



July-August
2007

Volume 20
Number 4
www.elca.org

Seeds for the Parish

RESOURCE PAPER FOR LEADERS OF ELCA CONGREGATIONS

On a Mission: A Call to Discipleship NOW

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.
-Matthew 28:19-20a

Jesus' words are the propelling mission of the ELCA! That call is ever-fresh today as Christ's example leads us out into the world to be a dynamic church of disciples (of all ages) initiating God's mission in the world!

With the advent of the new millennium, the ELCA embarked on a journey that embodied this church's desire to "teach the faith." The *Call to Discipleship* was developed as a key expression of the ELCA's Initiatives for a New Century. Now, seven years later, it's time to re-issue the call. It's time to challenge one another to learn to "live in Christ." It's time to employ creative and profound ways and to develop effective models for discipleship that deepen spirituality and transform individuals and congregations!

What is discipleship?

As disciples we are called to follow Christ on a life-long journey, imitating the heart and mind of Christ. Disciples are not born; they are formed in a community that learns, encourages, prays and worships together. This process of spiritual growth and transformation continues as disciples become apostles (those that are sent) on God's mission to love, serve and witness in the home, community, workplace and world. God's presence and promise, given to us in Baptism and affirmed each day, calls us to a "vocation" of discipleship in our day-to-day encounters.

Faith practices

Our call to discipleship propels us to act as Christ would in our daily encounters with others and in our growing relationship with God. The ELCA names seven common practices modeled by Christ: prayer, study, worship, invitation, encouragement, service and charity.

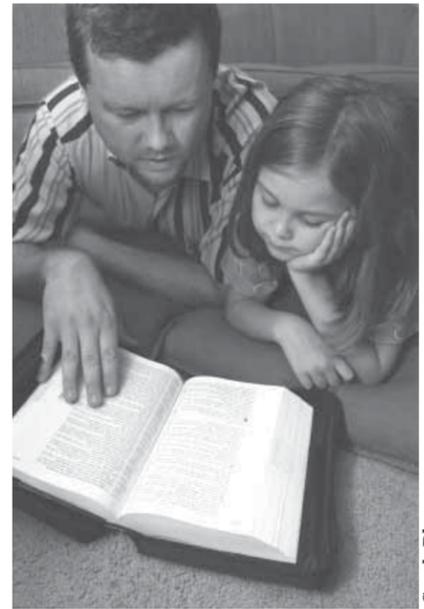
Faith practices are the tools of

discipleship, which deepen our relationship with Christ, equip us to live out our vocation and demonstrate how we are to love, serve and bear witness in the world.

What does a discipling congregation look like?

Most congregations "learn as they go," discovering what it means to be disciples in their particular context. "We'll try something and if it doesn't work, we try something else." They are open to new possibilities at the Spirit's nudging. Here are a just a few examples:

- While Christ Lutheran Church of Jefferson, Iowa, averages about 45 people at worship, this congregation typically tithes 15 percent in addition to special offerings. The people of Jefferson consider themselves disciples, sent to serve others. Their Lenten offerings support mission congregations and sustain a day camp for children from the community. Their "maternity ministry" provides a Christian children's book to each and every family taking a newborn home from the local hospital. Pastor Amy Fondroy Eich says, "We are humbly seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance as we seek to grow as disciples."
- Pastor Chip Borgstadt tells about the "adventure of discipleship" thriving at Alma Lutheran Church, in Mead, Neb. Three teams of congregational leaders developed Sunday school programming for all ages this year, with month-long intentional emphases on aspects of discipleship. Not every session succeeded, but that was the best part of the learning. Disciples found they could work together and share insights, especially when a lesson didn't go as planned.
- For more than 25 years, Principe De Paz, Miami, has trained lay leaders in an ongoing School of Discipleship. Learners experience the basics of



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Teach people of all ages to live as disciples of Jesus Christ, sent as witnesses to Jesus, in service to others and working for justice and peace in all the earth.

-ELCA Evangelism Strategy

discipleship grounded in study, prayer and spiritual formation. Through this school many ministries in Miami have been supported.

- Grace Lutheran Church, Loves Park, Ill., is on a Mission from God. The congregation is having fun with a "Blues Brothers" theme that calls the congregation to recommit to deeper discipleship through an integrated process involving study, prayer, worship and service.
- Worshippers at Peace Lutheran Church, Charlottesville, Va., are reminded of their invitation to step into God's mission through seven simple, yet profound, murals painted on the walls of the sanctuary. Each depicts a mark of discipleship that encourages the congregation as it follows the call of Jesus Christ.

Suggested Discipleship Resources

Here are resources to help with your call to discipleship:

Living Faith Congregational Planning Guide helps strengthen congregations as disciple-making centers.

The ELCA Christian education team has also produced eight annual *Program Planners* to support congregations and especially children's ministry leaders. Each program planner focuses on one aspect of discipleship through adult Bible studies, children's activities, intergenerational learning modules, and other practical materials. These are available at www.elca.org/christianeducation/programplanners/index.html

Living Faith Bible Study Series is a four-session Bible study on each of the seven faith practices. These small group resources are intended to equip disciples by deepening and broadening their understanding of each faith practice. Available at www.elca.org/christianeducation/discipleship/



faithpractices.html

Daily Discipleship is a weekly online small-group Bible study based on the common lectionary. Each session is available at www.elca.org/evangelism/dailydiscipleship/

Akaloo (Augsburg Fortress Publishers) is a theologically consistent approach to congregation-wide faith formation with a focus on making disciples of all ages. Visit www.akaloo.org

Early Signs of God's Design (ISBN# 978-6-0002-0871-4) is a modified spiritual

gifts assessment for children. Available by calling 800/328-4648 or at www.elca.org/christianeducation/programplanners/2005CEProgramPlanner/spiritualgifts.html

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Augsburg Fortress Publishers
Seeds for the Parish
Box 1209
Minneapolis, MN 55440-1209

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Daily Prayer in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

In addition to the 10 musical settings of Holy Communion, our new *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* contains other forms of worship. The inclusion of daily prayer for morning, evening and night provides rich material that supports and augments the Sunday service of Word and Sacrament throughout the week.

These liturgies are often used on Sunday or Wednesday evenings, especially during Advent or Lent. Some congregations have a simple service of morning or evening prayer every day of the year. These texts are also perfect to open or close a meeting and can be used for home devotions as well. The traditional structure of these services may be shaped simply or more elaborately, depending on the situation.

These services are different from Holy Communion with its primary emphasis on the proclamation of God's Word through sacraments. While God's Word is still central to these services, they tend to be more reflective and devotional.

Each service begins with its own unique opening sentences set to simple music. (These dialogues may also be spoken.) For more information on the musical execution for these services and all the liturgies in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, see the forthcoming *Musician's Guide to Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

Psalms are important to these services. In fact, in morning and evening prayer, several psalms may be sung, plus a hymn or other song appropriate to the occasion.



After the singing, God's Word is proclaimed. Then silence is indicated, allowing time for worshippers to reflect on the Scripture they have just heard. According to the rubric:

The reading of Scripture is followed by silence for reflection. Other forms of reflection may also follow, such as brief commentary, teaching, or personal witness; non-biblical readings; interpretation through music or other art forms; or guided conversation among those present.

The singing of a Canticle is a central part of these services. The song of Zechariah ("Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel"), Mary's song ("My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord") and the song of Simeon ("Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace") are the traditional options.

A time of prayer follows and a blessing brings these services to a close. A hymn and the sharing of peace may be added at the conclusion.

Musicians will note that the numbers from #224 – 236 in the Service Music section are alternate musical settings for these services. This repertoire can add a great amount of diversity to these liturgies.

An unfolding family of resources

Musical resources to support and supplement *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* will continue to become available over the coming years. The first round of resources will include:

- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* guitar accompaniments
- other accompaniments published in a two-volume format
- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* simplified keyboard accompaniments, perfect for use at home or in other smaller-scale settings
- *Musician's Guide to Evangelical Lutheran Worship*
- *Indexes to Evangelical Lutheran Worship*
- *The Sunday Assembly*, the first in a series of manuals for using *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* effectively

The next issues of *Seeds for the Parish* will examine some of these resources in greater detail.

Worship Jubilee 2007



It is not too late to register for Worship Jubilee 2007. This celebration of the future of worship renewal in the ELCA will be August 3-6 in Chicago at Navy Pier. Complete details are at www.elca.org/worship/jubilee

Diverse worship and music opportunities, varied presentations by speakers from across the church, workshops in over 60 topics, theological to practical, festivities, and fun await all who participate in this celebratory event, including

- anyone who worships and is committed to the future of worship in our church
- synod and congregational worship committees
- lay leaders
- those responsible for media art and sound in worship
- those responsible for the training of readers, acolytes, ushers, and other ministers of hospitality
- altar guild members and worship environment teams
- families
- church educators
- church musicians, volunteers, and professionals
- pastors and other rostered leaders.

The last Worship Jubilee was in 2000. There is not another one planned for the near future. You won't want to miss being a part of this adventure. Please join us!

Marty Haugen to Lead Workshop at Jubilee

Internationally-known liturgical musician and composer Marty Haugen will lead a workshop on "Musical Leadership in Challenging Times" at the Worship Jubilee this summer.

Music, especially congregational song, has always been an essential part of Lutheran celebration of Word and Sacrament. At this moment in history, confronted by many critical issues in the world and in our communities, how can those of us who prepare and lead the song of our assemblies speak the Word faithfully and powerfully within our tradition? Haugen's workshop will use the resources within *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* as a starting point for exploration.

Haugen currently serves as composer-in-residence at Mayflower Community Congregational Church (UCC) in Minneapolis and is adjunct professor at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, Minnesota.

For the past 25 years, he has presented hundreds

of workshops and concerts around the world.

With over 30 recordings and more than 400 separate printed editions available he has a number of published mass settings for Roman Catholic and Lutheran congregations, including Mass of Creation and Now the Feast and Celebration, as well as Holden Evening Prayer.

Haugen is the composer of Holy Communion Setting Two in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.



Seeds for the Parish

www.elca.org/seeds

Seeds for the Parish (ISSN 0897-5663) is published six times a year, bimonthly. It is distributed without charge to the professional staff and lay leaders of the congregations, synods and regions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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Seeds for the Parish

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Note: Not all the resources and program ideas listed in *Seeds for the Parish* have received official ELCA review or endorsement.

Seeds for the Parish is a member of the Associated Church Press.

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Seeds for the Parish

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Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival — a 25 Year Legacy

Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival (LSM) is commemorating 25 years of providing youth a unique summer academy program that focuses on both musical excellence and the church repertoire. Many influential Lutheran leaders have served as board or faculty members throughout the years and have made LSM what it is today. Referring to LSM, Dr. David Preus, a board member from 1995 to 1998, wrote, "...it is a superb summer program for outstanding high school musicians. In addition, it is one of the few remaining instances in which the ELCA and Missouri Synod Lutherans are working together and where young people from the two churches are developing deep friendships." Well over 5,000 students have been through Lutheran Summer Music's Academy. Many of those former students now serve in the church's music community.

This summer, students from 30 states and 3 foreign countries will participate in the four-week intensive learning and music-making academy. LSM students receive instruction by nationally and internationally recognized faculty and are nurtured and mentored by counseling and spiritual life staff. After a quarter century of providing excellence in music, LSM attracts some of the best faculty and staff available. LSM's curriculum is comprehensive and challenging. Students participate in large choral and instrumental ensembles. Each student also has primary lessons, attends music theory classes and participates in a variety of optional small ensembles, plus taking courses that emphasize church music. Each day ends with evening

worship led by the faculty chaplain. This year's Academy is at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota.

In the future LSM will continue to provide young musicians with a unique program that will enhance their knowledge and appreciation of the music traditions of the Lutheran Church. Plans for the expansion of music programs for younger students are also being developed. But one thing will never change—LSM's commitment to excellence as we provide a place for youth to explore both musical and spiritual



Lutheran Summer Music Photo

growth. Reflecting on their experiences, students and parents have expressed this commitment best:

"I have made new friends from all over the country, improved musically, and grown so much in my love for God and now have the confidence to follow my dreams." LSM Student

"Laura has grown deeply both musically and spiritually while at LSM. I have seen a big

change in her musicianship, but most importantly her time here was anchored in faith. This is a quality program on every level." LSM Parent

The Young Musicians Partnership

The Young Musicians Partnership is an initiative that connects individual congregations with LSM's mission as we pursue our "commitment to strengthening and expanding the church's heritage of excellence in music." As an organization, LSM has always had a strong congregational connection. Accordingly, LSM has established this program to provide more opportunities for young people to experience a high-quality music academy grounded in the music traditions of the Lutheran church. The Young Musicians Partnership promotes student scholarships for young musicians interested in attending the academy by matching congregation contributions three to one! In addition, each congregation registered in the program receives:

- a "partner only" member rate for congregational youth attending the academy
- a special marketing kit with fundraising ideas, posters, bulletin inserts, press releases and access to LSM musicians for local LSM events or concerts
- special "partner only" e-mail updates
- partner church recognition in LSM publications

After the academy, students receiving scholarships will be encouraged to take an active part in their congregation's worship and music ministry. For more information visit LutheranSummerMusic.org

New Multimedia Courses Available



Select Multimedia Resources of the ELCA is engaged in a major overhaul of its operations and is creating new courses that reflect changing technology, new faculty and educational

resources. Select is a primary resource for taped lectures with study guides and accompanying books for use in congregational adult study groups and courses for people seeking certification as Associates in Ministry (AIMs). All of Select's educational resources have now been digitized and stored on DVDs and are sold by credit card through a secure server at www.selectlearning.org

Most significant is a new course on systematic theology entitled Fundamentals of Christian Theology, that utilizes faculty from seminaries and colleges across the ELCA and consists of 12 lectures, a major study guide and two text books.

The new series of Select course offerings includes the following:

- Theology of the Cross in Contemporary Culture by Professor Vitor Westhelle at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Three lectures are accompanied by a major study guide and the new Fortress publication by Westhelle entitled *The Scandalous God: The Use and Abuse of the Cross*
- lectures on the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, utilizing some of the best contemporary Bonhoeffer scholars who apply his teachings to present day issues such as ecology, science and religion and war and peace
- a Bible study on themes in the book of Isaiah
- a major documentary on Lutheran theologians under Hitler
- a major set of presentations and

discussions on the church and human sexuality

- a program from the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin's lay school focusing on the teachings of Martin Luther, presented by Reformation and Luther scholars in the ELCA.

All of these courses are brand new and available at www.selectlearning.org or 877/675-6275.

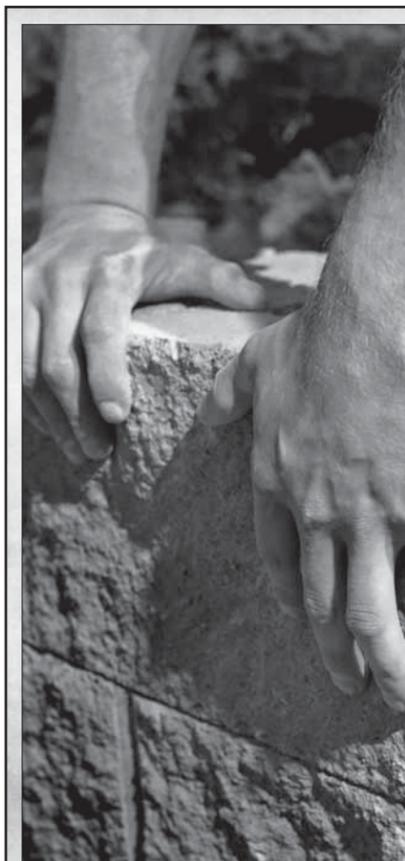
In addition, a new series of online courses will be offered for AIM candidates through the Fisher's Net beginning in September. Those courses, facilitated by academic mentors are:

- Fundamentals of Christian Thought (new

Systematic Theology course)

- Ethics in Lutheran Perspective
- Interpreting the New Testament
- From Jesus to Luther
- Augsburg Confession/Rediscovering the Catechism

Last year Select Multimedia Resources and the Fisher's Net online education portal of the ELCA merged into a new non-profit corporation designed to collaborate in the creation and development of multimedia educational resources. The new organization, Fisher's Net-Select, can be accessed at www.fishersnetselect.org



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We make your investment dollars work twice as hard for you. On the one side, the money you invest helps fund loans to build new congregations and renovate existing ones. On the other side, our excellent investment options help you save for life goals such as retirement and higher education. Taken together, you get the benefit of knowing your money is working hard for your church – and your family. To find out how you can invest, call 877.886.3522 or visit us at www.missioninvestmentfund.org.



877.886.3522

www.missioninvestmentfund.org



Ripe for Picking

Men Wanted!

Have you noticed a lack of young men in your church? Do you care deeply about this generation of young men, but don't now how to connect with them? Bring them to Road Trip 2007!

Road Trip is a gathering of men who will embark on a wilderness adventure in the Boundary Waters of northern Minnesota. They will explore life, talk about real stuff with real guys and venture into the wild! It will take place Sept. 21-23, 2007, at Wilderness Canoe Base (www.campwapo.org/wcb). There will also be a canoe trip into the Boundary Waters Sept. 17-21. You can come to either one or both events! Come ready for some awesome fellowship, food, teaching, fishing and canoeing! For more information visit www.lmmroadtrip.com

Sponsored by Lutheran Men in Mission (www.elca.org/lmm)

Spirituality Tour

Not your typical European tour, "Roots of Lutheran Spirituality," is a study seminar. The seminar to be held October 27-November 9, 2007, will emphasize pilgrimage more than tourism.

For a tourist, the action typically happens outside oneself in the exotic places one visits. A pilgrim also visits interesting sites, but with an eye toward the holy places, places with special spiritual significance.

Pilgrims typically take time at these sites to connect with that spiritual meaning as individuals and as a group. As a pilgrimage, "Roots of Lutheran Spirituality" goes to vital centers of renewal linked with the Lutheran Reformation, and then sets aside time for daily worship and regular reflection.

This study seminar will be led by Dick and Naomi Bruesehoff. For more information, go to www.elca.org/wittenberg/calendar.html and look for the link to the registration brochure.

Humor in the Pews

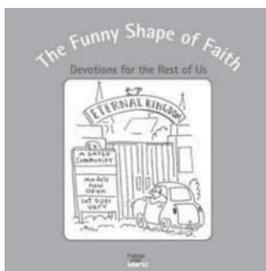
Explore the Bible, faith and Christian living with humor through a new book by cartoonist John Bush.

The Funny Shape of Faith: Devotions for the Rest of Us combines cartoons based on biblical texts with reflections and prayers

for any day of the year. Includes 158 devotions, each funny and faithful in their own particular way, and arranged in sixteen categories, such as: "The Problem with God's Love (Is that It's Also for People You Might Not Like So Much)" and "I Am the Lord your God, So Listen Up!" Perfect "devotional" for those of us who don't always do devotions—in other words, the rest of us.

John Bush grew up in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and spent nearly 30 years in the Twin Cities area. At age 52, he was diagnosed with stage 4 non-smoker's lung cancer. After fighting hard for 10 months, with his humor and enthusiasm, he lost the battle in late July 2006. Before his death, Bush was excited, grateful and humbled to know that his drawings would be pulled together as a collection.

The Funny Shape of Faith is available, for \$14.99, from Augsburg Fortress at www.augsburgfortress.org Please use item number 978-0-8066-5761-5.



There's Still Time to Enter Design Contest



In honor of the 20th anniversary of the ELCA, the Office of the Presiding Bishop has announced a design competition for gifts to be presented on behalf of the ELCA to global and ecumenical guests. The gifts may be of any kind, but must be easy to replicate inexpensively. Since they may be packaged for overseas distribution, artists are encouraged to be mindful of weight and fragility. Options include, but are not limited to, crosses, calligraphy, icons and lithographs.

Specifications: Designs may not be larger than 12" in height or width, and 1" thick.

Eligibility: Artists must be members of the ELCA. One entry per artist.

Deadline: Sept. 1, 2007, to submit a photo or slide of the entry; originals will be requested of finalists. Submit entries to:

Myrna Sheie
Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631

Middle East Immersion

January 8-26, 2008, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary offers a cross-cultural immersion in Israel and Palestine.

The immersion group will visit biblical sites all the way from Mount Hermon in the north to the Red Sea in the south. The group will also meet with The Rev. Mitri Raheb of the Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, the staff of Augusta Victoria Hospital, the pastors of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Jerusalem, Archbishop Abuna Elias Chacour in Galilee, Druze villagers in the Golan Heights, Jewish settlers and kibbutzniks. Three hours academic credit are possible at the M.A.R., M.Div., S.T.M. and D.Min. levels.

Contact Dr. Monte Luker for details at



Augusta Victoria Hospital

LLuker@mac.com or 803/787-0864. Pastors and lay professionals are encouraged to join this immersion group for continuing education credit.

Lutheran Creative Writers Wanted

If you're a writer of fiction, non-fiction or poetry, mark your calendar now for the first-ever gathering of Lutheran-affiliated creative writers. "Called to Create: A Lutheran Festival of Writing" at Luther College will bring together creative writers who have been shaped by the Lutheran tradition. Through readings, lectures, panel discussions and open-mike events, the festival aims to support and encourage serious writing in the Lutheran world.



"Called to Create" will take place November 2-4 at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Confirmed keynote speakers include National Book Award winner Walt Wangerin, author of *Jesus: A Novel* and *The Book of God*, and National Book Award finalist Rene Steinke, author of *The Fires and Holy Skirts*. Other participants include Paul Shepherd, writer in residence at Florida State University and winner of the 2004 Mary McCarthy Prize; Marilyn Nelson, Poet Laureate of Connecticut; and poets Joyce Sutphen and Gracia Grindal.

A chief goal of the conference is to cultivate a spirit of community among Christian writers and to learn from each other's walks of faith and writing experiences.

For more information about the festival, visit www.lutheranwriters.org

Toddler Magazine Launched

Are you a parent? grandparent? godparent? Aunt or uncle? If you're looking for a way to show your love to a little child in your life, now is a good time to subscribe to *The Little Lutheran*, a new toddler publication brought to you by *The Lutheran*.

This newest publication of the ELCA launches with the July/August issue and features 24 sturdy pages of stories, colorful pictures, activities, prayers, songs and more that arrives in a child's

name 10 times a year. Order a subscription for that child under six at the single-issue price of \$24.95. For discounted multi-year subscription rates, visit www.thelittlelutheran.org call 1/800-328-4648 or e-mail: subscriptions@augburgfortress.org

To order bulk subscriptions for use in your nursery or preschool or for toddler worship bags, you may do so at the price of \$12.95 each for orders of six or more by calling the 800 number above.

Ripe for Picking

Team Ministry Worship

Team ministry is alive and well in the ELCA, but who couldn't use a little help along the way? More than 13 percent of the congregations of the ELCA are served by a pastor and one or more full- or part-time program staff members. This means that between 30 and 50 percent of ELCA members belong to congregations where there is multiple staff.

A Multiple Staff Workshop for parish teams (pastors, rostered leaders, full- and part-time program staff) is scheduled for Sept. 10-12, 2007, at the Weber Center, Adrian, Michigan. Cost for the three-day event is \$395/person including materials, meals and lodging. In the course of the workshop participants will receive information specifically applicable to team ministry such as:

- how teams are structured
- how teams should function
- being a colleague in ministry
- leadership style assessment
- building a personal and professional team covenant



The workshop facilitators are: Walter Arnold, Suzanne Dillahunt and Herm Kuhlmann, who collectively have more than 70 years experience in team ministry. The workshop leaders are also available to conduct the workshop for parish teams in your synod. For more information contact:

Herm Kuhlmann
312 Eastwood Ave.
Westerville, OH 43081-1729
614-891-7233 or hkuhlmann@columbus.rr.com

If you are in Regions 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8, you may contact your bishop for information.

Anti-Racism Progress Report



Since 1988, when the ELCA came into existence, there has been a demonstrated commitment to engage in anti-racism work at all levels of the church. To further anti-racism work in the church, the Multicultural Ministries unit of the ELCA has now convened a two-day working group in Chicago to begin formulating a plan for creating the European American Lutheran Association (EALA). The EALA will join the American Indian

and Alaska Native, African American, Black, Arab and Middle Eastern, Latino and Asian and Pacific Islander Lutheran associations.

In calling this association into existence, the ELCA continues the efforts of the five current ethnic associations, the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the predecessor church bodies of the ELCA. The EALA is tentatively scheduled to come into official existence with an organizing conference in the summer of 2008. A preliminary informational and organizational gathering will take place in Los Angeles as part of the Spirit of Wholeness in Christ: A Racial Ethnic Multicultural Event, July 12-15, 2007.

The EALA will consist of people who identify themselves as European Americans who agree that racism is present in society and its institutions. The association will seek to provide communication and resources to move people and institutions toward an anti-racist identity.

For more information please contact The Rev. Sherman Hicks, ELCA Multicultural Ministries at 800/638-3522, ext. 2841, or Sherman.hicks@elca.org

New Book on Sound Congregational Administration

While leadership books abound, practical advice on administering and nurturing a congregation's programs, finances, staff and assets is rare.

Church Administration: Programs, Process, Purpose, a new comprehensive guide written by Robert Bacher and Michael Cooper-White lays a biblical and theological foundation for leading congregations. It offers a wealth of practical information and examples of "best practices" in key areas.

Topics include governance and working with boards and committees, planning, personnel supervision, office management, budget development and financial administration, teamwork and networking, as well as strategies for good com-

munication, dealing with conflict, and steering a faith community through the increasing legal complexities that impinge upon any religious entity. The coauthors bring to bear their combined experience of over a half-century in various administrative callings, as well as insights gained in consulting with hundreds of congregations and church organizations.

Robert Bacher is former assistant and executive for administration to the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Michael Cooper-White is president of Gettysburg Seminary.

To order call Fortress Press at 1-800-328-4648 or visit the Web site at www.fortresspress.com

Item Number: 978-0-8006-3742-2, Price: \$25.00.

Hunger Newsletter

Are you looking for articles, facts or information about the disposition of your congregation's donations to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal? Go to www.elca.org/hunger/newsletter for the latest issue of *LifeLines*, a free quarterly publication. View the latest newsletter or browse recent back issues, which include articles on Stand With Africa, the Millennium Development Goals, HIV/AIDS, hunger in the United States and more.



If you would like to be placed on the newsletter mailing list, e-mail your name and mailing address to hunger@elca.org with the words "New LifeLines subscription" in the subject line or e-mail body.

Grow to Go! 2007-2008 Christian Education Program Planner

For Sunday school coordinators and teachers, *Grow to Go* is the latest addition to the constellation of resources supporting the Call to Discipleship theme. The call compels disciples of all ages to boldly witness to God's creative and loving activity in the world. *Grow to Go* will help leaders equip all generations, but especially children, to be "disciplemakers" as they witness and serve in the world.

Features include:

- an adult Bible study
- an intergenerational learning module and skit suitable for Rally Day, which includes a spotlight on Albert Schweitzer
- a leader installation litany
- a home and family discipleship calendar
- teacher enrichments
- global mission connections

Visit www.elca.org/christianeducation/

Granting Hope



About 10 percent of your congregation's gifts to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal support specific anti-hunger projects in the U.S. These serve people who are hungry or living in poverty in your synod, state or even your neighborhood. In 2007, there were 350 grant recipients that received a total of \$913,300 in three categories: relief, development and organizing.

At Granting Hope, the online catalog of the domestic hunger grants program, you can read descriptions of all current grant recipients and download an application for the current grants cycle (beginning mid-July). You can also search for grant recipients by synod or by state. Try copying and pasting information for your synod or state in a bulletin as a way of asking people to give to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and emphasizing the importance of supporting people at home and internationally. Use this information in an upcoming church newsletter or at a synod assembly.

For more information visit www.elca.org/grantinghope

What's New on the World Wide Web

Churchwide Assembly 2007

Want to learn about the Tenth Biennial Churchwide Assembly in Chicago? Go to www.elca.org/assembly to find out about matters that will come up for a vote, the host city, and two important elections.

Assembly participants and visitors are encouraged to register online. It's fast and easy. Voting members and advisory members were sent a login number that will be required for online registration. If you prefer to register by mail, forms can be downloaded from the registration site.

This Web site is open to everyone, providing information about the assembly.

Online Atlas of the Millennium Development Goals

Launched by the World Bank <http://devdata.worldbank.org/atlas-mdg/> translates data on some of the world's development challenges into maps designed for a wide audience. The maps, which are derived from the Bank's World Development Indicators database, depict the progress toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Sexual exploitation addressed in the May issue of *Café* (www.boldcafe.org)

The award-winning e-zine for the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) *Café* addressed commercial sexual exploitation in its May 2007 issue. Elizabeth Hunter, associate editor, *The Lutheran* and former editor of *Seeds for the Parish*, wrote the cover article, "Human retail: Commercial exploitation and the everyday."

Hunter said she worried that the sometimes-not-so-subtle messages one receives from magazine covers in the grocery story checkout line could easily lead a naive teenage girl into sexual exploitation. Hunter listed "Seven things you should know about commercial sexual exploitation."

Women of the ELCA adopted a resolution in 2005 to "continue to provide information and promote resources that assist women in combating commercial sexual exploitation, both domestically and globally." It produced an eight-page resource, "A Day Full of Light: Ending Commercial Sexual Exploitation," as an introduction to commercial sexual exploitation or sex trafficking.



Lutheran Partners Magazine now available on the Web

Complete issues of *Lutheran Partners* magazine are now available in PDF format at www.elca.org/lutheranpartners/complete/. These PDFs contain everything the printed version does: covers, ads, masthead, and all the articles, in a convenient, readable form.

Would you like to be notified when the new issue of *Lutheran Partners* has been posted to their Web site? Subscribe to their E-Updates at: www.elca.org/lutheranpartners/update/

Clean it up Before Donating!

Before donating or selling your old computer, it is extremely important to clean the hard drive. Deleting files by using the recycle bin is simply not good enough because it does not actually remove them. Files containing sensitive data, such as address and telephone numbers or even photo albums, will remain on your computer unless they are overwritten.

Here are a few tips on how to prepare your computer for donation:

1. Back up the information you want to use on CDs or an external mass storage device.

You will need to analyze what needs to be transferred and what can actually be transferred. Keep in mind that you cannot transfer programs, only data. Programs must be reinstalled on your new computer by using the program's CDs. Remember that once you clean your hard drive you will no longer be able to retrieve your files or data.

2. Check your computer to make sure all sensitive information such as your address book is deleted. You may also want to uninstall un-used programs to free up disk space.

3. Do a Web search for software designed specifically to clean your hard drive. Com-

puter expert Kim Komando suggests using the free program "Eraser" and advises, "This program is a handy tool that deletes files permanently. It overwrites a file's space several times over with meaningless data. The result is a deleted file nearly impossible to recover."

4. Once you locate a "shredder" or "cleaning" program you need to download and install it on your computer.

5. Run the program on your hard drive. It will overwrite deleted files many times making sure that everything has been erased.



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/communication/resourcecenters.html

Q What's the best curriculum to help adults learn about managing money?

A I like a series from Morehouse Publishing titled *Living with Money* (www.morehousepublishing.org/), which is a powerful ecumenical adult education program that helps groups explore the subject of money from a spiritual perspective. In four or more sessions, this series shines the light of faith on the subject of money, helping participants develop a balanced, wholesome, rewarding "money life." It comes with a thorough leader guide and participant guides.

—Catherine Fink, director
Heilig Resource Center
Salisbury, N.C.

A Check with your synods to find their stewardship resource person who could do a presentation for free. Lutheran Social Services also has some wonderful resource persons who might be available to speak to congregational groups. ELCA Planned Giving staff should also be contacted.

—Kay Richter, pastor
Calvary Lutheran Church
Two Rivers, Wis.

A I've heard favorable comments about Dave Ramsey's Financial University (www.daveramsey.com) but have not had the opportunity to personally examine it.

—Karen Kaufman, director
NE Ohio Synod Resource Center
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio

A Although the resources are not faith-based, materials from your state extension and 4-H offices are family-friendly and always well done! Start by looking for financial resources under the category of "home and family."

—Linda Staats, director
Milestones
The Youth & Family Institute
Bloomington, Minn.

A *Share, Save, Spend* written by a former Thrivent guy, Nathan Dungan. It is set up for adults and children to learn defining wants and needs together, understanding advertising's effect on how we use money and setting up a sharing and savings program for one's finances. The DVD that accompanies the workbooks is pretty eye opening.

—Mike Woods, pastor
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
La Crescent, Minn.

A *Money Leadership for Thriving Congregations* is a resource produced by the ELCA. It focuses on seven areas: giving, saving, spending, debt reduction, financial planning, money leadership in the congregation and role of money in congregational family systems.

—Mim Woolbert
ELCA Communication Services
Churchwide Office
Chicago

A I recently purchased a game called "Your Money, Is It a Game?" by Walter Swanson (www.moneyisitagame.com).

I was impressed by it because you are to play the game once, then work through the pages in the workbook. After discussing it together, play with your family. It also looks great for an adult class! Many of our young adults and young married families will learn a great deal from this. Also, Zondervan publishes *Good Sense Budget Course* (www.zondervan.com). This course is a great way to help young families pay down college debt and consciously make choices for family building.

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

The Rev. Katrina Foster Wins Stewardship Award

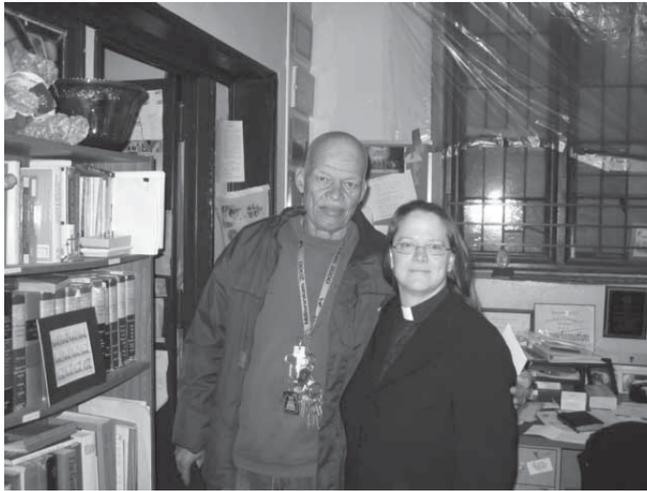
Pastor Katrina Foster clearly remembers the day she finally “got it” about stewardship. “God knocked me on the head with the message that I had to do something about my own stewardship, starting with my finances,” smiled the 2007 recipient of the Dr. Richard L. Peterman Good Steward Award. The award is given annually to a pastor who has a strong stewardship education ministry.

It wasn't until Pastor Foster got her personal finances in order that she felt comfortable in leading the congregation to financial health at Fordham Lutheran Church in the Metropolitan New York Synod ELCA. The congregation is an urban ministry in an emerging neighborhood.

Pastor Foster had managed to get herself into \$24,000.00 of credit card debt. “I knew I was in trouble, and I met with a Christian financial planner. We discussed changing the way money had power over me, and tithing. As I started to rethink my relationship to money, I inherited \$28,000.00 from my grandmother. I considered several investments. Then I laughed to myself, ‘You know, as much damage as I did with less money, I could be dangerous with more money.’”

So Pastor Foster started tithing and viewing money in a healthy way. She made a financial plan for herself and the congregation. She gave \$1,400.00 to God through the congregation. She gave another \$1,400.00 to a college fund for her friend's daughter. She said, “I felt so blessed. I was surprised to learn that the one who benefits from tithing includes the one who tithes.”

The average weekly worship attendance at that time at Fordham Lutheran Church was 20; their



Pastor Katrina Foster

annual offerings were \$8,000.00. “I knew that it was my leadership responsibility to start talking about money and also the stewardship of worship, family, time, talents, and life itself. Stewardship is about living a life that is pleasing to God.”

She began working with the synod stewardship specialist, the Rev. Bob Wollenberg, who coached her and introduced Pastor Foster to some resources. When the congregation received a \$30,000.00 bequest, “we tithed it with \$3,000.00 to missions and also funded a youth minister. This was a turning point. The congregation discovered a new spiritual freedom. This freedom showed up as freedom from fear and freedom from scarcity thinking.”

Today, less than 10 years later, Fordham Lutheran Church has an average weekly worship attendance of 70 and anticipates \$80,000.00 in offerings this year. A new giving initiative is envisioned to build two towers—for a community center and a new worship center. The congregation also supports three ministries in Tanzania, a prison ministry and gives a growing donation each year to mission support through the synod.

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Bouman, Bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod ELCA, said, “Pastor Foster connects living faith and gratitude to God for gospel grace. She also connects the way we decide to use money, and reminds the congregation of the purposes for which God gives these gifts—namely, to give out of gratitude as we reach out to the community and to the world.”

Pastor Foster preaches on stewardship every month and invites tithers to witness. Over 60 percent of the members of the congregation tithe, and Pastor Foster prays regularly that God will increase the number of people who tithe, and that God will enable everyone to grow in giving. Fordham Lutheran Church is a beacon of hope to people. Many in the congregation tell of stopping cycles of abuse, living fruitfully, getting work and growing stronger in faith because “God is turning their lives around.”

“We don't have money problems,” Foster says, “We have faith issues.”

Prayer Ventures Supports Missionaries to Russia

Missionary Bradn Buerkle is fairly sure he's the only ELCA pastor who has served all of his call in Russia. The 2002 graduate of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary was an intern and then pastor at St. Nikolai Lutheran Church in Novgorod. Since 2003 he has taught at the Novosaratovka Theological Seminary, a very small Lutheran seminary outside St. Petersburg.

Bradn and family (wife Natalia and sons Matvey and Martin) serve the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Russia and Other States (ELCROS). Its congregations span a huge area—“about one-seventh of the world's width,” he notes.

The history of St. Nikolai, where Bradn was pastor, is fairly typical of ELCROS congregations. Founded in 1821 by German speakers, it was suppressed in 1936 by the Soviet government and its building was destroyed. In the 1990s, congregational life began again, and a new congregation was organized in 1996. Says Bradn, “the church is

in the difficult process of moving from an ethnically based organization to a true fellowship of believers united by a common faith and not necessarily a common cultural heritage.”

At Novosaratovka Seminary Bradn teaches, mentors students, provides pastoral care, leads worship and preaches. He also coordinates the internship program and teaches two-week summer extension classes to men and women in ministry from all parts of ELCROS. “The formation of a new generation of leaders for the Lutheran church in the former Soviet Union is slowly but surely coming to pass,” Bradn says.

On July 26, you can pray for the Buerkle family and ELCROS in *Prayer Ventures*, the guide to daily prayer for the ELCA's global and outreach ministries. *Prayer Ventures* may be downloaded from www.elca.org/prayerventures. A print version may be requested by calling 800/638-3522, ext. 2642.



Pastor Bradn Buerkle in St. Catherine's Swedish Lutheran Church

LSA Awards Honor Social Ministry Organizations

Five social ministry organizations were honored April 20 for flexibility and creativity in collaboration in the 2007 Lutheran Services in America Awards for Excellence. The theme for the 2007 awards—strategic collaboration—recognized that today's complex challenges require multi-faceted solutions.

Awards for Excellence are given annually to help build a resource bank of ideas, and to celebrate innovation and excellence among Lutheran health and human service organizations. “What is striking in these awards is how our members engage the unique resources in their communities to respond to community or organizational need,” said Jill Schumann, President and CEO of Lutheran Services in America.

Lutheran Homes, Inc. and Lutheran Social Services (LSS) of Indiana received the award in the category of a Lutheran Social Ministry Organization Working with a Social Ministry Organization for their efforts in building an early learning center on the grounds of an assisted living campus. The program offers daily inter-

generational programs that develop positive interaction between older adults and children.

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) took home an award in the category of a Social Ministry Organization Working with Multiple Partners for their prison ministry program. Through the program, inmates learn construction trades by building housing components for Habitat for Humanity and other not-for-profit homes. In addition to Habitat for Humanity, LSSI collaborates on the project with the Illinois Department of Corrections, federal correctional facilities in Illinois and other not-for-profit organizations.

Lutheran Social Services (LSS) in New England received the award for a Social Ministry Organization Working with a Congregation. Faith Lutheran Church and LSS New England formed Lutheran Creative Living and built private apartments for supported living of people with developmental disabilities.

Lutheran Counseling Services received the award for a Social Ministry Organization Working with Judicatories for their work with the FL-Bahamas Synod (ELCA) and FL-GA District (LCMS) to create ministerial assistance service for the health and well-being of church workers

and their families.

Lutheran health and human services organizations that are members of Lutheran Services in America are eligible to enter the awards.

The LSA Conference was held April 18-20, 2007, in Baltimore. About 500 people attended, representing 90 Lutheran social ministry organizations, 34 states plus Washington, D.C., the Virgin Islands, Canada and Germany. Participants included 59 people from national church offices, judicatories, congregations or other Lutheran partners.

Lutheran Services in America creates opportunities for people in thousands of communities throughout the United States and the Caribbean as an alliance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). The nearly 300 Lutheran health and human service organizations offer healing and hope to one in every 50 Americans through services such as health care, housing, adoptions, disability and aging support.

To find a service close to you go to www.lutherservices.org/ServiceProvidersSearch.asp where you can search by location or organization name.



Your Life as Vocation

In February 2004, the Board of Trustees of St. Norbert College, a college affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church in Wisconsin, held a retreat to talk about the vocation of being a college trustee. Verbal comments from many of the trustees indicated that the idea of equating being a trustee with fulfilling a vocation was entirely new. As one trustee mentioned in a plenary session, "prior to today I would have never put 'vocation' and 'trustee' into the same sentence."

I suspect the trustees of St. Norbert College were surprised by the suggestion to think about their lives as a vocation because, like many American Christians, they thought that only clergy or other church workers have a vocation or calling from God. This is an all-too-typical perspective for American Christians, Lutherans included. Like all Americans, Christians do sometimes use the term vocation in a narrow sense to refer to technical education, as in "vocational" high schools. But for the most part, Christians think of clergy and other church workers when they think of the word "vocation."

Like the trustees at St. Norbert, American Christians are discovering that the idea of vocation has a deeper and broader meaning. God calls (vocation means "calling") all of us to live lives of meaning and purpose by taking our place in serving the common good, whether it be as a college trustee, a parent, a student or a bus driver. This deeper idea of vocation is also affecting secular circles in our society (where a deeper sense of calling is discussed, but without reference to God as the one who calls), but it is the Christian community that is providing the impulse. Witness the widespread popularity of *The Purpose Driven Life*, which addresses vocation from one Christian



Stock Photo

... a shoemaker fulfills his service to others primarily by making good shoes.

perspective. To cite another example, one of the hottest speakers on the convention lecture circuit in recent years is Parker Palmer, who writes and speaks regularly about vocation from his perspec-

tive as a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers).

Our Lutheran heritage is one of the founts of the broader and deeper idea of vocation. In fact, Luther's teaching about vocation is the primary source. For Luther, vocation is an outgrowth of the Gospel. "If the Gospel tells me that I am saved by grace through faith on account of Christ, and that I need do nothing to earn my salvation, what am I to do as a Christian with my life?" Vocation is the answer. Lutherans teach that God calls all Christians through baptism to serve their neighbors through all that they do in their lives out of a concern for others. This is the meaning of Jesus' call that his followers will "take up their cross" in order to "find their lives by losing them." That is, we are to understand our lives as conditioned primarily by the needs of others instead of our own. That is the radical call of God in Christ through the Gospel.

Responding to this radical call does not require that we take drastic or dramatic action every day of our lives. As Luther famously taught, a shoemaker fulfills his service to others primarily by making good shoes. Nonetheless, the challenge to live for the neighbor remains exactly that—a challenge. How we as Christians respond to this challenge is a complex and difficult task in a complex and difficult world, but it is also the rewarding lifelong task of discipleship. An important starting point for thinking through this complexity is the simple realization that we all have multiple vocations, or callings from God. For example, I am a pastor, but I am also a churchwide staff member, husband, father, president of my condo association, a citizen of the city of Chicago and a member of a synod committee. As the trustees of St. Norbert's discovered, all the tasks and work we take up are arenas, into which we are called by God to serve others and the common good, whether or not the tasks are for pay.

Lifelong learning in the faith is clearly a vital tool for responding to the Gospel by confronting and applying the idea of vocation to our lives. Recent interest in re-appraising the idea of vocation has resulted in an explosion of materials including:

- resources from Augsburg Fortress, including the volume in the Lutheran Voices series by D. Michael Bennethum, *Listen! God is Calling: Luther Speaks of Vocation, Faith, and Work* (www.augsburgfortress.org)
- the work done by many colleges, including eight of our ELCA-related colleges, through the Program for Theological Exploration of Vocation. See the "resources" section at www.ptev.org A bibliography of movies from the viewpoint of vocation is included.
- Luther Seminary's program "Centered Life," which offers a wide array of resources and opportunities for linking faith and daily life. See www.centeredlife.org
- the pamphlet, *Theological and Biblical Perspectives on the Laity*, by Herman Stuempfle, a readable overview of the idea of vocation. See www.elca.org/dailylifeministry/theology/theology02.html for excerpts. The pamphlet is available in hardcopy free from the Vocation and Education Unit, ELCA.
- the essay by Dr. Timothy Wengert of the Lutheran School of Theology at Philadelphia, *Martin Luther's "Priesthood of All Believers" and Other Pious Myths*, at www.valpo.edu/ils/publications.php and two books, *Vocation: Discerning Our Calling in Life*, by Douglas Schuurman, of St. Olaf College and the old but definitive book by Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*.

You can find many more. Jump in!

—The Rev. Mark N. Wilhelm
Associate Executive Director for Educational Partnerships and Institutions/Director for Theology in Daily Life
ELCA Vocation and Education

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