



News for the
Northwest Washington Synod, ELCA

Soundings

May-June 2009; Vol. 25, Issue 5

Caring For Our Children

by Anita Proudfoot

Director, Church & Community Relations, Western Washington

Lutheran Community Services Northwest

All children deserve a safe, happy life – including the nearly 9,500 children in foster care in Washington State alone. National Foster Care Month is an opportunity to highlight our mutual ministry providing stable, loving homes for abused and neglected children in our community. Together you and your congregation are involved with Lutheran Community Services Northwest in serving foster children through our two foster care programs.

The Permanency Planning Foster Care Program provides safe and stable foster homes for children 0-17 years. LCS provides intensive case management for foster children and foster parents with the goal to create a permanent home

for the foster child. LCS foster families are committed to working toward reunification of the birth family. If the child is unable to return home, LCS foster families become the child's adoptive family.

The Refugee and Immigrant Children's Program, in partnership with Lutheran Immigrant and Refugee Services (LIRS), serves refugee and immigrant children, ages 0 –17, who come from a variety of countries. LCS specializes in working with teenagers who arrive in the United States without their families. LCS foster families support the youth's adjustment to life here. It is a priority for our program

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A Word From The Bishop



Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Matthew 6:25-26 NRSV

At times I wish that all of the current economic reporting would close with these words of Jesus. I am not an economist and I have no pretense that I know what tomorrow will bring to our economy or to my own finances. I do know that God has called us into a new relationship with God, the world, my neighbor and whatever wealth may be entrusted to me.

Luther's understanding of vocation also speaks to our current dilemma. If my vocation is from God, then how will I be a good steward of that aspect of my life, even while facing issues of employment or economic downturn?

The issues before us are not just economic, but have a primary basis in our faith. How I understand my baptismal call to serve in vocation of spouse, parent, citizen and pastor are all involved in my decisions today. The church has the responsibility to remind itself and the world of our vocations in Christ.

There will continue to be headlines about the affects of our economic distress. The Synod Council is taking a cautiously conservative approach to spending and to budgeting. The ELCA Church Council has taken action to cut the churchwide spending in view of a downturn

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in mission support. There will be painful decisions in the coming months that will result from these decisions.

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A Word From The Bishop

The words of Jesus, “do not worry about your life” need to be spoken to our fearful hearts. The ministry of Christ’s church still remains before us. We are still to declare the love of God through our crucified and risen Lord, Jesus Christ. We are still to welcome the widow, orphan and resident alien. We are still to care for God’s creation. None of the commands of our God have been set aside due to financial distress.

Our financial distress is the result of our greed and desire for quick fixes to complex problems. Further panic at the lack of quick fixes only exaggerates the problem. Now is the time for the vocation of Christ’s disciples to act on Jesus admonition, “Do not worry.”

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Deadline for copy of the July issue of *Soundings* is Wednesday, June 3. The current issue, and archived issues, can be found on the synod’s website.

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Bible Book Of Faith

by Roger Anderson,
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What is the *Book of Faith* initiative? How can we participate? What is the program? How is this different from the Bethel series? Or Search? Or Word and Witness?

These questions are some that have been asked when the *Book of Faith Initiative* is discussed. A look at the initiative and its purpose may help to answer some of these questions.

Bishop Boerger in his April Soundings article speaks to the issue of corporate and individual Bible study. Corporate study brings us together to share ideas and understandings of faith. The *Book of Faith* initiative is the focus for the ELCA and its members to call attention to the need for better familiarity and understanding of scripture. The emphasis is not on our participating in some new program, but in a renewed involvement in reading and understanding the Bible. The purpose is to get us more involved with the Bible so we can speak more confidently about the stories and ideas found in the Bible, to work together to better understand these stories and ideas, and to take messages learned from understanding and apply them in our daily living.

The *Book of Faith* web site holds information for understanding the initiative (www.bookoffaith.org). Another web site is a place to share information with others on how to become more familiar with stories in the biblical traditions and how to better understand these stories and traditions (www.bookoffaith.ning.com). Please visit these sites to explore and see what other ELCA members are sharing about their faith journey.

Our Synod also has a chat room where we share ideas and approaches for how scripture can become more familiar. Look for it on the “ning” site.

The initiative is a way to help change our societal perspective on the importance of reading the Bible and to emphasize the importance of understanding scripture.

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Bible Book Of Faith

While the emphasis is not a curriculum, *Augsburg Fortress* has published/is publishing a variety of resources that can be used in the process. These are resources, not a prescribed course of study. Each congregation and specialized ministry can use these resources as best helps in their process of becoming more fluent and increasing understanding.

The current Bible studies that are happening in churches, schools, campuses, in clinical settings and in retirement centers are all part of the *Book of Faith* initiative. Celebrate the *Book of Faith* activities already in place. Share with others those approaches that are working and those that have been tried and don't work as well as planned. Increase participation in scripture study. Join the online discussion.

This fall several different learning and teaching opportunities, and workshops will be provided by this synod's *Book of Faith* work group. Information will be available later this spring.

The initiative has been listed as lasting five years. The study of the Bible will not last only five years. Study, familiarity and understanding are life-long learning activities. This initial emphasis called the *Book of Faith Initiative* will help renew our commitment to study scripture and to jump start a more concentrated emphasis on understanding the Bible in our lives as members of the ELCA.

Come, join the conversation. Share your ideas and understandings. Become more fluent in the stories of the Bible.

Editor's Note: At the 2008 Synod Assembly voting members added the word Bible to the initiative.

National
Advertisements

For Our Church

The ELCA launched a national television “brand campaign” March 30 on national cable channels and in selected television markets. A second campaign will follow on May 11.

“The purpose of the ELCA brand campaign is to grow awareness of the ELCA and inspire members to invite others to a worship service,” said Kristi S. Bangert, executive director, ELCA Communication Services. “After two years of research, testing and tweaking, the ads were ready for prime time.

Through April 19, two ELCA television spots featuring the tag line “God’s work, our hands,” aired on the CNN, HLN, the Fox News channel, HGTV, and the DIY Network. The spots can be viewed at www.ELCA.org/ads/tv.

The television ads are supported with print, outdoor and online advertising artwork that can be used by congregations, Bangert said. These materials are also available at on the ELCA Web site.

“This church wants people to know that we are out there offering hope and care -- doing God’s work with our hands,” Bangert said. “By putting this comprehensive plan into action, we hope to spread the word about what God is doing in and through the ELCA.”



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@msn.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.

More information for May 15 and May 16 is now available at www.lutheransnw.org.

Bringing Our Gifts To God's Party



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Caring For Our Children

to provide culturally and ethnically matched foster homes whenever possible.

Together we can continue to be a positive change in a foster child's life. No matter how much time you have to give, you can do something positive that will change a lifetime

for a young person in foster care:

- ◆ If you have a few minutes – make a contribution.
- ◆ If you have a few hours – volunteer to help by providing childcare or food for support groups or give a life skills class to foster care youth.
- ◆ If you have a few weeks – volunteer to help distribute recruitment materials for our programs.
- ◆ If you can open your home – become a foster parent.

For more information about how you and LCS can partner to make a difference in the life of a child, call 206-694-5713 or email mreed@lcsnw.org.

“Lutheran Community Services opened up what has been the most amazing experience for me. I went into it uncertain of whether I would adopt, but clear that I would have an opportunity to respond to that call in my own heart to be able to reach out to a young person in need. It’s been an

extraordinary journey that has been grace-filled at every turn, and in large part that’s to the credit of the good folks at LCS.”

-- Patrick D’Amelio, Foster/Adoptive Parent



Through LCS’ Permanency Planning program, Patrick D’Amelio became the foster parent of Etta and Dylan, who had been born to a mother struggling with heroin addiction. Etta and Dylan became part of Patrick’s family last year, when he formally adopted them.

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.

Four listening sessions with our voting members will be held in May and June. This is an opportunity for congregational members to express their opinions regarding the various resolutions and other decisions that will be made at this year's churchwide assembly.

- ◆ **Saturday, May 30**—10 a.m. to noon at Our Savior's Lutheran, 215 Mukilteo Blvd, Everett; 425-252-0413
- ◆ **Saturday, June 13**—10 a.m. to noon at St. Luke's Lutheran, 3030 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue; 425-822-7907
- ◆ **Thursday, June 18**—7 to 9 p.m. at Salem Lutheran, 2529 Laventure Road, Mount Vernon; 360-336-3600
- ◆ **Saturday, June 20**—10 a.m. to noon, TBD

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.)

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

For more information about the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly please visit www.elca.org/assembly.

2009 ELCA
Churchwide
Assembly

Listening Sessions

LPPO Update

by Fred Wicks
Member of Holy Spirit,
Kirkland

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.

I was blessed with the opportunity for the second time to participate in the Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, DC, held in March. Andrew Gensler, the ELCA's director of our Washington, DC office, greeted ELCA members who attended.

The theme of this year's conference was *2009: Enough for All Creation*. This theme was chosen because we live in an increasingly interconnected world, and we have an enormous impact on each other and creation.

During an intensive weekend, with our days and evenings filled, we (800 participants) received information on key issues. We heard first-hand accounts of climate effects from people in the Congo, Columbia, Nigeria and the Pacific Islands. We learned how our national policies significantly affect climate change, use of natural resources, food distribution, fair trade, population migration and maintaining a sustainable life for people. The debate needs to be changed from global warming to environmental justice.

We also had the privilege of hearing from Mara Vanderslice, Religious Advisor to President Obama. She told us that the president wants not a top down, but a bottom up policy agenda. Mara offered her office as a conduit for advocacy voices on all issues.

The conference culminated on Monday with "Lobby Day", which meant Congressional visits on Capital Hill. It is an awesome place to be and, even more so, rewarding to be able to apply the knowledge and skills we had learned to inform and encourage our congress people on behalf of the nationwide faith community. We were five Washingtonians who visited Sen. Patty Murray's office to discuss mitigating

climate change and its impact on people. We left with assurance that our concerns and policy recommendations would be addressed.

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LPPO

I need to mention our Lutheran Public Policy Office in Washington state. I was gratified to find the experience we gain when attending Faith Advocacy Day in Olympia was great preparation for the national advocacy event. Just as in our legislature, our Congress people want to hear what we care about.

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

**Come Hear
The Stories**

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.

Here 'n There

- **El Camino de Emaus** is our Spanish-speaking Lutheran congregation in Skagit County serving immigrant families in the valley. On June 7 the congregation will be celebrating their third anniversary. Dinner (5 p.m.) and worship (6:30 p.m.) will take place at Burlington Lutheran in Burlington. Two quilts are being raffled to help support their ministry. Tickets are available. Contact Luz Maria Cabrerra at edluzcabrerra@verizon.net
- **Immanuel Lutheran in Seattle** has been/will be busy. In February volunteers of Community Services (ICS), a ministry of Immanuel Lutheran, distributed food to a record 327 households, providing meals for almost 500 people. In March they hosted a group of student volunteers from Slippery Rock University in Penn. The 13 students flew out to spend spring break working on various projects related to hunger and poverty in Seattle. In May the congregation will be participating in a volunteer day to help support the 2009 Thrivent Builds with Habitat project. The home is located in Pacific, Wash.
- To receive the current issue of **Focus**, the Mission Partners newsletter, please visit www.elca.org.mp.
- **The Rev. Ronald F. Marshall**, pastor of First of West Seattle, had his critical review of Bill Maher's movie, *Religulous* (2008), posted on www.flcws.org.
- **Holy Spirit in Kirkland** has created a *Safe Haven Policy* to guide adults as they interact with minors in all church-related activities. Anyone who works or volunteers with children and youth is required to attend a training to receive information about and a copy of the policy.
- **Grace Matters**, the radio ministry of the ELCA, was discontinued and its last air date was on Easter Sunday. Previous programs can be found at www.gracematters.org

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. John Schiller**, PLU Sociology professor for 33 years. He died on March 10 at his home in Calif. A celebration of John's life is tentatively scheduled for the last week of April during University Chapel at Laugerquist Hall, PLU. Remembrances may be sent to the John A. and Aleen Schiller Scholarship Fund, PLU Office of Development. Cards may be sent to his son: Sam Schiller, 4417 Marble Way, Carmichael, CA 95008.
- † **The family of the Rev. William Luoma**, who passed away after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease on March 26. He served five congregations in Ohio from 1956 to 1998. Pastor Luoma was the father of the Rev. Gretchen Luoma Cohan, Chaplain, Skagit Valley Hospital, Mount Vernon. Cards may be sent to: Gretchen Cohan, 20614 Maupin Road, Mount Vernon, WA 98273-7128
- † **The family of the the Rev. Dick Bahnson**. He passed away on on March 27 at his home in Spokane. He was ordained in the ALC in 1962. Cards may be sent to his wife, Mary at: 4807 N Willow Road, Spokane, WA 99206.
- † **Richard Bridges**, Synod Council member, is ill with liver damage and awaiting surgery on an unrelated problem. Please keep him in your prayers. Cards may

Within Our Family



Northwest Washington Synod Transitions

	Location/Event	Effective Date
Calls Accepted		
Julie Hutson	Luther Memorial, Seattle	3/31/2009
Gerald Buss	Northwest Washington Synod Office	4/13/2009
Resignation		
Gerald Buss	Oak Harbor, Oak Harbor	4/13/2009
Michael Ross	Edmonds, Edmonds	4/15/2009
Retirements		
Cathie Carlisle	Aloha, Oregon	5/1/2009
Transfers In/Out of Synod		
Mark Gravrock	to Montana Synod	3/31/2009

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Within Our Family

be sent to him at: c/o The Millionair Club, 2515 Western Ave, Seattle WA 98121.

† **The Rev. Joe Albue**, Family of Christ, Vancouver, suffered a heart attack in mid-March. A stint was put in and he is now at home recuperating. Cards may be sent to:

Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 13001 NW 36th Ave, Vancouver, WA 98685-2298.

† **The Rev. Bill Walles**, Shepherd of the Valley, Maple Valley, and his family are traveling to China to bring home their daughter. They plan to return to Maple Valley on April 22. Card of congratulations may be mailed to: The Walles Family, c/o Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 23855 SE 216th St, Maple Valley, WA 98038.

† **Lyle and Doris Bergstrom**, parents of former LYONS Director Bergie Bergstrom, lost their home and all its contents to a fire in mid-March. The fire was caused by a lightening storm in rural Kansas.

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	P	Dennis Shaffert, Interim
Bellingham, Christ the Servant	PR	P	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	PR	NV	Interim Pending
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	C	Supply
Mount Vernon, First Evangelical	PR	TR	Linda Larson, Interim
North Bend, Mount Si	PR	I	Tim Wolbrecht, Interim
Oak Harbor, Oak Harbor	PR	NV	Interim Pending
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

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