

CROSS

Connection



The Cross Connection is a monthly publication of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod published for its clergy, associates in ministry, lay leadership and ecumenical partners.

From the Bishop

March 2014

God's Beloved People,

I spend a good deal of time thinking about the theological concept and teaching of Martin Luther on "vocation," or "calling." It was a central tenet of the Reformation that power and place and responsibility in the church be shifted from a ministerial elite—bishops, popes, priests, religious—to every Christian as a gift and calling bestowed in baptism. Every Christian is called by God through baptism, and we spend the rest of our lives in the adventure of pursuit, seeking to know more deeply the satisfaction of this calling as our proper response to the gift of life from God.

As we press into the changes involving Net-Workers assigned to groups of congregations across the synod, one of my tasks is to pursue and articulate this teaching and see how it might yield a gift for the world and the church. I will say it over and over again: My greatest prayer for our congregations is the formation of disciples, led by careful and generous fellow-members, in small conversation groups, toward understanding of one another's giftedness and calling. I believe that if our members were invited into such discernment groups our congregations would be stronger and we would become the natural evangelists that this notion of calling promises. We are not well suited to other forms and techniques of evangelism because they most often settle for a triumphalistic approach that betrays the Cross of Christ. But imagine what might happen if our members were able to discern their "evangelical voice" in prayerful discernment groups! This is our native gift and I pray we will pursue it.

Two recent thoughts prompt this encouragement:

We have a fine Synod Vice President in Gary Gemar. What you may not know is that Gary is also an accomplished businessman

and healthcare provider, serving as the COO of a pathology laboratory. It was while I was sick with the local crud, and happened to tell him about it, that he offered what few people could: the broader context of this winter's contagious stew. He knew it as an employer and he knew it because of the mix of specimens the lab was being asked to study. Among other things he warned me that if the cough persisted it could lead to lung infection. No, he wasn't giving me medical advice! What he was offering was a word from one whose work gave him access to the broader picture, and some wisdom. He is in something of an overseer role, with public health officials, because his work brings him this broad picture of health in the community. I think this is part of Gary's calling and I hope he takes some satisfaction from it. Too few of us get to do that if we have not offered them the language of calling and office and vocation.

The other example comes through the morning paper. As many of you know the Spokane Police Department is in the midst of a rebuilding its interior "culture," that set of assumptions, informal agreements, and practices that shape the way a specialized group of citizens interacts with others. When one group of citizens is privileged with the use of force on other citizens we all have a stake in how their culture is developed and sustained, and in this case adjusted for a new day.

This is hard work! But what if we in congregations could participate by learning more about the work of those who



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are called to law-enforcement professions? What might it be like to schedule meetings so that members in these professions had a chance to tell the rest of us what their work is like, what they enjoy and what they fear? How is a police officer trained to absorb the defensive projections of citizens who think they have been unfairly targeted? What is it like to be lumped in with abusive officers who have betrayed their calling through the abuse of power?

The truth is we don't know much about one another, do we? Can you imagine how our after-worship coffee hour might be transformed through deeper understanding of one another's callings in the world? In the particular case of the Spokane Police Department we could be learning to honor individual members

of the force while contributing to the larger conversation about how that force is entrusted with moral legitimacy after some difficult years. Do you see how investing in the conversation about calling reverberates in public ways, serving the community? I invite our local Spokane congregations to consider such forums and for the rest of our congregations to consider how they might stimulate the conversation on vocation/calling in ways useful to the congregation and the communities under their care. The beginning resource is Michael Bennethum's fine little book, "Listen, God is Calling," AugsburgFortress number ED008683.

God's richest blessings!

Pr Martin Wells, Bishop



**Join us
on
Facebook!**

[https://www.facebook.com/
EasternWashingtonIdaho
SynodELCA](https://www.facebook.com/EasternWashingtonIdahoSynodELCA)

St. Paul, Chewelah
is looking for large print LBW.
If you have some you are willing to
donate or would like to sell,
please call Denice Davis at
509-936-1547

Save the Date!

The date for the 2014
Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod
Bishop's Convocation in Walla Walla, WA
has been changed. It will be held **October 13-16**
Speaker will be Rev. Dr. Timothy Wengert

The Value of: VENTURES FOR GROWING STEWARDS

by Pastor Helga Jansons

In our synod 26 congregations have participated in the Ventures for Growing Stewards workshops. If you have participated in the workshops this will be a summary and reminder. If you have not done so, you might consider attending. I would like to share with you what participants learn.

- During the 4 workshop series people do something rare; we have conversations about stewardship - living out our faith with gratitude and generosity – and money.
- If we are to grow stewards in the congregation, it is helpful to know what we are aiming for, so we discuss 5 basic competencies. For e.g. trust God's abundance, engage and critique culture...
- Scriptural basis: some people are naturally generous, but to give sacrificially is a challenge for all. It is a biblical imperative; God's word tell us that this is what God wants us to do and we learn the passages in the Bible that speak to this. 2 Corinthians 8-9 is a good start, as is Luke 12: 22-48
- Money autobiography – two sets of questions generate conversation: one about our own experience with money and generosity, the other about the congregation's history with stewardship and money.
- Stages or faith impact our giving. Seven faith practices help us to grow in discipleship.
- Spiritual gifts assessment – we have all been given specific gifts by the Holy Spirit and yet sometimes it is hard for us to know what they are. There are inventory tools that are useful for discernment.
- Missional messaging; why people give and what we say. Different generations, socio-economic levels and newer Christians respond to stewardship messages that are about e.g. compassion and community
- Some Marks of a Missional Congregation –the health of a congregation can be evaluated using these, for example, leadership development, sharing faith stories, discipleship and faith practice development.
- Asset mapping – this process allows a congregation to connect individual gifts and skills, discover its strengths and passion as a congregation, and to form action plans that reach out into the community.
- Narrative Budget or Missional Spending Plan – shows how expenses are related to the organizational goals including administrative and staff costs. All members can understand where the money goes.
- “Six giving doors” – creating 6 opportunities / ways for people to give financially other than the annual financial response program.
- 8 financial response methods are described and planned in detail as part of the workshop series.
- Year round stewardship - this is essential to successful stewardship. It creates a culture where stewardship is part of a healthy Christian life. A plan is developed from the ideas that are provided.
- Mission and vision statement –people may need help to make connections between the mission and ministries of the church and stewardship. Stewardship teams benefit from having a statement also.
- Congregational survey with great questions can be taken before stewardship programs and 8 months later to discover their impact. They take 10 minutes online or paper and is collated by the ELCA.
- Mission Interpreters – half of our synod congregations have a person in the congregation who is given authority and training to thank people and tell stories of what God is doing across the synod and ELCA through their generosity.
- Many resources and handouts are provided.

For further information and to schedule Ventures with one of the 4 synod wide leaders available to lead this workshop series close to you contact me at helga.jansons@elca.org Phone (509) 380 7122

The next one is at Zion Lutheran Church, Spokane Valley, April 26th , 10-4p.m.



Call Process Status

A Process beginning/congregational study	I Interim	AP Associate/Assistant Pastor
B Names received or on-site visits in process	P Pastor	VP Visitation Pastor
C Call in process/issued	CP Co-Pastor	AIM Associate in Ministry
NV New Vacancy	LP Lead Pastor	L Lay Position
TC Term call	SP Supply Pastor	TM Transition Minister (available for the open-ended call)
VP Visitation Pastor		

POS	LOCATION/CONGREGATION	STATUS	PASTORAL CARE	
P	Boise, ID – King of Glory	NV	Kari Sansgaard	LP
P	Bonnors Ferry, ID – Trinity	A	Kimberly Meinecke	I
P	Chelan, WA – Fullness of God	A	Elizabeth Damico	
P	Chewelah, WA – St. Paul	NV	Betty Krafft	SP
P	Coeur d’Alene, ID – Trinity	A	Tom Inch	I
P	Gifford, ID – Good Hope	A	Valerie Beesley	TEEM
P	Grandview, WA – Immanuel Lutheran	A	Gary Rhode	L
P	Kamiah, ID -- Faith Lutheran	A	Art Finney	I
P	Moses Lake, WA – Immanuel Lutheran	B	Phylis Stromme	I
P	Pocatello, ID – Church of the Good Shepherd	A	Barbara Harrison-Condon	I
P	Sandpoint, ID – First Lutheran	A	Bob Chenault	I
P	Spokane, WA—Bethlehem Lutheran	NV	Steve Wee	SP
P	Terrace Heights, WA—Tree of Life	NV	Mo Garcia	L
P	Thayne, WY—Star Valley United Church	NV	Al Schoonover	SP

Your Church in Action

We ask that you keep the ministry of the church, our synod, and the whole world as well as those listed below in your prayers . . .

We Pray

- Rev Laura Lynn (Blackfoot & Firth, ID) for continued recovery and healing after surgery.
- Rev. Rick Evenson (Medical Lake, WA) as he continues treatment for multiple myeloma.
- Rev. Dave Kappus (Central - Spokane, WA) as he continues treatment for Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma.
- Rev. Ginny Krekling (Ellensburg, WA) for continued healing after knee surgery.
- Lynn Jansen (Christ - Yakima, WA) for healing after surgery.
- Rev. Steve Crittenden, as he celebrates the fifth anniversary of his ordination on 3/12/2009.

We also pray for . . .

- Students in the Assignment Process, it is a time of hope, and a time of anxiety.
- Congregations in Call Process.
- Individuals in Discernment.
- Families struggling with pain, illness, aging and loss. May their worries be eased, and their hearts be full.

Prayer Requests . . . to be included or removed from the Synod Prayer Request list, please send your request to the synod office@ewidsynod.org, or call 509-838-9871.

Presiding bishop

Elizabeth A. Eaton

Learning to speak a hard truth

Needle barely moved on ELCA becoming a diverse church



MICHAEL D. WATSON

Consider this: how many of you are left-handed? Of those of you who are, how many times a day are you reminded that you are left-handed? At every meal when you sit next to a right-handed person and bump elbows? When you use scissors? When you write? When you shake hands?

Now, how many of you are right-handed? Chances are you never have to think about being right-handed. Most of us are right-handed. The world is set up for right-handed people. This isn't necessarily bad. It just is.

The problem starts when the practical application of an economy of scale slides into a value judgment, when the majority's physical characteristic shifts from an objective fact to a subjective model of what is proper and good.

Right-handed people become a privileged group. Left-handedness becomes not a simple handedness but something of less value, limited accessibility in the right-handed world, and sometimes even a character flaw. We speak of "left-handed compliments," the word "sinister" derives from the Latin for "left," and some of us are old enough to remember when parents and teachers would try to force left-handed children to use their right hands.

I use this illustration as a way to start to look at some of the complicated issues involved in this church's uneven, and still incomplete, effort to be a truly diverse and multicultural people.

We see the glorious vision of redeemed humanity "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9), but do not see this reflected in our communities of faith. The U.S. is becoming increasingly diverse. Your children's or your grandchildren's soccer team might more accurately reflect local demographics than Sunday mornings at church.

We are an overwhelmingly white denomination in a culture that is still majority European American. Those of us who are white almost never have to think about being white. We can consider ourselves the norm. People of color, then, are implicitly expected to adapt. This, in and of itself, doesn't mean that we who are white are bad people. It's a system and reality that is already in place. We didn't create it. In fact, many of us can point to our own persecuted ancestors who came to America to have an opportunity for a better life.

But no matter where we came from or why we had to come, the mere physical characteristic of being white admits us to a certain degree of privilege, just as being right-handed is easier than being left-handed in our culture.

I believe this church truly longs for the realization of the vision in Revelation, or at least the glorious company of multicultural young people on a hillside meadow singing the 1970's Coca Cola jingle "I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony." I yearn, not for a color-blind world, but for a color-amazed world where distinctiveness and diversity aren't washed out but are noticed and treasured as God's gracious gift. The only norm is that we are all children of God and sisters and brothers to one another.

We aren't there yet. In the first 25 years of the ELCA's existence we've barely moved the needle on the percentage of our members who are people of color or whose primary language is not English. We have a beautiful theology of justification and grace, we point to the crucified Christ as clear expression of God's love for all people, we are realistic about human brokenness—surely this is good news for anyone and everyone. And yet . . .

At the 2013 Churchwide Assembly we declared that the church is "Always being made new." Perhaps now is the time for us to begin to talk to one another. This is Epiphany, the season of the church year when the person and ministry of Christ are revealed to us in powerful Gospel stories each Sunday, a good season to start.

We can begin by contemplating a Messiah who renounced privilege to love us (Philippians 2:5-11). And, trusting that we are forgiven sinners, we can even speak the hard truth. □

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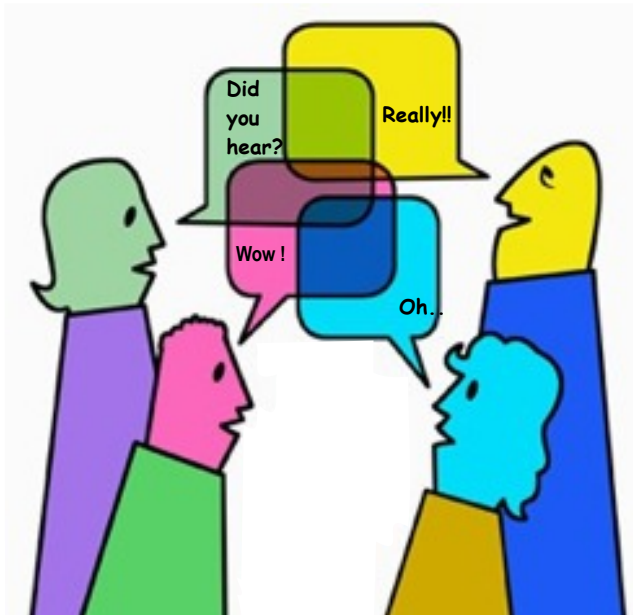
A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address: bishop@elca.org.

This column originally appeared in the February issue of *The Lutheran*. Reprinted with permission.

Is Anybody Listening?

A day a for you to share about the the joys and challenges of rural ministry.

Sponsored by Rural Ministry Resources



Date: March 3, 2014

Place: Immaculate Heart Retreat Center

6910 S Ben Burr Rd, Spokane, WA

Time: 10:00AM - 3:00PM

* Lunch and Snacks included

Cost: FREE !

RSVP: Cindy Wuts - cindy@wutsfamily.com

509-796-4504

Kathy Kramer - krammermrelmore@frontier.com

509-284-6107

We know that the community where you serve as a pastor or lay leader presents unique circumstances.

The programs and ministry styles that work for larger, urban/suburban settings, don't always "fit" the rural church. Your personal and professional needs are different, too.

We at Rural Ministry Resources have sponsored several successful programs to help support, educate and inspire those who are engaged in rural ministry.

In order to stay current and relevant to you and the needs of your church, **it is important to hear from you.**

At this event, we will be asking and listening to your questions, your experiences, your joys and even your woes, with an eye toward how Rural Ministry Resource staff can help you and your ministry thrive through programs, consultations and mentoring

The setting at the Immaculate Heart Retreat Center on Spokane's south side is a beautiful site, with comfortable meeting rooms and excellent meals.

We welcome you with listening ears and kind hearts to serve you in the spirit of Christ.

If you have questions please call or e-mail Cindy Wuts or Kathy Kramer using the contact info. above.



Practice Discipleship is a ministry of the ELCA Youth Ministry Network in close partnership with the ELCA and its synods. Its goal is to provide training resources to congregations in their faith formation work with young people. Our Synod's Practice Discipleship Coach, Megan Brannan (Trinity, Pullman) is available to you and can provide:

- In-Person Trainings for Youth Leaders/Volunteers
- Workshops on Faith Formation & Youth for Church Councils or other groups
- On-Line Webinars and Curriculum

If you are interested in these resources or would like to know more about how you could help in sharing these resources, contact her at meganbrannan@gmail.com or be on the lookout for Practice Discipleship information in your mailbox and inbox.

American and Lutheran Evangelicalism

March 4 First English - Great Falls, MT 9am-3pm



Dr. Paul Seastrand – Pastor at Zion Lutheran in Lewistown

Lutherans who are comfortable being called “evangelical” are often curious about Christians called “Evangelicals” with a capital E. While Lutherans see themselves as evangelicals committed to infant baptism, liturgical worship, and a Bible infallible in matters of faith and salvation, Evangelicals see themselves committed to believer’s baptism, experimental worship, and a Bible infallible in nearly all matters. At the same time, many Lutherans are hard-pressed to distinguish the origins and deep differences between these two ways of being evangelical. This class outlines the history of Evangelicalism in America, along with the theology of believer’s baptism, the role of experience, the interpretation of the Bible, the understanding of ordained ministry, and the engagement with culture and politics. These, in turn, are compared to Lutheran teachings. We hope to gain additional perspective and depth on some of the enormous changes affecting Christianity today.

5 Contact Hours

\$65 Clergy and Rostered Leaders

\$30 LPA and lay ministers

2014 Synod Assembly

May 16-18 at the Doubletree by Hilton Spokane City Center

“Living in Hope”

COSTS PER PERSON:

SINGLE OCCUPANCY \$505

Includes: Registration, Single occupancy housing nights of 5/16 and 5/17, Meals (Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, Sunday breakfast)

RETIRED ROSTERED SINGLE OCCUPANCY \$430

Includes: Registration, Single occupancy housing nights of 5/16 and 5/17, Meals (Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, Sunday breakfast)

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY \$380

Includes: Registration, Double occupancy housing nights of 5/16 and 5/17, Meals (Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, Sunday breakfast)

RETIRED ROSTERED DOUBLE OCCUPANCY \$305

Includes: Registration, Double occupancy housing nights of 5/16 and 5/17, Meals (Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, Sunday breakfast)

COMMUTER \$330

Includes: Registration, no housing, Meals (Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, Sunday breakfast)

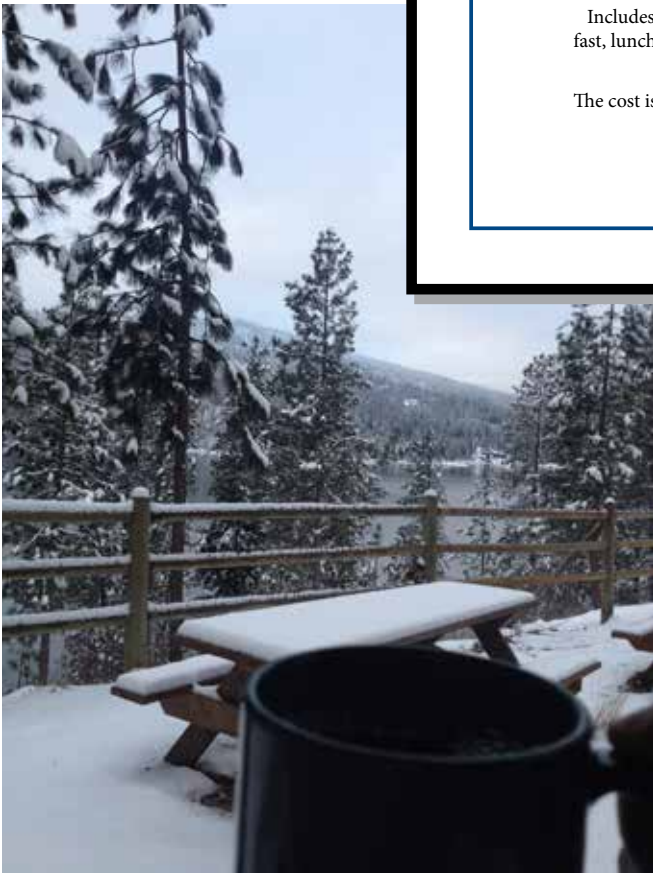
RETIRED ROSTERED COMMUTER \$255

Includes: Registration, no housing, Meals (Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, Sunday breakfast)

EXTRA NIGHTS HOUSING

The cost is \$115 per night or \$58 if double occupancy.

A late fee of \$50 per person will be charged for registrations made after April 7.



<http://kevinbeebe.wordpress.com/>

Kevin Beebe is a Young Adult in Global Mission for the ELCA. Living on the West Bank, his blog is an amazing view into the life of an ELCA Missionary. He grew up and attended school in the Northwest, and his observations of living in a war torn area are worth the time spent reading.

Where in the synod is that?

Last month's photo was taken at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Spokane, WA



Left to Right: Frank Christoff, Messiah Mission Endowment Committee Chair; P.L.U. Graduate Jennifer Emerson, Messiah's Youth Developer; Pastor Laura Olsen, January 26, 2014.

Endowment Grant Check for \$1466 presented to Messiah's Youth Developer, 23% of the total \$7003 2014 Grants made by Messiah's 14-year-old Endowment Fund.

Let us share your Good News

Have a service project you'd like to promote? Bringing in a speaker that you think people would like to see? Want to make your fund raiser more visible?

We can help! Email us at office@ewidsynod.org or call 509-838-9871 and we'll do what we can by Facebook, email, newsletter and our website.

Leadership in Ministry has offered family systems training to clergy and church leaders since 1992. This workshop is coming to the Collins Center near Portland in 2014 for the second year. It provides in-depth training in Edwin Friedman's application of Bowen family systems theory to congregations.

Attendees can:

- find greater sense of direction and purpose
- get clearer about what they are responsible for—and what they aren't
- learn an effective approach to conflict
- gain more energy and clarity for ministry

Dates for the workshop: April 28-30 and Nov. 3-5, 2014. Learn more and register at <http://www.leadershipinministry.org/> or contact Margaret Marcuson at Margaret@margaretmarcuson.com

The Book Parlor ministry seeks and celebrates God's presence for the life of the world by:

- *providing hospitality to all in a welcoming and safe space*
- *encouraging learning about God's presence in the world*
- *networking and collaborating with neighbors for the betterment of our community*
- *providing quality retail service as a full-service bookstore*

How many ways are there for **YOU to be part of The Book Parlor ministry?.....**

- Please help us spread the word about this great ministry here in West Central Spokane. Even as we begin our 14th year, we still encounter many who have never heard of us. Bring a friend in for coffee who may not know about us. Encourage your congregation **to call us when you're ordering Bibles, or Sunday School curriculum, or books for a study group.**
- **Thrivent Choice: If you are a member of Thrivent then you earn "Choice dollars". You can choose where to direct these "Choice Dollars", as long as the congregation or organization has been approved by Thrivent as a participating organization. However, if you don't choose an organization then those choice dollars simply disappear. The deadline is just around the corner (March 31st), even if you've designated choice dollars in the past they don't automatically renew so be sure to select an organization every year. The Lutheran Book Parlor is just such an organization. If you have any questions about Thrivent Choice, please call 1-800-THRIVENT (800-847-4836), email mail@thrivent.com or go to www.Choice.Thrivent.com. You'll notice that I've bolded our name a couple of times in this short article, which is because we used our full name when applying to Thrivent. You won't find us under just The Book Parlor, so be sure to type The Lutheran Book Parlor or speak it when directing your Choice Dollars.**
- AmazonSmile: A simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization (such as The Book Parlor) every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at www.smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. To support The Book Parlor through AmazonSmile **search for Salem Lutheran in Spokane, WA. But we'd still encourage you get your book purchases through The Book Parlor ☺**
- **Book Donations: If you're looking to clear out your book shelves (or get rid of those boxes of books that have been living in the basement, attic, or garage) The Book Parlor loves book donations. We work as a sort of "book adoption agency" finding good homes for books. Book donations not only help fund the ministry of The Book Parlor, they keep used book prices low for our neighbors who can't afford the pricier new book options.**
- **If you're more of a traditionalist and like to financially support us the old fashion way,** The Book Parlor always accepts financial donations in the form of checks or cash. You can also donate online at www.TheBookParlor.com.

We appreciate your support in all forms and every bit helps this unique ministry fulfill its mission. Thank You!



Adult Spirituality Retreat

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near.

-Isaiah 55:6

April 6-8, 2014
(Begins 6pm Sunday through 4pm Tuesday)

\$160

Retreat Leaders:
Jerry Aaker & Bruce McNab



Come as You Are: A Workshop on Prayer and Practical Spirituality

This Lenten workshop/retreat will give you an opportunity to look at your spiritual journey as you share with and learn from others. Lent is a good time to discover new ways to deepen your life in Christ and choose spiritual practices and forms of prayer that will be practical for you in your daily life and work as you move toward Easter and beyond. Retreat leaders Jerry Aaker and Bruce McNab bring incredible passion and expertise to this meaningful event for adults.



You are invited to a

Retreat

at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

March 2-4, 2014

RENEW RETREAT

Pastors, youth directors, and anyone working in youth and family ministry are invited to attend.

The retreat will have participants evaluate their current ministries, create a plan for renewed Youth and Family Ministry in their context, and be empowered to lead change for the sake of communicating the Gospel of Jesus into a new day.

This year's retreat will be led by Rev. Tim Coltvet, Coordinator of Contextual Learning and Coaching for Luther Seminary's Children, Youth, and Family department. He has served at two vibrant ELCA parishes in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN and enjoys helping congregations vision and shape their Children, Youth, and Family Ministries. Come to experience Tim's passion and expertise, while connecting and learning from other participants. Continuing education credits are available for this event through NRRIT.



Cost is \$160

Activities begin 6:00 PM on Sunday and conclude at 11:00 AM on Tuesday

Sierra Service Project



Youth: Building faith and strengthening communities through service to others.

Sierra Service Project (SSP) transforms the lives of teenagers through selfless service to others while strengthening marginalized communities.



Week-long Summer Service Projects for Junior High and High School Youth

Sierra Service Project offers week-long service projects during the summer for junior high and high school youth groups. Each summer, over 130 churches and 2,000 youth and their adult leaders join together at one of our six sites located in rural and urban communities across the western states.

At SSP, youth are safe to grow in their faith, learn new skills, and make new friends while serving those in need. Last summer volunteers completed 119 home repair projects and other types of community service. SSP serves the elderly, poor and marginalized. Our service is offered without strings attached and with respect and humility.



Generous Scholarship Assistance Available

SSP's Programs

- Summer Program at six locations throughout the western states beginning June 29th, 2014.
- Weekends of Service throughout the school year in Portland, Sacramento and Los Angeles for mixed junior high and high school youth groups.
- Study-and-Serve sessions in Central America for mature high school students and young adults.
- Alternative Breaks for college groups in Portland and Los Angeles customized to your schedule.

Visit our website for dates and availability.

www.sierraserviceproject.org



SAVE-THE-DATE

COLUMBIA BASIN ANNUAL FUNDRAISING BRUNCH

NEW HORIZONS

Sunday, March 9, 2014, at The Red Lion Hotel-Pasco
Social Hour at Noon • Brunch and Program at 1:00 pm

*Come celebrate the 50th anniversary of our outreach
to children and families in the Columbia Basin*

*Although there is no ticket or upfront cost to attend there will be an opportunity
to make a gift or pledge to support neighbors through the services of LCSNW*

EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS
Be a sponsor! Host a table! Volunteer your time!

Contact: Sara Clark, Development Director
509-735-6446 • sclark@lcsnw.org



Fairfield Community Church

(Zion Lutheran-ELCA and First Presbyterian -PCUSA)

*will begin their ministry
as a federated congregation
with a worship celebration*

*10:00 am Sunday March 23
at 206 W Hamilton
Fairfield, Washington*

*You are cordially invited
to join them in worship and in prayer.*

CONCORDIA CHOIR (MOORHEAD, MINN) IN CONCERT

Hear one of the nation's finest college choirs perform. René Clausen conducts the 79-voice a cappella choir in several spirituals and hymns plus some new dramatic new arrangements with Excelsior! instrumental trio. You've seen their Christmas concerts on television and Garrison Keillor calls them 'Exceptional!' Tickets available online at ConcordiaTickets.com, by calling 800-838-3006 or at the door. Visit www.TheConcordiaChoir.org for complete information.

Monday, February 24 at 7:30 p.m. in Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Thursday, February 27 at 7:30 p.m. in Walla Walla University Church.

Don't Wait! - Health Assessment - Take It Now!

If you have ELCA-Primary health benefits, we need your help. Currently, twenty three members have taken the assessment, we need 16 more people to take the test. Taking the assessment will help all of our synod's congregations and organizations collectively save an estimated 17,000 dollars on ELCA health contributions in 2014.

Find instructions for taking the health assessment at
myPortico.PorticoBenefits.org



AFTER the HARVEST in Nampa



by Pastor Meggan Manlove

The members of Trinity Lutheran Church in Nampa, Idaho, are living witnesses of the good news that is painted on the wall above the congregation's kitchen: "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry" (John 6:35).

The need for food distribution and assistance in southwest Idaho's Treasure Valley area and elsewhere in Idaho has been pretty clear. The unemployment rate for the county in which Trinity is located is about 7.5 percent; the poverty rate is 20 percent. In Nampa School District, 57 percent of the students qualify for free lunches. Statewide in 2013, the Idaho Food Bank served an average of 106,586 people per month and a total of 10,670,417 meals (12,804,501 pounds of food) for the year.

Responding to this need, the members of Trinity founded Trinity Community Garden in the spring of 2008. The original plot was planted in the congregation's backyard. Soon the ministry expanded to additional garden plots on properties of the congregation's members and then grew to gleaning the fields of local commercial vegetable gardens.

Southwest Idaho's high desert climate, combined with plenty of irrigation, lends itself to good growing conditions for both commercial vegetable farmers and community gardens. As a result, area food banks and food pantries have been receiving increasing quantities of fresh produce to give to low-income individuals and families. There is now a population of food pantry clients in southwest Idaho who regularly receive produce, such as cabbage, corn and squash. But clients don't always know how to prepare the produce they receive and have a need to preserve vegetables and fruit for use during the non-growing months. Trinity's community garden ministry wanted to help make it possible for families of all incomes to eat nutritious produce throughout the year and also to provide recipes for tasty and healthy meals made with produce grown close to home.

The motivation to offer education came a few years ago when Trinity hosted the University of Idaho Extension's Idaho Victory Garden course and junior master gardener day camp. Soon after that, the garden's founder, an advanced master gardener, began teaching "How to garden the Trinity Community Gardens way." With the help of funding from an ELCA Domestic Hunger Grant, Trinity's hunger ministry began offering education opportunities on food preparation and preservation. Congregation members have been going through the University of Idaho Extension's training process to become certified food safety advisors — also called master food preservers.

"Almost everything I had learned about canning from my mom and grandma was thrown out the window," said 34-year-old Amanda Hanson, one of the newly trained advisors. "In seven weeks I learned everything from canning green beans to dehydrating strawberries. Now I feel more confident that I can preserve food safely and confidently. I am excited to share what I have learned with others and teach our food preservation classes this fall."

This past summer, Trinity hosted a three-session, hands-on workshop on food preservation taught by the advisors and a county extension educator. At the same time, simple recipes such as summer squash gratin, corn salad and turnip fries were being collected for a cookbook. Each recipe had to have six or fewer ingredients and feature produce as the central component of the dish. The new cookbook incorporates information collected for the county's Eat Smart Idaho effort, a nutrition program for low-income individuals and families. It includes preservation instructions, nutrition facts, pictures to help identify varieties of produce (like different kinds of squash) and several recipes.

Trinity Community Gardens' reach and impact continues to grow well beyond the bountiful garden plots and putting beautiful, healthy produce into the hands of people. Their volunteers are teaching people new skills, healthy practices and self-sufficiency. Trinity's ministry and community garden is as much about relieving hunger as it is about growing faith and hope.

HELPING KIDS AT ALL SAINTS

Peaceful Valley is a small working-class neighborhood just to the west of downtown Spokane on the south bank of the Spokane River. It was a camping and salmon fishing site for the Spokane Indians. In the 1890s, the area was home to the many laborers who helped rebuild Spokane after the Great Fire in 1889. In 1893, a developer gave it the name “Peaceful Valley,” preferring that name to the area’s earlier name of “Poverty Flats.” Peaceful Valley has remained a beautiful area and home to working class families and artists. Most of the homes were built between 1900 and 1940 and due to its location, it has retained an identity and an atmosphere separate from both the city of Spokane and its upscale neighbor above it, Browne’s Addition.

The Peaceful Valley Community Center has been housed in a small World War II era building, on city parks department property, that has been inadequate for years. About 2006, the community center board started working on plans to update, replace or fix their space to better accommodate programming needs. Many ideas were discussed, but a lack of funding or suitable property always interfered with ideas.

In 2012, Pastor Alan Eschenbacher and All Saints Lutheran Church in Browne’s Addition was approached by Peaceful Valley Community Center (PVCC) director Mark Reilly about the possibility of using space at All Saints for their youth programs. Pastor Alan says, “I met with their board and eventually became a PVCC board member. The basement of the church seemed to be a good idea but fire codes made its use as a children’s center unfeasible. The entire basement space would need major construction, including an outside entrance, to make it work.”

Despite the challenges, work continued. “Planning was

continued through the generous donation of time by architects from Heylman Martin.” Pastor Alan continues. “Plans were drawn, funding and contracts between the community center and the church were discussed. Finally after 18 months of struggle a plan came together with help from the state of Washington capital budget and also block grant money from several neighborhoods.”

The groundbreaking ceremony was held on December 6, 2013. Construction should begin in earnest by April and be finished in time for the community centers summer youth programs.

“The Peaceful Valley Youth Program is a huge asset to this community,” said Spokane Councilman Jon Snyder. “This new facility will expand the amount of people this program reaches.” “This is a big step forward for the Youth Program and we are all excited to see this project come together,” said Councilman Mike Allen.

All Saints also hosts a community dinner and community garden. It is a congregation that looks for ways to be salt and light in the neighborhood, forming partnerships with many agencies to serve God’s people.



**EASTERN
WASHINGTON
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of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

314 S. Spruce St., Suite A
Spokane, WA 99201-5823



March 2014 Newsletter

Let Down the Nets

Lifting Our Vision

Jesus First, Last, Always

God's Grace, Our Gratitude

The Spirit Powers Us

No Fear! Transformation

Connections Multiply Miracles

Go, Tell & Serve

Please reproduce any and all articles for publication in congregational newsletters or bulletins.

The **Cross Connection** is also available on the synod website at www.ewaisynod.org.

Deadline for articles is the 5th of each month.



God's Work. Our Hands.

Synod Calendar

March 2014

- 9 LCSNW New Horizons Brunch - Pasco
- 9-12 Lutheran Staff Association @ Cannon Beach
- 12 Fig Tre Annual Fundraiser
- 15 Ecumenical Latino Ministry Event
- 20-21 Deans' Meeting
- 28 Assembly Resolution/Nomination Deadline

April 2014

- 4-5 Rev. Alan Roxburgh at Whitworth University
- 6 St. John's Sprague Sausage Feed
- 7 Synod Assembly Registration Deadline
- 12 LCSNW Chocolate and Champagne Gala
- 26 LCM-EWU Auction at Central Lutheran Spokane
- 26 Ventures Training at Zion, Spokane Valley



Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our Hands

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When Less Is More: The Consequences of Clergy Turnover

James served on the staff of two large churches before accepting a call as a solo pastor for a small rural congregation. After three years, he wonders if his leadership has made a difference. Gloria accepted a call to lead an urban congregation immediately after seminary. After a decade in ministry there, she wonders if she is still the best leader for the church. Jeremy heard from his seminary mentor that a wonderful church, served for twenty-five years by an esteemed pastor who has announced his retirement, is seeking a new pastor. Should he apply?

Pastoral change is a part of every congregation's life. Pastors serve a congregation about five years before leaving for another call. Protestant pastors currently in ministry have served, on average, in three or four church positions. Pastors tend to stay longer in any particular ministry position the longer they are in ministry because frequent job changes tend to occur in the earlier years of ministry service.

In addition to the individual circumstances of each church, the amount of time a pastor remains in any single position varies greatly by their denominational affiliation, theological training, and career stage. However, research conducted over an eight-year period tracked a sample of congregations to explore how a change in pastoral leadership affected those churches.¹ What did the study reveal?

About half of the congregations experienced a pastoral transition. Conservative Protestant churches were the least likely to experience a pastor turnover; only 29 percent of these churches welcomed a new senior or solo pastor between 2001 and 2008. Similarly, relatively few Catholic parishes experienced priest turnover, with only 36 percent of these parishes welcoming a different senior pastor. The biggest clergy turnover occurred among mainline Protestant churches. Two-thirds of these churches received a new senior or solo pastor during those eight years.

Church Conflict Makes a Difference

Clergy often leave congregations when conflict, resistance to change, and diminished ministry oppor-

tunities discourage them. One in four churches with different pastors in 2008 than in 2001 said that the church had experienced major conflict, leading a pastor or minister to leave.

What is the conflict about? One out of three pastors reported leadership style as a source of the church conflict. But other disagreements erupted into conflict around church finances, changes in worship services, or renovating or building new facilities.

Even more serious is major conflict that leads to a church split. One in ten pastoral leaders serving their congregation since 2001 reported that one outcome had been the departure of members to form a new church.

Negative Consequences of Clergy Turnover?

Many mainline Protestant churches that went through a pastoral transition also declined in size. Mainline Protestant churches that lost their 2001 pastor also experienced a loss in worship attendance between 2001 and 2008. And the majority of churches (seven out of ten) with different pastors in 2008 reported some decline in worship attendance. Those mainline Protestant churches that retained



"REMEMBER US?...THE MITCHELLS?...
YOU PASTORED OUR CHURCH FOR SIX WEEKS IN 1996?..."

their pastor reported almost no change in worship attendance. Only half of churches with the same pastor reported any decline in worship attendance.

The relationship between clergy turnover and growth is less clear in conservative Protestant churches. Conservative Protestant churches that lost their 2001 pastor actually increased their worship attendance by an average of almost 18 attendees. Those conservative Protestant congregations that retained their pastor declined slightly in size.

Do pastoral turnovers create numerical decline? It's complicated. Many factors play a role in decreasing or increasing worship attendance and growing church vitality. Sometimes numerical decline even precedes the pastor's departure. Any picture of clergy turnover does not capture the *quality* of pastoral leadership. The consequences for the congregation are quite different when an effective leader departs versus when an ineffective pastor leaves for a new call.

Positive Consequences of Clergy Turnover?

Research indicates that longer tenures give pastors more time to build relationships, lead through a period of change, and resolve long-standing conflict. Further, a new pastor can take several years to reinvigorate members' energy and investment in congregational life after such a transition.

New pastors are more likely to lead effectively if they listen to members' responses to the following:

- What issues and questions dominate the discussions at governing board meetings?
- What are the most important things that happened in the congregation in the past several years?
- What are some of the best things happening in the congregation right now?
- What are some of your hopes and dreams for the congregation over the next five years?

The first few years of a new pastorate set the stage for long-term effectiveness. In smaller churches especially, new pastors must first earn the trust of members. Visiting and building relationships helps the new pastor identify and affirm the gifts and talents in the congregation. In larger congregations, lay leaders want to see if the new pastor is a proactive leader who is willing to take the initiative or a more reactive leader who responds to others' initiative.

New ministers invariably inherit staff currently employed by the congregation. Lay leadership smooths the way when they quietly inform existing staff members that the new pastor will be given the

authority to build a new staff team and those terminations may be made by the new pastor. In this way, lay leadership and not the new pastor introduce the idea that staff changes may be necessary.

Advice to new pastors: Proceed with caution—only so much can be accomplished in the first year. It is enough to start a process where members begin to grasp a new vision for the future and become increasingly aware of new possibilities.²

Long Pastorates as More Chapters

If a new pastor negotiates the first year or chapter with an interim understanding—as a transitional leader between the past and the future, the stage is set for the next successful chapter. Long pastorates are actually a series of terms or chapters. Change necessitates that the current contract between the pastor and the congregation must be renegotiated. A new contract calls for retraining lay leaders, recruiting leaders with different skills, employing a new leadership team, and perhaps even revising existing rules. Likewise, pastors must reassess their role, leadership style, and ability to recreate themselves for the new congregation forming before them. Pastors who grasp the concept of chapters are better equipped to serve beyond the first or second term, which lasts between five and ten years.

In year three, James is still in his first term as pastor of the small rural church. Absent any major conflict, after another two or three years, he can discern whether his gifts and skills are right for the congregation's next chapter. Gloria, in year ten, has clearly finished a first term. Her discernment will center on whether her call to the congregation is going to be a long-term pastorate. If Jeremy is going to seriously consider a new call, his job is to ask questions to learn about the congregation's focus and commitments. Together he and the lay leadership can discern if his gifts are likely to bear fruit for the church's next chapter.

In every chapter of ministry, the goal is to flourish. Lillian Daniel, a United Church of Christ pastor captures the joy of ministry: "I do love being a minister. I love the agility it calls forth in me and the chaos that only Jesus could organize into a calling."³

1. The U.S. Congregational Life Survey, 2001–2008 (www.USCongregations.org).

2. Material drawn from *Wisdom from Lyle E. Schaller*, edited by Warren Bird (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012).

3. "Minute Fifty Four," *What is Good Ministry?* (www.pulpitandpew.duke.edu).