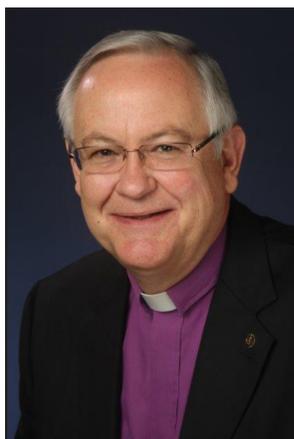


The Spirit

Mr. Fix-It

by the Rev. Kirby Unti, Bishop



I am a “wanna be” fix-it guy. Over the years I have prided myself in being able to figure out why something is not working and come up with a solution. I have also had my fair share of disasters like the time I blew up our oven trying to fix its clock and timer. (Safety tip: It is always a good thing to kill the power to any appliance that you are working on.)

This summer my challenge has been to get the trailer lights working on our boat trailer. Salt water is not a friend of electrical parts. The problem started the first with the truck itself. Kim said to me one day, “Have you noticed one of the lights is staying on even with the keys removed?”

Sure enough we have a series of LED lights just under the tail gate and one of them was on even through all of the lights were turned off. It took the help of my diesel mechanic to realize it was a problem with the flashing module. The bummer off the shelf costs a \$100.00. Fortunately my friend found one for half the price.

Knowing the lights were now working on the truck, I hooked up the trailer only to discover that the left turn indicator trailer light was not working. My mechanic friend explained to me how to try and test the light by taking power off of a known working light. The idea was a good one until I pushed the probe into the socket only to have all of the lights go out including the lights on the truck.

I was now having a few words with Jesus about this dilemma, knowing full well I probably blew up the \$50.00 flasher module. I did not sleep well that night.

The job would have to wait for my mechanic. The next day he arrived and immediately located the 15 cent fuse under the hood that I had blown and quickly determined that a wire had come loose in the main harness. Both were an easy fix.

Once again Mr. Fix-It was put in his rightful place. But the good news was two-fold. The lights on the trailer are working splendidly and the price of a fuse is nothing in comparison to a flasher module.

Friends, the lesson for me in this story is that I become obsessed with trying to make things work in my life when they don’t go just the way I want them to. I allow my problems to become much greater than they truly are.

It’s called keeping perspective. It’s called not getting worked up. It’s called being clear about what really matters in life.

Jesus put it this way in Matthew 6:25-27: *“For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? “Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? “And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?”*

Stay in touch and in the know!

Have you checked out the Synod Website Calendar? www.lutheransnw.org/calendar

Do you receive the Weekly Update eNews? www.lutheransnw.org/subscribe

Maritime Ministry & the Mission to Seafarers

Mission to Seafarers Luncheon

Saturday, August 23 at 11am
Aboard the Star Princess at Pier 91,
Smith Cove Cruise Terminal, Seattle

The NW WA Synod Maritime Ministry, in support of our work with The Mission to Seafarers and its Board of Directors, cordially invites YOU to the Annual Benefit Luncheon Hosted by the Princess Cruises Community Foundation. All proceeds will benefit The Mission to Seafarers.

This luncheon represents the Mission's major fundraiser each year. Over the past eleven years they have raised tens of thousands of dollars to help provide communications opportunities for merchant seafarers who are unable to leave the ship as well as transportation for those merchant seafarers and cruise ship employees who can go ashore to shop, get medical help, or just visit a friendly place. During the Holiday Season, they provide 'Ditty Bags' - shoe bag-sized gift bags filled with toiletries, stocking caps, candy, and often a New Testament. Last year volunteers packed and distributed more than 1,300 of these Ditty Bags.

A partner in this effort, the Princess Cruises Community Foundation, has generously provided for auction a seven-night cruise for two, to either the Caribbean or the Mexican Riviera. The cruise will be auctioned during the luncheon and you will have additional opportunities to show your support for the Mission and the Christmas-at-Sea Ditty Bag program. There will be other auction items available as well.

Please consider bringing a group of friends to the luncheon. In addition to the excellent cuisine and service provided by the Golden Princess' crew, this is a chance to let your friends know about our ministry to seafarers: a group of hard-working people who are often marginalized and taken for granted, and whose occupation is one of the most dangerous in the world. Seafarers make up the invisible workforce that brings us over 90% of the goods we rely on and use every day. If you are unable to attend the luncheon, a donation towards this ministry would be very much appreciated.

To RSVP, contact Susan at the Synod Office: 206-783-9292 or susan@lutheransnw.org. The minimum donation is \$100/person.

Information on this cooperative ministry is available on the NW WA Synod website at www.lutheransnw.org/maritime-ministry. The video created for the 2014 NWWA Synod Assembly featuring our own Bishop Unti and Western Washington Episcopalian Bishop Greg Rickel is also located on that page.

Ditty Bags

Each year the Mission to Seafarers give Ditty Bags to the seafarers on merchant vessels calling at the Port of Seattle. These simple 12"x 14" cloth bags are filled with practical items that convey the love, concern, and compassion of our local churches to the seafarers working to bring us the items we use and wear on a daily basis. Making and filling these ditty bags provides our church congregations with an opportunity to take part in an international and ecumenical outreach ministry. Creating and assembling these bags is a fun and caring intergenerational activity for your congregation! Or you could make collecting the items a special mission of the month for your Sunday School students. Bag pattern: www.mts-seattle.org/ditty-bags.

The following items are particularly needed each year:

- Deodorant
- Shaving Cream & Disposable Razors
- Shampoo (16oz bottles)
- Toothpaste (5.6-6.2oz)
- Toothbrushes (single packs only)
- Knit or Fleece Hats
- Small New Testaments or Gospels of John
- Playing cards
- Bar Soap
- Pens/Pencils/Notepads

Personal notes or Christmas cards to the seafarers are always welcome. For more information, contact the Mission to Seafarers, Seattle at 206-935-3439 or seafarers-center@mts-seattle.org

Additional opportunities for serving include knitting watch caps, garden work, driving the Mission to Seafarer Vans for shopping trips and medical appointments, and joining our Synod Maritime Ministry Team! Our hope is that through this partnership with Mission to Seafarers, we will be able to increase our ability to impact the lives of the seafarers. More information available on at www.lutheransnw.org/

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

Northwest Washington Synod, ELCA

5519 Phinney Ave North
Seattle, WA 98103-5829

Telephone: 206-783-9292

Toll Free: 1-800-244-6997

Fax: 206-783-9833

Email: office@lutheransnw.org

Website: www.lutheransnw.org

Information for the September issue of *The Spirit* is due to the Synod Office by August 8