



News for the
Northwest Washington Synod, ELCA

Soundings

April 2009; Vol. 25, Issue 4

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to announce that the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit of the ELCA is calling the Rev. Gerald Buss to serve as the Director for Evangelical Mission for the Northwest Washington Synod. Jerry will serve as an Assistant to the Bishop. Jerry will be concluding his ministry at Oak Harbor Lutheran Church and assuming his duties with the Synod in mid-April.



Pastor Jerry Buss

I invite your prayers for Jerry and Darlene as he transitions into this new role of service in Christ's church.

Grace and Peace,

Wm Chris Boerger, Bishop

Editor's Note: *The Rev. Jerry Buss was raised in the Midwest, working on dairy farms and growing up in a family where his father was also a Lutheran pastor. After graduating from high school in Berthoud, Colo, he attended the Colorado School of Mines and Pacific Lutheran University, graduating from PLU with a BA in history.*

Jerry received a Master of Divinity from Luther Northwestern Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. His first call was as an associate pastor at St. Andrew Lutheran in Beaverton, Ore. He then served as pastor of Peace Lutheran in Astoria, Ore. In August of 1999, Jerry was installed as the seventh pastor of Oak Harbor Lutheran.

A Word From The Bishop

First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation...

2 Peter 1:20 NRSV



As we move toward our Synod Assembly and our Churchwide Assembly I would ask that the members of this church and synod to be engaged in the study of scripture and in prayer. Much of what I hear today is private views of scripture being used to support a particular position on contemporary issues. Peter is very clear that scripture belongs to the community of faith and that it is to be used by the whole church.

As the inheritors of Luther's theological perspectives we understand that God speaks to the church through the word. The word that accuses and kills and the word that brings life and hope is the word of God read and spoken in our communities of faith. As we seek to know what God is calling us to do as congregations, synods and churchwide, it is essential that we struggle with the word that comes to us through the study of scripture.

The Bible – Book of Faith initiative is one way this church is attempting to raise this issue of corporate study of Scripture. This initiative is not a Bible Study series. It is an emphasis on the importance of individual and corporate Bible Study. It is what we need to be doing in these days.

I would ask each of our congregations to be intentional in encouragement of its members to be engaged in regular Bible Study. In these days of anxiety, sexuality statements and economic downturn are dominating our discussion. Scripture speaks God's faithful word to us in all times. We need to hear that word and to

base our hope on the word of the crucified and risen Lord of the church who promises to be with us, even to the close of the age.

Church politics are very real. But in the face of that reality, we need to ground ourselves in the community study of scripture. We will discover that we do look at scripture in a variety of ways. That diversity will not be resolved by some authority from the outside. It will be resolved by God's faithful people working at understanding the interpretation of the text. My point is that this is the work of the community of faith.

We have work to do. We need to study the scriptures and listen to the word of the Lord.

Editor's Note: *In the three days leading up to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis/Saint Paul (Aug 17-19) Luther Seminary is hosting a Book of Faith Jubilee: Equipping Everyday People to Read the Bible (Aug 14-16). The key keynote speaker is Eugene Peterson, author of The Message translation of the Bible. For more information visit the website for Book of Faith at www.bookoffaith.org or for Luther Seminary www.luthersem.edu/jubilee/.*

Soundings is published monthly (one combined issue for May/June) by the Northwest Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

206-783-9292 or 1-800-244-6997 (Wash. State); Fax: 206-783-9833.

office@lutheransnw.org; www.lutheransnw.org

Deadline for copy of the May/June issue of Soundings is Wednesday, April 1. The current issue, and archived issues, can be found on the synod's website.

Synod Staff:

The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, Bishop—boerger@lutheransnw.org

The Rev. Jan Nesse, Assistant to the Bishop—nesse@lutheransnw.org

Jim Goeben, Webmaster—jim@lutheransnw.org

Elaine Harrison, Synod Relations Administrator—elaine@lutheransnw.org

Margit Peiffle, Synod Communications Administrator—margit@lutheransnw.org

Margaret Spatafore, Synod Office Administrator—margaret@lutheransnw.org

Continued from page 1

A Word From
The Bishop

2009 Churchwide Assembly

The 2009 Churchwide Assembly will begin with worship on Monday, Aug. 17, and conclude Saturday, Aug. 23, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Host synods are: Minneapolis Area Synod and Saint Paul Area Synod. For more information about the 2009 Churchwide

Assembly please visit www.elca.org/assembly.

Congregation Observers—Each congregation of the ELCA is invited to register with the secretary of this church one congregation observer for the Churchwide Assembly prior to May 31, 2009. Such individuals have reserved seating in the observers section of the plenary hall and receive a copy of the report of recommendations for assembly action and materials distributed on the plenary floor to voting members, advisory members, and non-voting members during the assembly. Observers have neither voice nor vote in plenary sessions of the assembly. A registration fee of \$150 has been established by the secretary of this church for administrative costs and materials. Observers may purchase the same meals as are provided for voting members. Transportation costs, housing, and related expenses shall be the responsibility of the registered observer or sending congregation.

Visitors—A large number of visitors attend the Churchwide Assembly to participate in worship and to watch the legislative work of the assembly. Visitors have access to a special section of seating on the assembly floor and may attend other events associated with the assembly as space permits. You may register as a visitor by filling out the appropriate form.

At the 2008 Synod Assembly voting members elected ten people to attend the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. (Bishop Chris Boerger and Larry Johnson, Associate in Ministry and Synod Vice President, attend automatically because of their leadership positions.)

continued on page 6

Those elected were: The Rev. Chris Berry, Western Washington University Campus Pastor; Diakonda Gurning, Synodically Authorized Minister, Indonesian Lutheran Fellowship; Glenn Ryder; The Rev. Jianhua (Jimmy) Hao, Grace Chinese Lutheran, Seattle ; Millie Fosberg; The Rev. Pam Russell, Prince of Peace Lutheran, Shoreline; Richard Bridges; Sarah Tveit; and Vanessa Unti.

continued from page 4

Churchwide Assembly

El Camino Lutheran Church is starting a new ministry to enrich the Skagit Valley Hispanic community and strengthen the El Camino congregation. The new ministry, called *The Skagit Valley Hispanic Community Enrichment Project*, will start this April. The ministry will support to learn how to adjust to their new communities. The project is planned and supported by The Pastoral Team of El Camino and families of the congregation.

Building upon the strengths and gifts of Hispanic immigrants, the new ministry needs to raise funds. Raffle tickets are on sale now for two quilts. Come join the fun at 5 p.m. on June 7 at a recognition dinner, prepared by the congregation of El Camino. Worship to follow. During the dinner the winners of the quilts will be announced. The fun will take place at Burlington Lutheran, 134 East Victoria Burlington WA 98233. RSVP for dinner to Anni by May 17. Please join us as we celebrate and recognize our “companeros”! Contact person is Anni Campbell at campbellr001@comcast.net or 360 929 2535.

El Camino de Emaus is an authorized worship community of the Northwest Washington Synod. El Camino serves and worships with immigrant families in Skagit Valley and is dedicated to assisting families struggling to integrate into their new Skagit Valley communities.

A Ministry Serving Immigrant Families

Spring Bishop's Convocation

Ancient Judaism, the New Testament, and our Lutheran Heritage: Refocusing the Images is the theme of the 2009 Spring Bishop's Convocation to be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, at Maple Leaf in Seattle.

How have the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and revolutions in biblical scholarship in the past two generations changed our perceptions of Judaism at the turn of the era, and how do—or should—these developments lead us to rethink the origins of Christianity and enrich our Lutheran theology?

Our presenter for this one-day convocation is the Rev.



*The Rev. Dr. George
W. E. Nickelsburg*

Dr. George W. E. Nickelsburg (ret.) of Issaquah. He was a supervisor of archeological excavations, theologian, editor, recipient of numerous academic awards and honors, author of *Ancient Judaism and Christian Origins* (copies of this book will be available for sale at the convo).

Nickelsburg is also the author of several other books and articles, a creator of photographic exhibits, a participant on inter-disciplinary panels and discussions and a pastor. Faculty appointments include: Univ. of Iowa; LST of Chicago; Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO; and PLTS in Berkeley, CA.

Registration and payment deadline is Monday, April 13 (lunch is included): \$18 for active rostered and \$15 for retired and interns (\$20 at the door). Make checks payable to: NW Washington Synod and mail to 5519 Phinney Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98103.

(For directions to Maple Leaf Lutheran Church please visit www.reachoutchurch.org.)

The 2009 Synod Assembly is going to be a celebration!

The two-day assembly at the Lynnwood Convention Center is designed in a new format this year so that the celebration and the business can both take priority.

Friday, May 15, is all business. This allows us to give the priority that the business of the synod deserves.

Saturday, May 16, is designed with a celebration of who the Northwest Washington Synod is. Our keynote speaker is Dr. Leonard Sweet, a nationally known author and teacher. (Check out his website at www.leonardsweet.com.)

Celebration worship will be on Saturday and will include a synod-wide choir of all ages. The party will continue throughout the day as we offer many “party” rooms where we will be sharing all of the resources and ministries that are available in our own synod. Come to celebrate who we are and what we are doing.

Saturday is open to everyone. Voting members will be there, but we also want to share this “party” with everyone.

Come, celebrate and learn. We are *Bringing Our Gifts to God's Party!*

Contact co-chair Pam Kluth at purplepatch47@hotmail.com or Kim Unti at kim.unti@comcast.net. We are excited to share with you what the plans are. Maybe you would like to help host the party – we would love to have you join us.

As more information becomes available visit www.lutheransnw.org.

Bringing Our Gifts To God's Party



It's A Joy!

by The Rev. Scott
Postlewait
Lutheran Campus
Pastor

Covenant House
University of Washington

Grace Chinese Lutheran Church in Seattle and Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Washington have partnered to provide an outreach ministry at the University of Washington (UW).

Mr. Zhenchuan Liu will be leading efforts to serve International Students and Scholars at the UW. Zhenchuan began efforts last Fall to connect international students with host families for the holidays. Those efforts continued with a kickoff ministry event in February. International students and scholars

were invited to an introductory dinner at Lutheran Campus Ministry. The response was overwhelming!

“International students have great needs,” said Zhenchuan. “They often lead very isolated lives when they arrive at the University, focusing on their studies, and limited by language and cultural differences.”

The kickoff dinner was a wonderful time for these visiting students and scholars to enjoy community, to welcome them

to Covenant House and to introduce them to Zhenchuan, Pastor Jimmy Hao of Grace Chinese Lutheran in Seattle and myself.

The ministry continues with “English



Mr. Zhenchuan Liu; Chaplain Mary Shehane, Covenant House Episcopal Campus Chaplain; Pastor Scott Postlewait, Covenant House Lutheran Campus Pastor; and Pastor Jimmy Hao, Grace Chinese Lutheran in Seattle.

Talk Time” during the month of March, where International Students will gather with Lutheran Campus Ministry students for peer taught English and American Culture conversations.

It’s an exciting time for ministry at the UW. It’s been a joy working with Zhenchuan. He has a wonderful gift for inviting and welcoming. His enthusiasm is contagious, and his care for students is warm and genuine.

For more information and to help support this ministry, contact Pastor Jimmy Hao at jianhuahao@yahoo.com, Pastor Scott Postlewait at chscott@drizzle.com, or Everett Savage at ewsavage@msn.com.

The website for the Campus Ministry at the Covenant House at the UW is <http://uwcrossroads.com>.

continued from page 8
It’s A Joy



Mr. Zhenchuan Liu (far left) and Pastor Jimmy Hao (far right) with three of many who attended the kickoff ministry event: (center, l to r) Jijin Liang, Song Yang and Xiaogang Shi.



Just a few of the international students who gathered with others at the February ministry event.

LPPO Update

by Mary Jonassen
UW Graduate Student

On February 9th I had the privilege of accompanying Rev. Paul Benz to the state capital in Olympia.

As a current graduate student studying public policy at UW, I was excited for the opportunity to experience ways in which the academic and theoretical side connected to where the advocacy meets the road

I was able to sit in on committee hearings and listen to testimony on important legislation – that day it was Pay Day Lending Practices and Voting Restoration Rights. I sat in on a committee of advocates working on many facets of an anti-poverty agenda. I walked until my legs almost fell off while Paul testified, connected with other advocates, tracked down legislators, followed up on bills, called other ministers and lay leaders to ask for their testimony at the next few days' hearings and prepared for a meeting with Governor Gregoire. Paul connects astonishingly well with such a broad range of stakeholders, advocates, legislators, aides and anyone else he bumps into. I consider myself a high-energy person, but Paul could run circles around most people.

On the drive home I had a chance to reflect.

What is at the intersection of faith and policy advocacy? Jesus - and the fulfillment of his call to us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and visit the imprisoned. For those who have ever questioned or wondered whether public policy (some may call it politics) and faith should mix? Those who have questioned whether this may be too 'political', I invite you to ride along with Rev. Paul Benz – learn about LPPO. This work is living out the gospel call to 'seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.'

Editor's Note: The Rev. Paul Benz, Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington State, can be reached at benz@lcsnw.org; 206-464-4133; www.lppowa.org.

Hear the success stories. Celebrate the women. Pledge your support.

The Elizabeth Gregory Home Board of Directors invites you to attend our Third Annual Spring Benefit Dinner from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 17, at Lake Union Cafe, Seattle.

Elizabeth Gregory Home (EGH) is dedicated to helping women move off the streets into independent living by providing safe, supportive, transitional housing for 6-24 months. While living at EGH, women receive individual case management, job readiness skills, and life skill classes. EGH also provides a seven-day drop-in center for women needing respite during the day, along with access to the most basic of human services, including food and clean clothes.

To provide these services we need community financial support. Together, we can help the women of EGH continue their diligent work of moving forward with their lives. RSVP by Monday, May 4, 2009. Contacts are: Darleen Atik at 425.672.8692 or email: darleenatik@comcast.net; or Carol Bridges at 206.523.1959 or email: coffeybridges@comcast.net. To learn more visit www.elizabethgregoryhome.org.

In early February the ELCA made the difficult decision to end the production of Grace Matters, the 61-year old radio ministry of the ELCA. This decision was based on current strategic priorities of Communication Services and the churchwide organization and in response to economic challenges. It affects three full-time and two contract staff. Please hold these colleagues and the Communication Services staff in prayer during these difficult days. The expected last airing date for Grace Matters is Easter Sunday.

Come Hear The Stories

Grace Matters Ends

Here 'n There

- **Chrism Mass**, a joint liturgy for Lutheran and Episcopal pastors during Holy Week, will be held at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, April 7, at St. Mark's Cathedral, 1245 Tenth Avenue East, Seattle; 206.323.0300. A light lunch will follow.
- In January the Synod Council authorized the **Bethel Ethiopian Fellowship of Seattle** as a synodically authorized worshipping community. The congregation worships at Broadview Community United Church of Christ, 325 N. 125th St., Seattle, WA 98133. Learn more about this congregation at www.bethelseattle.com.
- **Cross and Crown Lutheran in Renton** will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary on August 8 and 9. You can visit their website at www.cclutheran.org.
- On Sunday, April 26, the **Lutheran Public Policy Office will hold their Sixth Annual Fundraising Dinner and Auction**. The festivities will begin at 4:30 p.m. and end at 7 p.m. and will be held at the Campion Ballroom, Seattle University, 901 12th Ave. Seattle. For information please visit www.lppo-dinner.webs.com.
- On Saturday February 28, 125 men gathered at **Prince of Peace in Everett** for a morning of fun and fellowship. Frosty Westering, beloved coach of PLU fame was the guest speaker. Men came from as far away as Tacoma Washington and Petersburg Alaska. The next Men's Day event is at Camp Lutherwood on October 10.
- Twice a year **Wooden Cross Lutheran in Woodinville** cleans up a two-mile portion of the Woodinville-Duvall Road. They were out there cleaning that section of the road on March 15. And the youth of Wooden Cross prepare and serve breakfast at the Compass Center one Sunday a month.
- In February **St. Luke Lutheran in Bellevue** hosted *Congregations For The Homeless* housing an average of 27 men each night. The program currently has a long

continued on page 14

We continue to hold in our prayers:

- † **The Rev. Sai Wai (Paul) Cheung**
 - † **The Rev. John Ericksen** and his wife, Marita
 - † **The Rev. Paul Wuest**
 - † **The Rev. Joel Lohafar**, Hope Lutheran in Lynden
 - † **The Rev. John LaMunyon**, Samammish Hills Lutheran in Sammamish
 - † **The Rev. Mikkel Hustad**, St. Peter in Clinton
- We pray for:

- † **The family of the Rev. Charlie Mays (ret).**
Pastor Mays died on March 6 after a brief battle with cancer. Please keep his wife, Sandra, in your prayers. Cards may be sent to: 10820 - 39th Drive SE, Everett, WA 98208. A service for the Rev. Charlie Mays has been scheduled for 3 pm, Saturday, March 21, 2009, at University Lutheran Church, 1604 NE 50th St, Seattle, WA 98105-4223.
- † **The Rev. Anne Hall, pastor at University Lutheran in Seattle.** Her mother passed away peacefully on February 28 in hospice in Tucson. Pastor Anne and her sister were with her. Cards may be sent to University Lutheran Church, 1604 NE 50th St, Seattle WA 98105.
- † The children, grand children and great grand children of pastors **Otis A. Lee and Kathryn Ann Smithers Lee**, warmly invite you to attend a memorial service celebrating Otis and Kathryn's lives. The service will be 2 pm, Sunday, March 22, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 18341 State Route 525, Freeland (Whidbey Island).
- † **Cheryl Wolff**, long-time Synod Assembly Registrar. Cheryl had a heart attack on Feb. 11 while undergoing laparoscopic surgery in Richland, WA. She is healing. You may email her at cmwolff@embarqmail.com.
- † **The Rev. Philip Petrasek, Christ Lutheran in Ferndale**, has been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. Cards may be sent to Phil and Linda at: Christ Lutheran Church, PO Box 845, Ferndale, WA 98248.

Within Our Family



Northwest Washington Synod Transitions

	Location/Event	Effective Date
Calls Accepted		
Julie Hutson	Luther Memorial, Seattle	3/31/2009

Continued from page 12

Here ‘ There

waiting list of men who need assistance.

- On March 30, **Trinity Lutheran in Lynnwood** will be hosting a choir from the Cathedral of Worcester, England. The choir is made up of 16 boys and 21 adults. Come hear the choir on Monday, March 30 at 7 p.m.
- Members of **First Lutheran in Bothell** raised more than \$14,500 at their 2009 Youth Auction. The Auction will support the 24 youth and adults who will travel to New Orleans in July to be part of the 2009 Youth Gathering, as well as other youth ministry programs that take place throughout the year.
- **Central Lutheran in Seattle** received \$10,000 from United Way to help pay for food pickup and deliveries for their Community Lunch program. The historic average for the Community Lunch is 180 people at each meal. Currently they now serve more than 300 people.
- The annual spring luncheon to benefit the ministry of **Foss Home** will be held at 11:55 a.m. on Thursday, March 26, at the Shilshole Bay Beach Club. For information please contact the Foundation Office at 206-834-2581 or email at ejoung@fossicare.org.
- A young Palestinian woman will share her story in words and pictures at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 27, at **Our Redeemer’s Lutheran in Seattle**. The community is welcome.
- **The Rev. Ronald F. Marshall, pastor of First Lutheran Church of West Seattle**, had his article, “Why I Teach the Qur’an,” posted March 10 in *The Lutheran* online E-newsletter.

Editor's Note: For the most up-to-date listing of transitions and mobility please visit our website at www.lutheransnw.org and click on Leadership. That website page is updated weekly, when necessary.

Northwest Washington Synod Mobility

In Call Process	Position	Status	Current, Interim/Supply Pastor
Arlington, Our Saviour	PR	TR	Marilyn Schultz Rothermel, Interim
Bainbridge Island, Bethany	PR	TR	Dennis Shaffert, Interim
Bellingham, Christ the Servant	PR	I	Jim Miley, Interim
Bothell, First Evangelical	PR	TR	Doug Stensby, Interim
Bothell, Light of the Cross	PR	TR	Cindy Salo, Interim
Burlington, Burlington	PR	TR	Michael Swain, Interim
Edmonds, Edmonds	A	P	Michael Ross, Pastor
Everett, Zion	PR	TR	Mitch Watney, Supply
Everson, Immanuel	PR	C	Mary Bosell, Interim
Issaquah, Shepherd of the Hills	PR	TR	Martha Myers, Interim
Mercer Island, Holy Trinity	PR	I	Supply
Mount Vernon, First Evangelical	PR	TR	Linda Larson, Interim
North Bend, Mount Si	PR	I	Tim Wolbrecht, Interim
Seattle, Gethsemane	PR	TR	Maynard Atik, Interim
Seattle, St Paul's of Shorewood	PR	TR	Supply

Mobility Position Key:

PR = Pastor
 A = Associate
 AIM = Associate in Ministry
 DM = Diaconal Minister
 A/SP = Associate with Special
 Emphasis contact Synod Office)

Mobility Status Key:

I = Interviewing
 C = Calling
 NV = New Vacancy
 V = Vacancy
 SC = Synod Call
 TR = Transition process
 P = Profile presented (receiving nominations)
 TR/DO = Div for Outreach Transformation Process

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Northwest Washington Synod
5519 Phinney Avenue North
Seattle, WA 98103-5299

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 1337
Seattle, WA

Return Service Requested

March 2009; Vol. 26, Issue 4

Table of Contents

Bishop's Message page 2
2009 Churchwide Assembly page 4
Serving Our Immigrants page 5
Bishop's Convo page 6
2009 Synod Assembly page 7
News and Events page 8- 11
Here 'n There page 12
In Our Family page 13
Transitions/Mobility page 14-15