



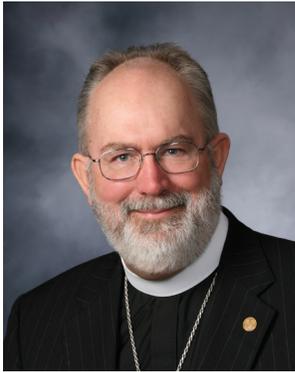
# The Spirit

Volume 29, Number 6

News for the congregations of the Northwest Washington Synod of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

July 2012

## Beyond The Local Congregation by The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, Bishop



Who is the Synod? What does the Synod do? These are the questions that begin adult forums when I visit with congregations on Sunday morning. As we approach the 25th anniversary of the forming of the Northwest Washington Synod, it is a matter of

some concern to me that we still do not have a clear identity with many members of the synod.

From a constitutional perspective, the synod is made up of the baptized members of the congregations located on the territory of this synod. The synod is made up of approximately 43,000 baptized members of the congregations and mission starts which are in this area. That means that you are the synod.

What we do is a more complicated question. Members of this synod serve on local committees and boards for numerous organizations throughout the region. Members of this synod financially support their congregations and a variety of institutions and agencies either affiliated with the church or not. Members of the synod have elected a bishop and a Synod Council; these members of the synod do specific types of work on behalf of the synod, things that are mandated by our constitution and the larger church.

Most importantly, the Northwest Washington Synod is engaged in starting new ministries and helping existing ministries grow. Currently this synod has 16 ministries that are being explored

or that are officially under development. These are primarily in ethnic communities other than the dominant northern European culture. Our Candidacy Committee works with over 50 candidates for one of the rosters of this church; we are raising up leaders for the future of the whole church.

When congregations are in leadership transition, the synod staff works to assist by appointing interim pastors or by working with call committees to surface names for consideration in the call process. When invited, we work with congregations to help them resolve conflict. Our Director for Evangelical Mission, Pastor Jerry Buss, works with stewardship education and planning. Jerry also works with congregations with mission planning, redevelopment and ministry extension grants. The Director for Evangelical Mission is a position funded by the churchwide expression of the ELCA, deployed to work out of the synod office. The Synod Council has established liaison members to each congregation in the synod. I want to thank these leaders for their work in connecting the activity of the local congregation to the larger church.

There is much more we could be doing together as the Northwest Washington Synod. In the coming months we will be looking at the mission of the synod, your mission beyond the local congregation. What will you do as a member of the synod?

## Thank You!

by The Rev. Jane Prestby, Pastor at  
Kent Lutheran Church in Kent

Members from the South Sudan Community Restoration Mission Team (Kent Lutheran Church in Kent) would like to thank everyone for their prayers and donations. This mission trip in February 2012 of nine people consisted of education efforts, clothing donations, microenterprise donations (a water and sanitation program) and a trial of a composting latrine.

We met some unexpected needs for medical care and supplies (fully stocking the community clinic) and established the first (albeit tiny) library in Malwal. Our library is a large weather-proof bin with a number of children's books and early reader books.

We held regular "school" sessions that Pastor Steven Gach Gatluak, the pastor in charge of the Malwal Parish (Presbyterian), plans to continue for both children and young adults.

We distributed enough clothing for 197 children in the village, this was mostly "pillowcase dresses" and "breeches for boys"



*One of the girls in Malwal who received a "pillowcase" dress from the Kent Lutheran team.*

from the *Little Dresses for Africa* program.

Due to our limited access to proper materials, we were unable to complete the composting latrine (available materials were not strong enough or not in enough supply).

Our biosand water filter molds were ordered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. When we arrived in Malwal, we discovered two problems. First, the molds had been built incorrectly using steel

so soft that they would need to be used near welding facilities for repairs. Second, the soil in Malwal simply did not yield enough rocks for us to be able to mix a stable concrete mix.

This was very disappointing to the team. However, God provided for us by introducing us to a well engineer who had just completed a well in the neighboring village for a very reasonable fee. We had also met someone in Ethiopia who is interested in starting a biosand program near the community college—where the molds could be repaired and re-used.

The team also provided other items: one mile of fishing nets, which will provide a stable protein source and a marketable surplus for the community; a corn grinder to both the Malwal and Bethlehem communities; and a sewing machine and some fabric to begin construction of mosquito nets.

The team is praying and contemplating God's plan for our continued relationship with Malwal.



Carrying water back to the village.

**The Spirit**, a publication of the Northwest Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), is intended for members, leaders, and clergy of synod congregations and organizations. Congregations are encouraged to copy **The Spirit** and include it in their own newsletters. **The Spirit** can be downloaded from the Synod website.

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