



Resources to plant seeds of prayer and discipleship

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As part of the ELCA's evangelism strategy, new resources have been developed to help congregations grow in prayer and discipleship. To learn more about the evangelism strategy, go to the newly updated evangelism Web site at www.elca.org/evangelism. Be sure to check out the "E-Tips," articles on evangelism that can be used in your congregation's bulletins or newsletters.

Prayer video

With Hands Uplifted – A Call to Prayer is a new video produced by the ELCA's evangelism team. This seven-minute video can be used in Bible studies, small groups, prayer ministries, worship, council and committee meetings, youth group meetings—wherever and whenever the people of God gather. It is available both on DVD or VHS.

To pray is to trust. We trust God's promise to listen, to forgive, to renew, and change us as we pray. Just as a loving parent invites a child to talk at any time, God invites and encourages us to enter into a prayer "conversation" of praise, petition, confession, speaking, listening, silence, and song. The ways people pray—kneeling, sitting, standing, singing, dancing, at meals with hands folded or uplifted, in worship, work, or play—are as diverse as the people who pray.

With Hands Uplifted – A Call to Prayer is one of many resources developed to support the implementation of the Evangelism Strategy adopted by the 2003 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. The first objective of the strategy calls us to "... pray for the renewal of this church, so that every member, congregation, synod, churchwide unit and institution might bear witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ."

Through rich, diverse images and music, *With Hands Uplifted – A Call to Prayer* draws the viewer into new expressions and experiences of prayer. It invites, encourages, challenges, and stimulates prayer for

the renewal of the church. Because there are so many images in this montage, this video can be viewed several times, emphasizing different aspects of prayer. A user's guide (included with the video) offers helpful questions to engage in reflection and prayer.

To order, call Augsburg Fortress 800/328-4648 for VHS (ISBN 6-0002-0394-2); for DVD (ISBN 6-0002-0393-4) or go to www.augsburgfortress.org

Prayer Web site

Additional resources on prayer can be found at the ELCA Prayer Web site www.elca.org/prayer

Go to the site and take a moment to pray the Psalms as part of the Meditation page. Or experience the Prayer for Healing. Discover resources to teach prayer to children, youth, adults, and families. Find ideas for summer programs. Learn ways to launch and advance a prayer ministry in your congregation and community.

Prayer requests

The Prayer Web site provides a place to request prayer petitions. Concerns submitted online are sent to individuals of the ELCA prayer network who commit to pray for 30 days for that prayer request. If a prayer group in your congregation or community would like to become part of the prayer network, register online at www.prayingchurch.org

Summer camp theme

This summer many ELCA camps will be using the camp curriculum *PRAY!* Daily themes include thanking, asking, forgiving, persisting, and listening. The outdoor ministry setting is an excellent place to explore God's presence in every aspect of life. Campers of all ages, along with staff, will explore ways to live in humble praise and thanksgiving to God.

New Bible study on discipleship

Daily Discipleship is a new ELCA lectionary-based curriculum available online at the ELCA Web site. It is ideal for groups desiring to focus on God's Word and apply that Word to their daily lives. This free downloadable resource provides a two-page reflection guide for each Sunday's Gospel, beginning with September 11, 2005. A different aspect of the call from Jesus to his disciples is explored each week around the question: What does this Sunday's Gospel teach about being a disciple of Jesus Christ? These Bible studies are available to download at www.elca.org/evangelism/dailydiscipleship

Each session has three components:

- Word of Life (Gospel text)
- Word Among Us (daily life)
- Last Word (a faith practice)

How to use it

Daily Discipleship groups can gather at any time in any location. Imagine groups of two to seven participants meeting for coffee, before or after work, to focus on the call of Jesus to be disciples. Or envision congregational chat rooms preparing for worship by exploring the Gospel text online.

Daily Discipleship is also ideal for a pastor's lectionary class. Excerpts can be used in bulletin inserts or newsletters. Here are the topics for the Fall term:

Challenges of Discipleship

Sept. 11	Forgiveness
Sept. 18	Grace
Sept. 25	Responsible Living
Oct. 2	Courage
Oct. 9	Invitation
Oct. 16	Citizenship
Oct. 23	Love
Oct. 30	Freedom

For more information, go to www.elca.org/evangelism/dailydiscipleship

Announce the perfect gift for a special someone

Your mom has told you she "doesn't need another thing," but you still need to honor her on Mother's Day. You've got a special graduate in your life who deserves an equally special acknowledgement. You consider your husband or brother a gift-giving "Mission: Impossible."

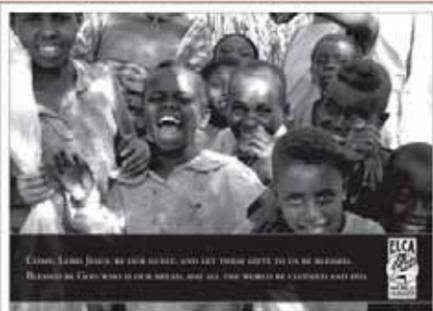
The solution is as easy as 1—2—3.

1. Give a gift donation in your loved one's name to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Give through your ELCA congregation or send a check directly to ELCA World Hunger Appeal, P.O. Box 71764, Chicago, IL 60694-1764. With a major credit card, you can donate by phone (800/638-3522) or online (www.elca.org/giving).

2. See how much good your gift will do. Check out the ELCA World Hunger *Alternative Gift Catalog* (www.elca.org/hunger/resources/altgivingindex.html) for ideas. For example, \$30 might feed a hungry child for a month or provide agricultural tools, \$100 could be used to

cover school fees or offer a micro-credit loan, \$500 could offer a family two goats or a cow, \$1000 could dig a well or dig out a landmine.

3. Let your loved one know about their special gift! There are all-occasion (Mother's and Father's Day, graduation, birthday) and seasonal (Easter, Christmas) cards to send via e-mail at www.elca.org/ecards



Seven all-occasion postcards (ISBN 6-0002-0433-7), striking blue "Go and do likewise" gift announcement cards (ISBN 6-0001-9705-5, 1 pkg.=10 cards with envelopes), and classic black blank "stained-glass logo" cards (ISBN 6-0002-1176-7, 1 pkg.=10 cards with envelopes) are free on request from Augsburg Fortress (800/328-4648 or www.augsburgfortress.org/store).

The postcards are perfect for birthday and congratulatory gift donations, the blue gift cards are ideal for wedding gift

donations, and the black cards are lovely for memorial gifts.

Drop the hint that you'd like a donation to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal for your next gift.

Contact the ELCA World Hunger Appeal office (hunger@elca.org, 800/638-3522, ext. 2764) for a copy of the latest *Alternative Gift-Giving* catalog and start a wish-list.

Couples have truly "shared the love" by enclosing a World Hunger Appeal gift card in their wedding invitation and used Appeal blank cards for thank-you notes. Contact the Appeal office for more information.

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Ideas and resources to help with planning worship

There are many new and exciting resources to help you plan worship in your congregation. Check out these ideas.

SundaysandSeasons.com is coming

Imagine one place where you can access a vast library of Lutheran liturgies, lectionary texts, prayers, and propers. Imagine having all of the content for the day—lectionary texts, prayers, suggestions



[sundays and seasons.com](http://www.sundaysandseasons.com)

for hymns—
brought to you
instead of having

to seek it out.

In July, www.SundaysandSeasons.com, a new online worship planner, will bring you all of these helps. This new online resource will contain:

- Current liturgies, including *Lutheran Book of Worship*, *With One Voice*, *This Far by Faith*, *Libro de Liturgia y Cántico*, *Occasional Services*, *Renewing Worship*, and more
- Extensive collection of other worship texts, including prayers from *Sundays and Seasons*
- The complete NRSV, searchable by verse or word
- Suggestions for congregational song from all current ELCA hymnals
- A growing assortment of hymn texts and hymn graphics for use in bulletins or projections
- Lectionary art graphics from *Graphics for Worship*, *Icon*, and *Icon Two*

Users will be able to choose the date and type of worship they want to plan, and then choose the worship elements they want to include, in the order they choose. The *SundaysandSeasons.com* engine will deliver your entire worship plan in a single document—no more cutting and pasting, or swapping disks or files.

Congregations will be able to subscribe to *SundaysandSeasons.com* on an annual basis. The subscription cost will be based on average weekly attendance. Since *SundaysandSeasons.com* is a Web-based product, you will be able to use all of these features from your church or home.

The widely-used *Sundays and Seasons* annual print resource will still be the home for much additional planning material, plus deep reflective content and other study material not found on *SundaysandSeasons.com*

Go to www.sundaysandseasons.com for a free demo and details about signing up.

Other resources for worship planning

Although the church year officially begins with Advent, in-depth planning for the next year often occurs during the summer months when the schedule is a bit lighter. Annual resources to support worship planning are now available for next year. All of these are available from Augsburg Fortress by calling 800/328-4648 or at www.augsburgfortress.org

- *Sundays and Seasons 2006 Year B* (ISBN 0-

8066-4685-3; \$35 plus shipping). This invaluable guide for creative worship planning presents propers, prayers, introductions to the day, seasonal worship texts, images for preaching, week-by-week hymn and music listings, and more. New this year: suggestions for Lent and Advent thematic preaching series, essays exploring the use of multimedia elements in worship, integrated *Renewing Worship* text proposals, visual art suggestions for each Sunday, and essays on children in worship.

- *Worship Planning Calendar 2006 Year B* (ISBN 0-8066-4688-8, \$20 plus shipping; *Sundays and Seasons/Worship Planning Calendar* combo pack, ISBN 6-0001-7401-2, \$49 plus shipping). A companion to *Sundays and Seasons*, this planning guide and appointment calendar can be used both to guide your prayer and facilitate your planning. Each two-page spread includes propers (including *Renewing Worship* proposals) for Sundays and festivals, a weekly worship planning worksheet, and room for your schedule and your notes.
- *Church Year Calendar 2006 Year B* (ISBN 0-8066-4684-5, \$1.95 plus shipping). This simple four-color sheet is a useful tool for congregation committee members, worship planners, altar guild, teachers, and pastors. It includes dates and church year names, Scripture citations, hymn of the day suggestions, and liturgical colors.

Icon Two for Projection

Churches that use projection for their worship or education will find hundreds of uses for *Icon Two for Projection* from Augsburg Fortress (800/328-4648; ISBN 0-8066-4814-7, \$39.99 plus shipping). This collection includes 250 fine-art, lectionary-based images for all times of the year, including an image for each week.

- Each one in rich color and presented on an attractive background,
- Each one provided in full-screen and thumbnail size on PowerPoint™ slides,
 - Use full-screen as a backdrop before, during, or after the service,
 - Use the thumbnail-image slides with your text, music, or other images to reinforce the image of the day,
- A wide selection of matching backgrounds without images,
- Images match those available in the original *Icon Two* for bulletin graphics and pre-printed inserts, for a unified look,
- An exhaustive lectionary and theme index included in the user guide.

Favorite Hymns Accompanied

Favorite Hymns Accompanied is a double audio CD set from Augsburg Fortress (800/328-4648; ISBN 0-8006-7771-4, \$24.98 plus shipping). It includes high-quality, digitally mastered recordings of brief introductions and full accompaniments to 52 beloved hymns. Played by nationally

renowned organist John Ferguson of St. Olaf College, the stirring accompaniments span the entire church year and correspond to the presentation of the hymns in *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Perfect for small groups, retreats, home use, and worship contexts where resources are limited.

Designing Worship Together

Designing Worship Together: Models and Strategies for Worship Planning by Norma deWaal Malefyt and Howard Vanderwell explores the value of careful worship planning and offers practical advice. In addition to describing best practices, the authors identify the biblical assumptions underlying Christian worship, highlight the importance of teamwork in worship planning, name the issues and barriers worship planners must overcome, and suggest a variety of models for worship planning and evaluation. To order, call 800/486-1318, ext. 244 (ISBN 1-5669-9296-6; \$16). Order online at www.alban.org

Ideas from full communion partners

Many of our full communion partner churches are doing and saying interesting things about music and worship.

To get a glimpse of what is going on in other churches and to get some fresh ideas and perspectives, you will want to explore these Web sites:

From the Episcopal Church:

www.episcopalchurch.org/lml and www.theworshipwell.org/

From the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.:

www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/worship.htm

From the United Church of Christ:

www.ucc.org/worship/index.html

From the Reformed Church in America:

www.rca.org/worship/index.html

From the Moravian Church in America:

www.moravianmusic.org/

Seeds for the Parish

www.elca.org/co/seeds

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Keep Renewing Worship going strong

Assuming all goes well with the *Renewing Worship* proposal at this summer's churchwide Assembly, our church's new abook of worship, with supportive print and electronic resources, will be available to congregations in the fall of 2006. As that time nears, congregations will receive materials for and information about the introduction of the new materials.

The summer, when schedules slow down a bit in some congregations, may be an ideal time to offer opportunities for engaging in conversations around worship, remembering that the proposal is about far more than just a new worship book—it is about actual renewal. Perhaps planning now for a September introduction to or deeper exploration of *Renewing Worship* is a good idea.

The *Principles for Worship*, as well as the church's statement on the practice of Word and Sacrament, *The Use of the Means of Grace*,

continues to be vital and engaging resources for such a conversation. The videotape discussion starter, *These Things Matter: Word, Baptism, Communion* and the *Study Guide for The Use of the Means of Grace* are available from Augsburg Fortress to aid in such a conversation.

Available for free download at www.renewingworship.org/resources/video/ (see links down the right side) are several helpful resources, including a study guide for exploring the *Principles for Worship*, along with some of the provisional texts and songs.



Get ready now for the 2006 ELCA Youth Gathering

The community of Christ is coming together in San Antonio, Texas, for the 2006 ELCA Youth Gathering!

Some 40,000 Lutheran youth and adults are coming from all over the map to be renewed in their faith journey through Bible study, worship, prayer, service, and learning. They are crossing every kind of border to be with friends and neighbors who share the same name: Child of God.

In the company of the gathered in San Antonio, youth will learn to see Jesus more clearly, love Jesus more dearly, and follow Jesus more nearly. They will be opened to the many faces of God by listening to the stories of friends who are different from them. They will touch the places where wounds are, and learn that Jesus meets them before they're all fixed up. They will practice telling God's ancient story in new ways, and in so doing, create a future worth wanting.

This Gathering is about the young church risking being a certain way in the world together. It is about following Jesus' lead and crossing boundaries that keep us alienated from each other and from God. It is about our need for each other and for God. It is about the dynamic of life lived in the tension of God's ways colliding with the ways of the world.

Teenagers know this tension. A day rarely goes by when they aren't wondering how a loving God is active in a world that includes war, tsunamis, poverty, and hatred. Parents know it too. Many are scared and overwhelmed by the responsi-

bility of rearing faithful children in a world where the familiar boundaries of right and wrong are redefined regularly, where temptations abound via the media, where pressures to be perfect hold captive a teenager's attention, and where cultural diversity is redefining the face of the United States.

Even the church knows this tension. Once perceived as the center of people's lives, for many today the church sometimes feels less like a rock and more like a pebble caught in the whitewater rapids of the world.

In the community of the gathering, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, youth will see that faith gives them the strength to steer into the rapids of real life rather than navigating around it or abandoning ship.

Youth will learn how to recognize Jesus in the tension of the border situations in their lives and in the world. They will *wake up* to who they are in Christ, *look around* and see Christ in the eyes of those standing beside them, *turn around* and walk in a new direction, *cross over* and experience the "something new" that Jesus promises, and *go with God* into the world as witnesses to Jesus' way of compassion and justice.

There is the potential for young people to return home profoundly changed by their encounter with God through Christ in the lives of the people of faith they will meet at the gathering—from across the country and around the world—their friends, neighbors, and strangers along the way. They may act differently, not because

it is popular or hip, but because their eyes are open and their hearts changed.

Through this Journey with Jesus, young people have the opportunity, to experience their call to service in a new way.

The call is to get them there... and share in the experience.

How to learn more

- Go to the gathering Web site at

www.elca.org/gathering

Information is being added regularly.

- Watch and discuss the gathering DVD.

It has introductions to the Gathering theme, Lutheran Youth Organization Convention, Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE), and the Definitely-Abled Youth Leadership Event (DAYLE). Spanish translations are included.

- Read the gathering registration book.

The Registration Book will arrive in ELCA congregations sometime this spring. It will also be on the Gathering Web site. A Spanish translation is available by sending in a postage-paid response card.

- Contact your gathering synod coordinator.

A list is provided in the Registration Book and on the Gathering Web site at

www.elca.org/gathering



Save money for the Youth Gathering... and support ELCA ministries

Youth groups throughout the ELCA will be raising funds to participate in the 2006 ELCA Youth Gathering (www.elca.org/gathering). How will your congregation manage those funds until they're needed? The ELCA Mission Investment Fund (MIF) has a solution! A **MissionPlus account** is an easy way to save for the gathering, have immediate access to the funds when you need them, and support the church's mission.

With a MissionPlus account

- your congregation will receive a competitive interest rate on the funds that youth raise for gathering expenses.
- funds are available when needed for registration or travel expenses before, during, and after the gathering.
- funds may be added to an account at any time.
- at the gathering in San Antonio, you can easily cash checks on your MissionPlus account to get funds for meals and other expenses.

How to open an account now

Contact the Mission Investment Fund toll-free at 877/886-3522, e-mail mif@elca.org, or visit the Web site at www.elca.org/mif. You'll receive an information packet with a purchase application form. Complete the application, include a check in the amount of \$100* or more, and send both to the Fund. Once your account is opened, your congregation's hard-earned Gathering funds will begin to grow and will be available when needed.

MissionPlus account details:

- The minimum initial amount to purchase a MissionPlus investment is \$100.*
- Additions to an account may be made at any time in amounts of \$100 or more; just deposit funds in a local checking account, write a check to the Mission Investment Fund, and send it to your MissionPlus account.
- Partial redemptions may be made at any time by writing checks provided with the MissionPlus check book.

- Interest is paid and reinvested monthly.
- There are no fees with a MissionPlus account (checks are provided free of charge).
- Only those who sign the purchase application (signatories) are authorized to act concerning the account.

About the Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA offers investments to ELCA congregations, their members, synods, and ELCA-related organizations. With these invested funds, MIF provides loans to young mission congregations for purchases of land and construction of initial church buildings, and to established ELCA congregations for renovation, expansion, and relocation projects.

MIF currently has nearly 600 loans at work in ELCA ministries. More than one-third of ELCA congregations, most of the ELCA's 65 synods, thousands of members of Lutheran congregations, and many ELCA-related organizations such as colleges, universities, and social ministry organizations, are investors in the Mission Investment Fund.

MIF's church building consultants are resources to congregations that are considering building or renovation projects.

*The \$100 minimum initial investment applies only to a 2006 Youth Gathering MissionPlus investment. For all other MissionPlus investments, the minimum initial investment is \$500.



Wouldn't it be nice to invest in your grandchild's education — and your faith? Well, that's just what you can do at the Mission Investment Fund. We offer a wide array of great investment opportunities, including MissionFuture4KIDZ, an appealing way to save money for college, or to give a birthday or baptismal gift. We also offer opportunities of another kind: With your investments, we make loans to new and existing congregations, plus to social service agencies to help those in need. For almost 100 years, we've been helping families build their investments, while helping the Lutheran church build its future. We're the Mission Investment Fund — the only investment fund for individuals that's a ministry of the ELCA.

877.886.3522



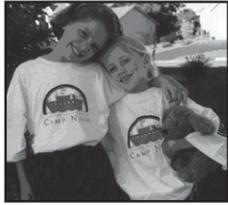
www.elca.org/mif

Learn about Liberia

Visit the ELCA Liberia Support Network Web site at www.elca.org/liberia for new reports about the process of return and rehabilitation in war-torn Liberia. The work of the Lutheran Church in Liberia, and Phebe and Curran hospitals, remains critical as hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons begin moving back to their homes after the 14-year civil war. The church will also play a role in civic education and monitoring democratic elections in Liberia, scheduled for October 11, 2005. To receive monthly e-mail reports on the situation in Liberia, the work of the Lutheran church there, and efforts in the ELCA to support this work, sign up at www.elca.org/liberia/emails/signup.html

Children deal with disaster

Camp Noah is a faith-based, day camp for children, kindergarten through sixth grade, who have experienced disaster.



It is a week-long program of healing and hope that has an impact for a lifetime. Communities throughout Alabama, Florida, and Puerto Rico are

making plans to offer Camp Noah free of charge to as many children as possible. Some 150 volunteer specialists and 50 church mission teams are needed to support these communities. If you would like to join the effort to assist children and their families on their long road of recovery, please contact the Camp Noah headquarters at 800/987-0061 or go to www.campnoah.org to learn more. Your gift of time or money will make a significant impact on the lives of the children! (Camp Noah was created by Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota and is offered as a program of Lutheran Disaster Response, in collaboration with other Lutheran, ecumenical, and agency partners.)

Resources for board members

Members of congregations who serve on the board of a Lutheran social ministry organization will be happy to know that Lutheran Services in America has prepared new resources for social ministry organization boards of directors—a study guide, a series of devotions, and a session for new board member orientation. Priced at \$5 per copy, order these new booklets from Evia Cozart at 410/230-2703 or e-mail ecozart@lutheran-services.org. The resources are:

- *Being Lutheran in Social Ministry is...* This short study guide by J. Paul Balas examines the themes of Lutheran social ministry and the implications of that identity for the values, leadership, and practice of a social ministry organization. The information and exercises can be used in a retreat setting, or they may be divided up for a learning

series at several board meetings.

- *Being Lutheran Means...* This series of six short interactive devotions by Margaret Schmitt Ajer is for use with social ministry organization boards or other groups. Each session relies on conversation, Scripture reading, prayer, and reflection.

- *Becoming a Trustee of Lutheran Values.* Arthur W. Scherer has written this resource for use as part of an orientation program for new board members of social ministry organizations. The booklet consists of background material and discussion questions to fit a 60-90 minute time frame.

Study guide on health care

“Using ‘Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor’ in your Congregation” is a new study guide for the ELCA social statement on health and health care, *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*. The five-session guide focuses on key themes and issues of the statement. It includes helps for study leaders and five supplementary pieces. The resource is suitable for use by adult study groups or health ministry teams. For single complimentary copies call the Division for Church in Society resource request line 773/380-2996; for group orders, call Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0002-0254-7; \$1 each, plus shipping).

Convocation on ending hunger

On June 6 at 7 p.m., the first ever Interfaith Convocation on Hunger will bring together faith leaders from around the nation, including ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, to draw attention to the scandal of hunger at home and abroad. Meeting at the Washington National Cathedral in a spirit of prayer, participants from many faith traditions will stand in solidarity with the hungry and millions of volunteers to feed the hungry and bring relief to people in need. The leaders and their supporters will call on President Bush and members of Congress to join with Christians, Jews, Muslims, and people of other faiths in a new commitment to end hunger.

People concerned with addressing hunger are encouraged to participate. On the days surrounding this Interfaith Convocation, June 4-7, Bread for the World, America’s Second Harvest, and Call to Renewal will sponsor a conference under the theme, “One Table, Many Voices,” which will bring together people intent on addressing hunger and poverty to learn, network, and advocate.

For more information, go to www.onetableconference.org/convocation.html

Small town and rural ministry

Approximately 55 percent of the ELCA’s 10,636 congregations are in small town and rural settings. In order to serve these parishes, the

ELCA Rural Ministry Office has developed the Small Town and Rural Ministry Alliance (STaR). This summer they will have their second national meeting July 28-30, at Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas. The conference theme is “Celebrating Rural Life.” Featured keynote speakers are Martin and Micah Marty. There will be worship provided by the Great Plains Coalition and Central States Synod, opportunities to network with others who are involved in these kinds of ministries, crafts on display, and vendors who will be selling rural life goods. Registration cost (including meals and conference materials) is \$200. To register call the ELCA Rural Ministry Office at 800/638-3522, ext. 6556, or send e-mail to sandra.lablanc@elca.org. For information on the STaR Ministry Alliance, go to www.elca.org/rural

Vision for Mission

Once a year members of the ELCA are asked to go the extra mile in support of ministry. The Vision for Mission Annual Churchwide Offering is an opportunity to do just that. This year, May 15 is the suggested date for congregations to celebrate the offering. However, the resource material is appropriate at any time of year.

The Vision for Mission Fund Annual Offering

supports the core work of the ELCA. It provides an opportunity for celebration of the global and domestic ministry of this church through worship, learning, and gifts.

A box labeled Annual Churchwide Offering arrived in each congregation in early April. It includes worship aids, a poster, reproducible information for newsletters and bulletins, offering envelopes, and a *Making Christ Known* CD for presentations on the ministry we do together.

At the Vision for Mission Web site (www.elca.org/visionfor-mission.html) you can view or download offering material. Bulletin inserts, with envelopes in packages of 50, can be ordered by calling Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0002-0428-0; free). Any questions? Call 800/638-3522, ext. 2536.



Global Lutheran family on Web

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) North America Web site at www.elca.org/lwfn has wonderful stories and prayers that will bring the world to your door. What is our shared ministry through the LWF around the world? How do we make a difference in Cambodia, Kenya, Colombia, and countless other places? The stories are appropriate for newsletters, worship bulletins, and sermons—and are yours at a “click.”

Events for choir directors

Lutheran musicians Helen Kemp and Anton Armstrong will lead weekend educational events for choir directors during the coming months. Helen Kemp will serve as the clinician for the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM) national conference pre-conference event on Saturday, July 9, in New York City. The event is in partnership with the Choristers Guild.

Anton Armstrong will lead workshops in New York on September 23-24, in Denver on September 30-31, and in Charleston, S.C., on October 21-22. For information visit www.choristersguild.org or e-mail jrindelaub@mailcg.org or call 972/271-1521 ext. 227.

Video on the New Testament

"Introducing the New Testament" is Mosaic Television's new



30-minute program that focuses on the origins of the New Testament and its authors. The program examines the New Testament in three parts: the Gospels, letters, and the Book of Revelation. It is intended for educational use in a variety of congregational settings including Sunday school classes, adult forums, youth groups, women's and men's groups, new member classes, congregation council, committee, and other organizational meetings.

This New Testament program features interviews with scholars from ELCA higher education institutions and comes with a user's guide that can help start group discussion. The program is available on DVD and VHS for \$19.95. To order, go to www.elca.org/mosaic or call 800/638-3522, ext. 6009.

For Christian educators

The Lutheran Association of Christian Educators (LACE) continues to gain momentum with increasing membership and locally sponsored events. Currently, members reside in 30 states and Puerto Rico, with chapters hosting events. LACE held its first official election in November 2004. It publishes a quarterly newsletter and a monthly E-News as part of the membership benefits. The Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) has invited LACE to partner with them for their annual educators' event in St. Louis, Mo., February 1-4, 2006. It will include 150 workshops, a spiritual center, worship, awards banquet, and a LACE members gathering. A substantial discount for the gathering will be offered to LACE members. Visit the LACE

Web site at www.elca.org/lace or the APCE Web site at www.apcenet.org to learn more. Recently, the LACE office relocated to 300 Matthews-Pineville Road, Matthews, N.C. 28105. To contact LACE, call 704/301-3284, or e-mail laceoffice@alltel.net.

New book on clergy health

Among the most helpful and widely acclaimed resources for addressing congregational conflict and the quality of church life is Ronald W. Richardson's groundbreaking volume *Creating a Healthier Church* (Fortress Press, 1996). His application of family systems theory to congregational life has clarified its operative systems and especially its emotional system. Fortress Press has announced the release of his latest work, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor*.

In this sequel Richardson employs the same methodology to address the roots of personal issues that may hinder pastors' ability to function effectively as leaders within their congregations, and may cause them deep difficulties. He especially addresses pastors' own families of origin—a major, but often hidden, component in how they function emotionally in their congregations. Ronald W. Richardson is former Clinical Director of the North Shore Counseling Centre, a pastoral counselor, the author of many books on family systems theory, and a retired pastor.

To order call Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 0-8006-3639-2; \$16 plus shipping).

Book and CD about the Bible

Introducing the Bible with CD-ROM by John Drane is a reader-friendly resource for the beginning student in the study of the Bible. It combines Drane's two informative and popular earlier works, *Introducing the Old Testament* and *Introducing the New Testament*, and adds a new CD-ROM.

In this volume, Drane covers the entire Bible. The reader is introduced to each book; but key issues that reading the Bible raises are covered in special articles concerning authorship, theology, history, literature, and the cultures of ancient Israel and the earliest followers of Jesus.

Drane writes in an accessible style, and the volume includes hundreds of illustrations—tables, charts, photos, maps, and line-drawings. The CD-ROM allows the reader to use the book interactively. The Libronix software offers not only the full text and links to the biblical references but also extensive additional study materials, such as chapter summaries, questions for review and discussion, and Web links. Each biblical citation is hyperlinked to the text of the NRSV Bible.

Drane has taught biblical studies in the United States, Scotland, and Australia.

To order, call Augsburg Fortress

at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 0-8006-3672-4; \$49 plus shipping).

Programs on art and faith

The Grunewald Guild offers programs to explore the essential links between faith and faithful creativity. The Guild is located in the Plain Valley in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. People from across the United States and Canada assemble to immerse themselves in the study of art in the context of faith and community. Some come with very minimal art skills, others are professionals. Some seek ways of relating their art skills to the service of the church and others are using the format of art as personal retreat.

Ministerial students at schools of religion attend the Guild's January (J) term to get credit toward their degrees. Pastors come for continuing education. Church building committees come with their pastors and even their architects for especially designed workshops on creative ways to build or renovate their worship spaces. Some people join the guild on a pilgrimage to sacred sites around the world.

In this its 25th year, Grunewald Guild looks forward to new ways of making the art, faith, and community connection. It has recently dedicated its impressive fiber-arts studio. This summer's program offers classes on stained glass, ceramics, fabric arts, drawing, painting, creative writing, calligraphy, book making, icon writing, wood carving, banner making, weaving, and more. Underlying all of the programs is the constancy of art and faith—Matins in the morning, Vespers in the evening, Eucharist on Sunday morning.

To get a catalog of classes, call 509/763-3693 or go to www.artfaith.com to learn more.

Fund for Leaders in Mission

Did you know that the greatest deterrent to those who want to enter seminary is money? The ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission has a

SEMINARY
scholarships
for faithful
leaders

resource that clearly summarizes the answers to important questions related to leadership needs in the church, the costs related to seminary education, and the availability of financial assistance through this growing scholarship resource. *Seminary Scholarships for Faithful Leaders* is a Question and Answer resource recommended for use with individuals and groups who have an interest in this churchwide seminary scholarship program. It is excellent for use with congregation endowment committees, congregation councils, and other leadership groups. Additional resources are available. Go to www.elca.org/fofundforleaders or call 800/638-3522, ext. 2970.

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

Watch TV on the Web

Did you know that you can view videos from Mosaic Television for free on the ELCA Web site? Go to www.elca.org/mosaic to see past shows such as "Women in the Early Church," "Life of Apostle Paul," and "Understanding Islam." If you like a program and want to show it to a group, order online. On the Davey and Goliath Web site, you can view video clips of new and classic episodes of Davey and Goliath. Go to www.daveyandgoliath.org/gallery.html to see what's available.

Listen to radio program on the Web

You can listen to programs from Grace Matters, the radio ministry of the ELCA (formerly Lutheran Vespers), by going to www.gracematters.org/listen.html. Programs are available as podcast, MP3, or RealPlayer streaming—all for free, at a time that is convenient for you.

Open a World of Possibilities

Have you checked out the Web site for

"Open a World of Possibilities: Nicaragua"? *OWP: Nicaragua* is a seven-session hunger education curriculum that can be used in ELCA congregations of any size. Each of the sessions is a multi-generational event that lasts about 90 minutes.

There you'll find study materials, stories, devotions, and activity ideas, as well as resources for children, including games. Go to www.openaworld.org to see an offbeat, fun, and informed look at life in Nicaragua.

Know the ELCA Web status

If you use the ELCA Web site often, you'll want to remember www.elcawebstatus.org. If ELCA.org is unavailable, this site will let you know what's going on and when you can expect the ELCA Web site to be back in business.

Christian education site

The ELCA's Christian education Web site has a new look and is easier to navi-



gate. Go to www.elca.org/christianeducation

There you'll find resources on forming faith, deepening discipleship, equipping educators, and planning programs. Also, check out the materials on

Sunday school, Rally Day, teacher recruitment and training, faith practices, and other curriculum information.

Lutheran Partners magazine

Lutheran Partners is a bimonthly magazine that mails to active and retired ELCA rostered leaders, but often the articles are of interest to other leaders in the church. For instance, the theme of the January-February issue is on parish education: "Intersecting education with evangelism." To read *Lutheran Partners* on the Web, go to www.elca.org/lpl

What you should know about moving and relocation

Whether you are a rostered leader or congregation lay member, you may find yourself needing to relocate from time to time.

Moving across town or across the country, the moving company that packs and totes your belongings can play a large role in how pleasant the experience is. The following tips can help you select a moving company that gets the job done right—and at the right price:

- Start your search as early as possible. Ask friends, employers and co-workers for recommendations, and try to book with a company five to eight weeks before the move.
- Tell the company whether you are moving locally (less than 100 miles within a state), intra-state (100-plus miles within a state) or inter-state (between states).

Local moves are billed at an hourly rate whereas intra- and inter-state moves are

billed according to the size and weight of your shipment.

- Get at least three written estimates. Companies will generally give free estimates, but confirm this before an estimator comes to your house. If you can get an NTE ("Not to Exceed Price") estimate, do so. This means that the price cannot go above the estimate and it may be less.
- Make sure you discuss insurance coverage with your mover and understand the level of coverage you decide on.
- If one or more of your items (such as a piano) requires special handling, inquire whether the mover has the experience and equipment to do the job.

Find out what they *won't* move. Some companies choose not to handle high-value items and/or dangerous substances (corrosives, explosives, flammables, etc.).

In addition, many people feel more secure when they stick with well-known,

brand-name companies that have been in business for years and have built up a reputation for quality service. "When you contract with a mover, there are certain things you expect," says Tim Schneeman, Vice President and General Manager of Allied Van Lines, Inc. "Your belongings should arrive on time, in good condition, and at the agreed-upon price."

The ELCA HomeBenefits resource can help. For more tips on planning your move, or for information on how you can save additional money when buying, selling or financing your home, call 800/823-0646 or visit <http://elca.myhomebenefits.com>



Resource centers discuss 'Theology of the Cross'

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 are some good resources to teach adult Lutherans about the Theology of the Cross?

A During a recent gathering of resource center directors, we were pleased to hear from the Rev. Ted Schroeder, director for Christian education in the ELCA Division for Congregational Ministries. His presentation "Resources through a Lutheran Lens" was a highlight of our time together. Here's a great quote from Ted about the Theology of the Cross: "A theology of glory is appealing. Everyone wants to be part of something as worthwhile as establishing the kingdom of God on earth and as fulfilling as leading the successful life. But the theology of the cross reminds us that God meets us exactly where we fall, fail, and come to the end of our rope. At baptism we begin the path of the cross. We continue ... as we depend on God's constant grace and return to the cross daily to put to death the sins that continue to plague us, celebrating again the forgiveness that God has won for us on the cross." As immersed as we all are in "successful Christianity" (*40 Days of Purpose*, etc.), we all struggle to claim and reclaim this rich piece of Lutheran identity.

—Julie Aageson, director, Eastern North Dakota Resource Center, Fargo

A Some of the best are from author and artist Dan Erlander. He has an easy-to-read style, fun illustrations, and is a great theologian. Specifi-

cally, *Baptized We Live* (Augsburg Fortress, www.augsburgfortress.org) covers the theology of the cross in Chapter Four.

—Irene Flynn, director, Florida-Bahamas Synod Resource Center, Tampa

A Adults interested in some serious study should look for Gerhard Forde's *On Being a Theologian of the Cross* (Augsburg Fortress) and Alister McGrath's *Luther's Theology of the Cross* (Blackwell Publishers, www.blackwellpublishing.com).

—Mim Woolbert—ELCA Department for Communication, Chicago

A Don't overlook *Faith: Confidence and Doubt in Daily Life* by Martin Marty. It's part of the *Intersections* small group Bible study series (Augsburg Fortress). In six sessions, Marty does a great job dealing with issues of guilt, doubt, and the "successful Christianity" phenomena that Julie Aageson mentions. I would also suggest *Lutheran Voices: Who Do You Say That I Am?* by Susan Hedahl, *Basics in Lutheran Doctrine* by Timothy Wengert (out-of-print) and *Treasures Old & New: Images in the Lectionary* by Gail Ramshaw (all Augsburg Fortress). These are wonderful resources that get checked out frequently from our resource center.

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

A After a quick search, here's what I've found:

- *The Hand That Holds Me: How God's Grace Touches Your Life* (Michael

Rogness, Augsburg Fortress)—easy to read

- *Jesus Christ For Today's World* especially chapter 2 (Jurgen Moltmann, Augsburg Fortress)

- *We Believe* (Frank Seilhamer, CSS Publishing, www.csspub.com)—based on the Nicene Creed; see especially the chapters on salvation and resurrection

- *Christian Spirituality* (Donald Alexander, ed., InterVarsity Press, www.ivitypress.net/ivpress)—see chapter 1, "The Lutheran View" by Gerhard O. Forde

- *Ten Key Passages from the Bible* (Julie Sevig, Augsburg Fortress)

- *Grace: An Invitation to a Way of Life* (John Ortberg, Zondervan, www.zondervan.com)
- *Questions of Faith: Sin and Salvation* (video, EcuFilm, www.ecufilm.com)

Thanks for the nudge to look for these resources; this will get me started reading and viewing these in more depth!

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

A There are two books by Douglas John Hall: *God and Human Suffering* and (most recently) *The Cross in Our Context* (Augsburg Fortress). *God and Human Suffering* was very helpful to me as my mother lived with Alzheimer's for 10 years.

One of my colleagues introduced us to *The Cross in Our Context* at a recent meeting. I haven't read it, but both he and Bishop Strobel recommend it.

—Ruth Miller, director of ministry resources, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Wescosville

Creative ways to learn about global mission

How to fill the awkward gap between the end of Sunday school in May and the end of public school in June? St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Renton, Wash., adds a month-long celebration of global mission.

Children explore a different country each Sunday during the worship service. "Kids get a passport in the narthex, and then move between learning stations," explains Christian Education Director Kim Unti. "They visit a culture site, a craft site, a games site, and a Bible story site. Adult station coordinators and teen-helpers help children enjoy multigenerational activities at each stop."

Country packets from the ELCA Division for Global Mission are an essential resource for planning the annual event. Available online at www.elca.org/countrypackets, the packets offer information on 72 countries and companion churches.

St. Matthew's teachers use the packets to select and acquaint themselves with the countries to be highlighted. "The country packets help us get started," Kim says. "The background information, crafts, and recipes, are especially helpful and become part of a binder of materials that station leaders use to create the learning center."

June Sunday school offerings always go to support global mission. "Most summers we choose countries from different continents, but in 2002, we focused on Africa in order to lift up the ELCA World Hunger Appeal's Stand With Africa campaign," says Kim. "After visiting Tanzania, Ethio-

pia, Madagascar, and Senegal, we held an African festival on the fifth Sunday, and built a mud hut with a straw roof. It stayed up through the summer."

Country packets: updated

ELCA country packets offer a wealth of information on countries from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. Recently updated, most packets include:

- a country overview that provides informative statistics and commentary on the current economic and political situation;
- a history of Lutheran missionary activity and the companion Lutheran church;
- advocacy pages that outline issues of concern to the companion church and offer links to Web sites that explore the issues in greater depth;
- recipes, crafts, and songs;
- photos of the country and its people.

Use country packets to create adult forums, Sunday school activities, or to learn more about a country where your congregation sponsors a missionary.

Come to a Global Mission Event

To learn more about global mission consider attending a Global Mission Event (GME) this summer. Under the theme "Gathered by God's grace for the sake of the world," GMEs will be held July 14-17 at North Dakota State University, Fargo, and August 25-28 at the Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore. This year, Tsunami recovery is a focus of the GMEs.



Vidhya Rani

Tattered, abandoned fishing nets are strewn across the beaches of India. Fisherfolk are gathering the nets into piles, hoping to receive new nets they can use to return to the sea and reclaim their livelihood.

Everyone who attends one of the GMEs will receive a piece of these nets as a memento of the havoc and the hope created by the tsunami. The havoc has been well documented in media around the world. The hope—emerging from the generosity of the ELCA and regional Lutheran churches working with tsunami survivors—will be celebrated at the GMEs.

Ms. Vidhya Rani, Secretary of the Women's Desk of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in India (UELICI), will be a featured speaker and presenter. Video footage taken in February will highlight the UELICI's tsunami recovery work. You can see a two-minute video clip on the GME Web site at www.elca.org/gme. At that site you can learn more about the events and how to register.

"Touching nets handled by fisherfolk will help us really feel and experience their situation," say the Rev. Dr. Michael Weed and Leslie Weed-Fonner, ELCA regional representatives for Asia. "The same nets that once gathered fish will gather us into the community of the GMEs."

Learn about new program to prepare for confirmation



Most pastors can attest to a long-standing demand from congregations for a substantial, innovative and affordable confirmation program that is decidedly Lutheran. Augsburg Fortress is launching *Here We Stand*, its groundbreaking new confirmation program this year. As part of this launch, Augsburg Fortress announces a special introductory membership discount that offers pastors 50 percent off the normal first year's cost. Pastors can take advantage of this offer through August 31.

Here We Stand combines print and online resources in a flexible, easy-to-use curriculum, offering pastors a customizable

program that can meet their specific needs. Because of its flexibility, *Here We Stand* has wide applicability for congregations and is suitable for all demographics.

Recognized as solidly Lutheran in a recent field test involving congregations of various sizes and from different regions of the country, *Here We Stand* offers an approach to confirmation that is both theologically sound and teen-relevant.

For pastors who prefer more traditional print resources, the program features binders for three different units—Old Testament, New Testament, and Small Catechism—with 30 lessons each.

More cyber-savvy pastors can access *Here We Stand Online*, in addition to or in place of, the print binders. The online

resources also include planning tools, peer-to-peer sharing, audio and video clips, PowerPoint™ presentations, "How To" teaching support and more. Through peer-to-peer sharing, pastors access a virtual window into other congregations for an exchange of ideas and best practices with a community of pastors.

Also available at an additional cost is the innovative learner resource for the program, *The Lutheran Handbook*, a humorous approach to confirmation learning. The first unit of *Here We Stand*, *Small Catechism*, will be available July 15, both online and as a binder. The remaining units will be available in 2006. For more information, visit www.herewestandconfirmation.org, or call Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648.

Prayers requested

"Millions of people in our world find themselves living in countries that are not their own," says Robert Schmalzle, pastor of the international English language congregation of Uhuru Highway Lutheran Church, in Nairobi, Kenya. "These strangers can feel lost and confused—an experience that creates an openness to God."

When strangers arrive, Uhuru Highway members—many trained to be evangelical witnesses—swing into action. "With over 100,000 Christian converts a week occurring in Africa, the Holy Spirit is using all Christians as evangelists as never before," Schmalzle says. "The evangelization of strangers is certainly one of the most exciting aspects of being an international congregation."

On May 11, the *Prayer Ventures* petition invites you to pray for Pastor Schmalzle and his wife Denise. In addition to congregational duties, Bob works with the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church in the area of Christian education, and Denise does health education and outreach.

Ways to use Making Christ Known 2005

The 11th edition of *Making Christ Known* is now available. This very popular ELCA resource gives us reasons to be proud to be part of the ELCA. Through stories, pictures and graphics it tells who we are as the ELCA, what we do together through churchwide ministries, how these ministries are funded, and what the churchwide budget funds. It takes us to faraway places like Russia, Uganda, and Sudan, and to places very near like California, Maryland, Wisconsin, Oregon, Minnesota, and many more places near and far.

This resource has many uses for congregations. Send a copy to every household, cut it up and make displays or use on bulletins boards. Try using it in these settings:

- new member classes
- confirmation classes
- adult education classes
- stewardship emphasis
- temple talks
- sermon illustrations

See how the ELCA is involved in training pastors all over the world, supporting congregations that need to grow,

providing education for children in neglected neighborhoods, helping youth discern God's call, feeding the hungry, giving succor to victims of disasters and offering hope to the hopeless and homeless. Graphics show where your offerings go, and the printed version of "Making Christ Known" even has a crossword puzzle!

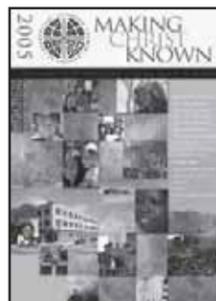
Order as many copies as you need. Call Augsburg Fortress at 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0001-9710-1; free, pay only shipping).

PowerPoint companion for Making Christ Known

Travel from Oregon to Guyana with many stops along the way in a PowerPoint presentation. The companion CD-Rom to the 2005 *Making Christ Known* magazine is an excellent resource to use in many settings.

You can request your free CD through the ELCA Resource Information Service by calling 800/638-3522 ext. 2457, and

asking for the *Making Christ Known* CD-Rom. Or find it at www.elca.org/dcm/stewardship/makingchristknown.html



Helping your congregation become more welcoming

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”
—Matthew 11:28

The rhyme, “Ginny and Timmy, sitting in a tree, k-i-s-s-i-n-g... First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes a baby in a baby carriage,” voices a common childhood wonder as we ponder who we might become. The sequence outlines a presumed order for each of us within life’s “normal” pattern.

As we grow older, however, we discover that there are many versions of this pattern and the sequence isn’t always predictable. For some, there’s a marked change in the course of events—the baby comes prior to a marriage, or there is love, but never a marriage, or there is marriage, but no need for a baby carriage.

For some people, the traditional reference to gender doesn’t apply as they encounter and engage in same-gender partnerships and relationships.

These realities sometimes become a part of our lives, our families, and our faith communities.

Aside from the different interpretations or opinions about any one of these relationships, there is a common issue at heart. They all reflect a deep desire for relationship, love, and community. People want to feel welcomed, accepted, and embraced for who they are. We all want to belong.

According to Matthew 28:19, the role of the church must be to go, without reserva-

tion, into the world and beneath each person’s life circumstance to provide opportunities for everyone to grow in a relationship with Jesus in a gracious, welcoming, and redeeming community.

Ways to offer hospitality and welcome

- Nurture a climate that honors Matthew 11:28: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” Assume that all who gather, including you, come with sin and a yearning for acceptance and forgiveness.
- Evaluate your programs and small group ministries for inclusivity. Consider the implications and limitations of their titles and content.
- When planning programs for specific groups, be aware of your potential audience. Don’t assume that the stages within the family-life cycle correspond to a traditional family configuration, age range, or orientation.
- Promote your programs and events in such a way that they will welcome anyone who may want to come, i.e., “*Mothers with Young Children*” could imply married and unmarried mothers. The success of these programs, however is dependent upon the authentic hospitality of your leaders and participants.
- Train leaders to be non-judgmental as they provide occasions for encountering

God’s love and saving grace and as they address real issues and life concerns.

- Embrace issues that are known to stress the hearts of members in your congregation and community. Provide resources for people to receive confidential support. Also, talk with individuals and families about the value of gathering together with others who may have a similar need for support.
- Pray for hearts of gracious hospitality so that our congregations do not withhold ministry, Word and Sacrament, from anyone who comes with a humble heart and faithful intent.

Resources on hospitality

- *Harnessing the Energies of Love: A Practical Guide for Active Befriending* by Willard and Marcia Lund. Contact Conflux Communications 608/238-3578.
- Resources for self-reflection and small group study on issues related to hospitality and shaping faith community: www.practicingourfaith.org/prct_healing.html and www.elca.org/evangelism/assessments/hospitality.html
- Bible studies and other guides for convening conversations related to sexuality and homosexuality are available at www.elca.org/faithfuljourney/resources.html
- *Welcoming the Stranger: A Hospitality Workshop*. Available online at www.womenoftheelca.org or call 800/328-4648 (ISBN 6-0001-6479-3; free).



The fact is, choices are never easy. Very often, our choices in life are dictated not only by our resources, but also by our values. At Thrivent Financial for Lutherans we understand, because we share your values. We can help you build enough financial resources to do the things you need to do, as well as things you’d like to do. To contact one of our financial representatives, call 800-THRIVENT, or visit www.thrivent.com

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Charitable gift annuity supports ministry

A charitable gift annuity is a wonderful way to join your desire to support ministry and your need for lifetime income. How does a charitable gift annuity work? You donate cash or stock. The ELCA gives you high, fixed, lifetime payments. A portion of each annuity payment is tax free; the older the age, the higher the tax free portion. A charitable deduction is also received the year of your gift. At the end of the annuity, what remains goes to the ELCA-related ministry of your choice. The benefits of gift annuities are many, but the greatest benefit is the satisfaction that others will be uplifted and ministry will be blessed through your generous gift.

Setting up a gift annuity is easy. For your complimentary gift annuity illustration, call the ELCA Foundation at 800/638-3522, ext.2970. Or visit www.elca.org/fo for the regional gift planner nearest you for additional information and assistance.

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Did you see the Action Packet?

www.elca.org/colactionpacket

- The contents of the May-June Action Packet included:
- *Daily Discipleship* online Bible study sample
 - *Daily Discipleship* flyer
 - *With Hands Uplifted: A Call to Prayer* information flyer
 - *Let us Pray* brochure
 - *Procession* newsletter