

# The Spirit

## Hearing The Power Of God's Good News by The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, Bishop



Robert Bertram, a seminary professor of mine, once said, "You can only know how bad it is once you know how good it is." By that he meant that we can only really see the true reality of sin and its destructive power after you know the power of forgiveness and

God's grace. I find that to be true. People seem to want to live in the depression of sin or in the triumphalism of Easter. Connecting the two is often forgotten.

One of the great gifts we have as Lutheran Christians is that we hold both the Law and the Gospel as honest words of God. To truly deal with the condemning word of the Law I need to hear the power of God's good news in my life. I am not hung up with my sin. I am freed by the power of the gospel to repent and to respond to the consequences of evil that surround me.

Good works do not save us. Good works do follow from our faith. It is not a condition, but a response to the grace of God that does heal the world. That is a tricky part of the Christian life.

We will act in the face of evil. That action comes out of the Easter message that Christ is risen and death has been defeated for us. Our action does not conquer death. Christ does that.

Our anxious culture wants a triumphant church that is a respite from the anxiety of the world. It is tempting to say that the church is the place where the problems of the world are simply set aside in the victory of Jesus over the grave. The fact is that Jesus calls us to take up our cross and follow. We will walk with the poor and the ignored. We will act on the grace of God in those places that we really would not want to be.

The Easter message is not about a pastoral picture of peace. It is about God's victory which empowers and calls us to greater clarity about what is going on in the world. Our world can be a beautiful place. It also can be a place of evil and pain. As followers of Jesus, we are called to be in the world as it really is. We do not deny the pain in ourselves or in the creation because we know the good news of Jesus, we can face the news of the world and of our lives and proclaim *Christ is Risen. He is risen, indeed. Alleluia!*

### You Are Invited

#### A Thank You Celebration For Bishop Chris Boerger

Trinity Lutheran Church, 6215 196th St SW, Lynnwood

Thursday, May 16, 2013

5 pm — Hors d'Oeuvres Buffet

6 pm — Thank You Program

7 pm — Worship

ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson Preaching; Bishop Chris Boerger Presiding

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## Joining With God In Our Neighborhoods And Communities

Don't miss out on this one day, interactive event that will show you how to experiment in discovering God's mission in your neighborhoods and communities.

Alan Roxburgh\* will be at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Bellevue on Saturday, June 1, 2013. Alan has dedicated his life to helping churches find their way in a time of great disorientation and disruption. He will help your congregation begin a process of discovery and engagement with what God is doing in the neighborhoods where you live.

This day will introduce you to mission habits and practices, not to strategic plans and procedures. Alan's resource *Moving Back into the Neighborhood* will be available as a tool for your congregation. Alan's description of the day is as follows:

Local churches are looking for ways to engage their changed communities with the gospel. They know once successful programs no longer work and wonder how to be God's people in this new context. They need ways to imaginatively be God's people in their communities. This event shows churches how to effectively engage their contexts in the mission of God by:

- Asking such questions as: What type of church are we? What does that mean for how and where we begin to engage our community?

- Discovering how to begin where your people are, not where you want them to be.
- Engaging in your stories as the key to listening and discerning the activities of God.
- Learning to dwell in Scripture as an essential capacity for local mission.
- Creating experiments for discerning God's actions in the neighborhood.
- Learning together with other congregations.
- Discovering how to take a journey in engaging your neighborhood.

Registration materials will be sent to your congregation via email in the near future. The cost will be \$20 per person, lunch included. Individuals welcome, teams encouraged. If you have questions, contact the synod office at 206-783-9292.

Evangelical Outreach Team, NW Washington Synod

*\*In addition to being the author of many books related to the missional church and a member of The Missional Network team ([www.themissionalnetwork.com](http://www.themissionalnetwork.com)), Alan is a pastor and teacher with more than 30 years of experience in church leadership, consulting and seminary education. Alan has been a pastor to congregations in a small town and in the suburbs, a re-developer of a downtown urban church and the planter of new congregations. He has directed an urban training center and served as the director of a center for mission and evangelism. Alan teaches as an adjunct professor in seminaries in the USA, Australia and Europe.*

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## Bishop Election

- Sixteen men and women have been nominated for Bishop of the synod: **Kathleen Anderson, Wayne Bacus, Chris Berry, Karen Bloomquist, Ruben Duran, Eric Finsand, Julie Hutson, Rick Jaech, Marvin Jonasen, Ron Moe-Lobeda, David Parks, Jane Prestbye, Jeff Russell, Paul Sundberg, Kirby Unti, and Deanna Wildermuth.** For information about these nominees please visit [www.lutheransnw.org/bishopelection](http://www.lutheransnw.org/bishopelection).
- **Save the date:** The installation for the new bishop of the Northwest Washington Synod will be held on Sunday, September 15, 2013. Time and location still to be determined.

**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](mailto:office@lutheransnw.org)

**Editor: Margit Peiffle**

Email: [margit@lutheransnw.org](mailto:margit@lutheransnw.org)

Telephone: 206-783-9292

Website: [www.lutheransnw.org](http://www.lutheransnw.org)

Information for the April issue of *The Spirit* is due to the Synod Office by Wednesday, April 3.