



The Spirit

Volume 26, Number 3

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

March 2009

Nurturing Our Interns

by The Rev. Jan Nesse, Assistant To The Bishop



Our Synod has been lifted up throughout the church for identifying and launching candidates

for ministry in Christ's church.

We are uniquely gifted because we live in the *None Zone* (Patricia Killian's word for this region which checks "none" most often as religious preference). We usually talk about the *None Zone* as a handicap or hardship. I propose it is an opportunity.

The great gift of living in the *None Zone* is the experience of communicating in an environment of apathy, hostility or misinformation about the gospel of Jesus Christ and the church. It is a place where other parts of the country are only now finding themselves. So we have the opportunity to use our experience to strengthen the church as well as infuse our own congregations with new ideas, fresh leadership, and renewed energy through internships.

We have only seven congregations which have

interns right now. Most of these congregations have made it a part of their mission to have an intern every year. They will tell you that the internship program has been good for the congregation and each intern has added to the life of the community.

These congregations will also tell you that the relationships they have developed have been worth the financial commitment to the program. Some congregations have declined to have interns because they think it is too expensive, others have found ways to overcome that hurdle.

The Sno-King Cluster started an "Intern-Sabbatical Program" in 1991 which has continued throughout the ensuing years. It was based on one intern shared by the cluster who served six months in a congregation with the supervisor and then six months in a congregation where that pastor was able to take a sabbatical. The intern retained the same supervision but had more opportunity to learn about the church and to lead in different settings. The costs and roles were shared by all the congregations. Such a plan could be created by any group of congregations whether they

were officially a "cluster" or not.

Another example of shared internship is the plan of St. John United Lutheran Church in Seattle and the Washington State Lutheran Public Policy Office (LPPO). Together they share an intern providing that person a wide variety of experience in the congregation, as an advocate and as a bridge between church and state.

Congregations which are considering adding staff have often used interns as a bridge to the additional staff position. Sometimes an intern has served in an offsite location where the congregation is considering planting a new daughter congregation.

Internship is a time of great learning for both the intern and the congregation, and the variety of settings and experiences has taught us to be flexible in setting up a program. The intern comes with different gifts and skills and develops new ones as the needs of the congregation become part of the learning plan.

Consider the gifts your congregation has to offer an intern and what you might gain from nurturing a candidate for

continued on page 2

Helping The People Of Haiti

It was a simple phone call, five years ago, that began a relationship between Christ the King Lutheran in Snohomish and Food for the Poor (FFP).

In late October 2008 the Rev. Jeff Gaustad, pastor at Christ the King, was invited by FFP to visit Haiti. While there Pastor Gaustad saw many, many people living in desperate poverty, their condition made all the more desperate when, only weeks before, Haiti was battered by wave after wave of tropical storms, hurricanes and torrential rains. In spite of poverty, flooding, damage and destruction, Pastor Gaustad found among the Haitian people a hospitality and a deep joy he has seldom encountered elsewhere.

(You can view photos from the visit at www.ctksnohomish.org/page13298.asp.)

The pilgrimage had a dramatic impact on Pastor Gaustad. He shared with the congregation that he had told his family: "All I want for Christmas is a house in Haiti." When the congregation heard about the wish they too caught the spirit. The congregation raised more than \$22,000 toward the building of houses in Haiti, specifically in Cabaret.

This coming April, ten members from Christ the King will make pilgrimage to Haiti to continue to build this relationship begun by God with our neighbor in Haiti. We'll keep you posted.

Bringing Our Gifts To God's Party!

This year the Synod Assembly is going to be a celebration!

The two-day assembly at the Lynnwood Convention Center is designed in a new format. Voting members on Friday, May 15, will conduct the business of the Assembly. This allows voting members to give the priority that the business of the synod deserves.

Everyone is welcome on Saturday, May 16, because the day is designed as a celebration.

Our keynote speaker is Dr. Leonard Sweet, a nationally known author and teacher. (He wrote the book, *The Gospel According To Starbucks.0*)

A celebration worship will take place on Saturday, including a synod-wide choir of all ages. The party will continue throughout the day as we offer many "party" rooms where we will share resources and ministries that are available in our own synod.

Come, celebrate and learn. We are *Bringing Our Gifts to God's Party!* For more information visit www.lutheransnw.org.

continued from page 1

Nurturing Our Interns

ministry who is growing skills in this very unique area of the *None Zone*.

This year seven interns are serving and learning in our synod: **Elizabeth Cutler**, serving at Phinney Ridge Lutheran in Seattle; **Diakonda Gurning** serving at Holy Cross Lutheran in Bellevue; **Coe Hutchison**, serving at Trinity Lutheran in Lynnwood; **Kristi Kleinbeck**, serving both at LPP0 and St John United Lutheran in Seattle; **Leslie Neist**, serving at Central Lutheran in Everett; **Suzanne Paulus**, serving at Fir-Conway Lutheran in Mount Vernon; and **Gloria Stubitsch**, serving at Gloria Dei Lutheran in Alderwood Manor.

Contact the seminary of your choice and ask about inviting an intern to serve and learn with you.

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.

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

Editor: Margit Peiffle

Email: margit@lutheransnw.org
Telephone: 425-299-6667
Website: www.lutheransnw.org

Information for the April 2009 issue of *The Spirit* is due to the Synod Office by Wednesday, March 4.