

# ALASKA SYNOD NEWS

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### Developing a Story Budget

*The Rev. Carol George; foreword by the Rev. Lisa Smith Fiegel*

Most people relate better to stories than numbers. Of course numbers, data, facts and figures are important, but those things tend to inform, while a story tends to inspire, encourage, empower or delight. At your congregation's annual meeting, you'll have a chance to review your budget for the coming year. Want to make your numbers come alive? Consider a narrative (or story) budget, presented side by side with a line-item budget. Why?...[Find out here.](#)



### Parochial reports

There are good reasons to complete your congregation's [Annual Report](#), but here's one: The Office of the Presiding Bishop is working with ELCA seminaries to implement ways to reduce debt pastors accumulate in seminary. This work has been supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, in part because this church could show trends in congregational membership and giving that can **impact a pastor's salary**. How did we obtain this data? From the dedicated people who complete their annual reports. Thank you! Please complete congregational reports by Feb. 15, 2015.

### "Yellow Pages" Scam Targets Church Admins

New and Seasoned Church Administrators should be aware of a regular scam that often comes by fax. The scammers, American Yellow Group, Inc., use an old Yellow Pages "walking finger logo" and send a bill demanding payment for a Yellow Pages listing. They often threaten credit damaging action if payment is not made. Do not reply to the fax. You may report the scam to the Better Business Bureau. [bbb.org](http://bbb.org). A copy of the fax scam may be [viewed here](#). A video news release is available [here](#)



### New PO Boxes for Churchwide Giving

If you or your congregation make certain donations directly to the churchwide organization, you should note that they now receive contributions at two PO Boxes in Merrifield, VA. Details can be found on the Alaska Synod website: <http://www.elcaalaska.net/giving.html> or in [this note](#) from Christina Jackson-Skelton, Executive Director for Mission Advancement, ELCA.

**Risk Reporter Online** Check Out this Resource from Church Mutual Insurance Featured this month-[The mission: possible](#). Prep work is key to safe missionary trips. Mission trips are important to many religious organizations, but in the midst of the excitement it's easy to overlook necessary logistic preparations. Follow these guidelines to keep your missionaries safe. *Also in this month's issue*-[Managing Your Risks](#): Don't let hazardous materials go down the drain. [Seasonal Spotlight](#): Churches in every area at risk for frozen pipes. [Q/A Perspective](#): Is your Congregation Ready for a Disaster?

### **Historic Photo Search**

AK Child & Family is celebrating their 125th anniversary! They're in search of photos from the Lutheran Youth Center, which was one of the original bodies that merged with several others to form AK Child & Family. The Center was in Cordova from circa 1900 to 1964, then moved to Palmer, and in 1970 went to Anchorage. If you have any photos, AK Child & Family would love the chance to copy and display them. Contact the Synod Office or send pictures to AK Child & Family Director of Spiritual Life, Kelli Williams [kwilliams@akchild.org](mailto:kwilliams@akchild.org); (907) 348-9201.



### **Wartburg Theological Seminary Presidential Announcement**

The Board of Directors at Wartburg Theological Seminary invites nominations and applications for the calling of its next president. The presidential search committee will review applications on January 23, 2015. [Details Here](#).

### **2015 St. Mary's Outreach Mission Funds GRANT APPLICATION**

St. Mary's Episcopal Church offers an opportunity to apply for grant funds for any community group that is doing work that benefits the greater good of our community. In the past our St. Mary's Mission Outreach Funding has funded spiritual retreats for people living with HIV/AIDS, alcohol intervention programs, clergy education and training in the Diocese of Upper Shire, Malawi, Africa, Dancing with the Spirit gospel music camps, and much more. Read more about the grant funds and [how to apply here](#).

### **Global Church Sponsorship Resources**

Inspire your members with a free PlaceMap that shows where God is working through ELCA Missionaries, and share the excitement of building up Christ's global church together with this great brochure and more! Investigate these informative [items here](#).

## EVENTS

### **The Glacier Brass Quintet in Concert**

January 25, 4:30pm; 1420 N St, Anchorage near Inlet View School & Westchester Lagoon  
The concert series at Anchorage Lutheran Church is pleased to sponsor The Glacier Brass in performance. Admission is free but donations are gratefully accepted for the musicians. Music of Henry Fillmore, Johannes Brahms, Gustav Holst, Saint-Saens, J.S. Bach, and a relatively new arrangement by Kevin McKee will comprise the program. Ensemble members include Jennifer Edwards, trombone; John Cleveland and Sam Cliff, trumpets; Darrel Kincaid, French horn; and Jeff Manley on tuba.

### **Savvy Social Security Planning**

[What Baby Boomers Need To Know to Maximize Retirement Income.](#)

January 26th, 3 Anchorage Locations

January 27th, 2 Valley Locations

Join special guest speaker Mark A Peterson, Wealth Adviser, ChFC, FIC\* Thrivent

Financial \* 12 Years Experience \*Seattle Magazine's 5 Star Wealth Manager past 6 years

consecutively. This **complimentary workshop** covers the basics of Social Security and reveals strategies for maximizing your benefits, including:

- \* Five factors to consider when deciding when to apply for benefits.
- \* How to minimize taxes on Social Security benefits.
- \* How to coordinate Social Security with your other sources of retirement income.

[Read details, locations and times here.](#)

### **Prepare-Enrich Certification Class**

Rev. Carol George will be facilitating a certification class for using Prepare-Enrich pre-marital and marriage counseling materials on Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to 4:00 PM. Cost of the course, certification and all materials is \$175. Registration forms are available online at [www.lifeinnovations.com](http://www.lifeinnovations.com) or you may phone Pastor Carol at (907)227-7501 or at St. Mark (907)276-6231.

### **Diana Butler Bass Learning Event**

Diana Butler Bass will be in Alaska January 30-31, 2015. Her learning event will be held at St. John UMC and the FREE public lecture will be held at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. Here is the [information sheet and registration form](#). You can visit her [website](#) for more information about her.



### **Lutheran Winter Community Camp**

Friday, January 30th- Sunday, February 1, 2015.

Held at Victory Bible Camp, Mile 95 Glenn Hwy; Sutton, AK.

A weekend of Christian camp for singles, couples and families. ALL are welcome!

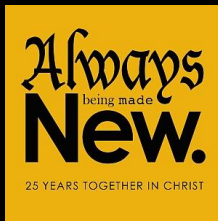
Register today at [www.aklutherancamps.org](http://www.aklutherancamps.org)

[Details Here.](#)

### **Domestic Violence Help**

[Click here](#) for contact information on crisis teams across Alaska and to find programs in your area that can help.

[Click here](#) for resources from the ELCA website for helping nurture families dealing with Domestic Violence.



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*Try it FREE today.*

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