



The Spirit

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

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We Are Reaching Those In Haiti by The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, Bishop



At our recent meeting of the Conference of Bishops it was reported that the ELCA has received \$6 million in response to the earthquake in Haiti. This represents money that is being used to provide clean water and sanitation systems

to this devastated country. We are also directly involved in developing temporary housing, as well as working on longer term housing solutions. We are able to fill in the holes in the disaster response as other groups move forward in the areas of health care.

I want to say thank you to all who supported this effort and will continue to support the work being done in Jesus' name in this troubled land.

At this same meeting of the conference we heard from Pastors April and Judd Larson. Their son Ben, a fourth year seminarian at Wartburg Seminary, was killed when the guest house he had been staying in collapsed. Ben was in Haiti to work with the recently established Lutheran Church in Haiti.

This church continues to serve in the face of the disaster. Ben's niece was born on February 27, Ben's birthday. So the Larson family grieves, gives thanks for the resurrection promise and welcomes a new life into their family. For them this is not a time they ever imagined, yet they trust in the faithfulness of God even in their pain and joy.

It is at times like these that I am truly impressed with this church. We live with abundance even in the face of economic situation and the divisions in our denomination. As the congregations, synods and churchwide organization do their work with fewer workers or reduced resources, we are reaching out to this new church and the people of Haiti with long-term commitments and accompaniment.

When I am asked why do we have a larger church structure beyond the congregation it is for times like these. With your regular mission support the infrastructure has been put in place that allows us to respond quickly to disasters. People are pulled from their regular jobs to respond to the needs that surface in the disaster.

All of the funds donated for Haiti will be delivered in services. Our administration costs, etc. are covered by your regular benevolence sharing with the Synod and the Churchwide organization. There are costs and you pay for them. Your designated gifts go to those in need. Thank you for your gifts.

As of this report \$3.8 million of the \$6 million has been allocated. The remaining money and the gifts yet to be received will be used to be a part of the long-term recovery efforts in Haiti. Lutheran Disaster Response does do immediate response to disasters. We also stay with those affected as they recover from the hurt and pain. We are still working in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. We will still be working in Haiti years from now.

Thank you for being engaged in God's Work with our hands.

Here 'n There Around The Synod

- **University Lutheran University in Seattle** will participate in an Ecumenical Parish Worship Service on Good Friday. The service will be held at noon on Friday, April 2, at the University Christian Church. Representatives from seven parishes in the University District each will reflect upon one of the seven words of Jesus.
- **Lord of Life Lutheran in Renton, Lakeridge Lutheran in Seattle and Cross and Crown Lutheran in Renton** are teaming up to support the Area Renton Interfaith Shelter Endeavor (ARISE), a year-round, over-night shelter for single men 18 and older. Men who stay in the shelter are provided with case management services as well many other services that they need.
- **Our Redeemer's Lutheran in Ballard** participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring. They raised \$517.75 for the Ballard Food Bank. The Souper Bowl of Caring's website says that \$9,449,084 has been generated in 2010 (11,428 groups reporting).
- Members of **Faith Lutheran in Redmond** are participating with the Good Gifts to raise \$2,500 in order to dig, drill and install a well of clean water. They are working through ELCA Global Missions and Lutheran World Relief (LWR). They have already raised more than \$1,100 towards their ministry.
- Members of **Bethlehem Lutheran in Marysville** provided meals for the Salvation Army's Soup Kitchen on February 10 and 17.
- **Members at Peace Lutheran in Silvana** held Hunger Strike 2010. Youth and adults volunteered at the homes of three members where they did everything from splitting and stacking wood to clearing brush and building a sanctuary. They also picked up enough trash to fill two dumpsters. So far they have gathered 2,564 pounds of non-perishable food. They were able to do this while fasting for 30 hours. Congratulations!
- **The Lutheran Church in the San Juans** has made a major change. Their Friday Harbor Branch has moved from St. Francis Catholic Church, where they have worshipped for 28 years, to St. David's Episcopal Church. Worship times at Friday Harbor and Lopez

Island have also changed.

- During Lent, **Light of the Cross in Bothell** has been holding dramas during their Lenten worship times on Wednesday evenings. Afterward, they hold a discussion time to explore each drama on a new level.
- **First Lutheran in Bothell** had a standing room only crowd for their 2010 Youth Auction. The auction raised more than \$15,600 for youth ministries. More than 40 creatively decorated cakes and confections were auctioned, adding to the fun and spirit of the event. A Western Buffet was organized and prepared by a family member, with lots of volunteers from youth and adults.
- **Kent Lutheran in Kent** is preparing Easter Baskets for the families of the Kent Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). The goal is that each basket will include items for an Easter Dinner for one family.
- **First Lutheran in Mount Vernon** was thanked by the ELCA Barnyard Program. The Sunday School donated \$500 to purchase a cow for a family in need. And, the congregation is now on Facebook.
- **Our Saviour's Lutheran in Stanwood** has a new website. The address is: www.stanwoodoslc.org.

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