *Giving: Growing Joyful Stewards* helpful as they plan your congregation's stewardship ministry. Published annually by the Ecumenical Stewardship Center, this year's issue features instructional articles about congregational endowments, capital fund drives, and helping young children and older youth grow as givers.

In addition, this issue includes a thoughtful piece by the Rev. Arthur Simon, founder of Bread for the World and author of *How Much is Enough? Hungering for God in an Affluent Age*. Another bonus is the regular column, “Clergy and Money,” this year written by the Rev. Margaret Payne, bishop of the ELCA New England Synod. She writes, “It takes a strong spiritual leader to guide people out of resistance and reluctance into the delicious freedom of God's abundance.”

One of the most popular features in *Giving* is the pull-out financial response method. “Go and See Mission Festival” includes instructions for celebrating your ministry in a festival setting.

Accompanying materials for the response method (bookmarks, bulletin inserts, envelopes, commitment cards, letterhead, and poster) are available for sale through the Ecumenical Stewardship Center in Indianapolis at 800/835-5671. A collection of the stewardship response



methods from each of the first five issues of “Giving Magazine” is now available as one set. To order call Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0001-7668-6; \$4 plus shipping).

One copy of *Giving* magazine 2004 was sent to all ELCA congregations in February. For one additional free copy,

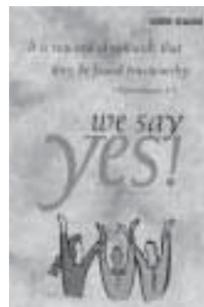
call the ELCA Resource Information Service at 800/638-3522.

New program from Augsburg Fortress

We Say Yes!, the new stewardship program from Augsburg Fortress, helps people everywhere say “Yes!” to God, “Yes!” to their congregation, and “Yes!” to a new commitment to live out their faith in their lives. Built on a Lutheran understanding of the biblical responsibility to care for the church, *We Say Yes!* provides a complete set of materials for a successful stewardship effort. This program centers on a worship response, and uses a CD-ROM full of flexible and practical content.

A highlight of the supplemental resources is a pamphlet introducing the *We Say Yes!* stewardship theme with an interview with Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson on the meaning of stewardship and accountability today.

Order from Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 or go online at www.augsburgfortress.org (ISBN 0-8066-4839-2; \$49.99 plus shipping).



Receive, reflect, rejoice, respond

“Rejoice: Our Joyful Response to God's Love and Grace” is a series designed to build stewardship awareness based on a “journey” theme.

The “Rejoice” journey series is presented in four weekly parts: “Receive,” “Reflect,” “Rejoice,” and “Respond.”

Each week a Bible study, bulletin insert, and temple talk introduce members to simple stewardship concepts. This resource comes with samples of four Bible studies, four bulletin inserts, four temple talks, a poster, a bookmark, and instructions.

Produced by Lutheran Laity Movement in 2001, this resource is now available through Augsburg Fortress. Order the “Rejoice Stewardship Packet” from Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0001-7738-0) for \$24.95 plus shipping.

Way to increase contributions

It's a little known fact that something as simple as your choice of an offering envelope program can affect member contributions. However, the fact remains that congregations that convert from traditional boxed sets

to a monthly mailing program typically see between a 10 to 20 percent increase in contributions—and the majority see the increase within the first six months. Augsburg Fortress can connect you with other ELCA congregations that are willing to be a reference where monthly mailing programs are concerned.

If you'd like to contact someone for references or obtain a free quote regarding a monthly mailing program for your congregation, call Augsburg Fortress at 800/804-4521.

How congregations can help 'revolving door' families

Some 6 percent of U.S. children under age 18 live in grandparent-headed households.

For many, the door that let the grown chicks out of the nest has become a revolving door. Children who left for school, for jobs, to follow their dreams, or to start their own families, are coming back home again and again and again! For a variety of reasons—some emotional, some economic—children who used to leave home to make their own homes and lives are increasingly coming back to the safety and security of the nest and many are bringing one or more of their own children along. The empty nest, once signifying “mission accomplished,” is prompted to become an occasion for ongoing welcome, a mountain of good intent and an opportunity to define new roles and expectations.

Thoughtful and careful planning is necessary to make an empty nest a viable three-generation household. It is important for all in these households to remember that the children who came home are now adults. They need to be treated as adults. Parents who are able to move into a mutual friendship (as opposed to a parent/child relationship) with their grown children certainly will be able to live together more peacefully. Beyond that, a few thoughtful conversations can make “living together” a little easier the second and third time around.

- Even before the door swings open again,

agree on “rules for the house” that will work for everyone. Who does the cooking, cleaning, shopping, laundry? What about bedtimes? How will expenses be shared? Will those who have returned home pay rent? If so, how much? Who disciplines children and how?

- Additional agreements might set limits on built-in babysitting. Parents who feel taken for granted can become resentful.
- Make it a goal to help each family unit become independent again. Multigenerational households can work over a long period of time, but conflict is inevitable. For most, separate households for each family unit will be best in the long run.

Congregations can support multi-generational families in these ways

- Provide a support group for the primary providers of the “revolving doors” in your community. Participants can share common issues even though their situations may be unique. You may also wish to provide support, fellowship, and activity groups for young adults who are coping with prolonged goals and transitions in their lives. Single parents also deserve occasions for conversation and support, as do grandparents who are finding themselves in a position to parent again.
- Schedule Christian education classes for young adults that are designed to address

their specific needs and interests. Invite young adults in your congregation and community to help plan these events. You might even consider presenting them within the context of a coffeehouse.

- Provide access to child care at a reasonable cost for single parents. Facilitate the creation of a co-op nursery or day care to address multiple needs as young parents partner to accommodate one another’s schedules.
- Consider including babysitting as an option for a confirmation service project or an option for congregational service.
- Create your own “Big Brother/Sister” program for after-school play or companionship.
- Sponsor workshops that focus on practical skill building and support, budget planning, child care, time management. You may wish to partner with another community organization to promote and present these events.
- Equip your church library with a relevant listing of books to equip and support individuals and families who find themselves in similar situations. Reference AARP (formerly known as the American Association of Retired Persons) www.aarp.org/confacts/programs/grandraising.html as a supportive organization.
- Take time to acknowledge and affirm families in these situations. Encourage them to keep faith, grace, and prayer at the center of their households. Expressions of love and forgiveness are invaluable when several generations try to live together.

— The Rev. Ted Schroeder is the ELCA director for Christian education



Lobster with vendor.

Steak with the guys.

Meatloaf with the kids.

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Prayers requested

For more than 45 years, the ELCA and its predecessor church bodies have had a special short-term missionary program in Japan. Known as the J-3 program, these mission personnel spend almost three years teaching English in Lutheran schools, working in congregations, and being a witness in the communities in which they serve. Many J-3s have returned to become pastors and leaders in the church in the United States.

On May 7, you are asked to pray for Elizabeth Lord, who is beginning her assignment in teaching English at Kyushu Gakuin School in Kumamoto. This is the oldest of two middle/high schools of the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church. For a long time these schools and two Lutheran colleges have provided educational excellence and have been a means for outreach and witness to society.

Did you see the Action Packet?

www.elca.org/co/actionpacket

The contents of the May-June 2004 Action Packet included:

- Prayer Ventures
- Pericope Partners
- Salt Seasonings e-mail newsletter subscription form
- We Say Yes stewardship brochure
- Procession newsletter