

# 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

June 2014

God's Beloved People,

This issue of the Cross Connection has to be processed just before Synod Assembly so I can't report to you on the work we've just accomplished. Please watch for this space next month for news of our synod in Assembly!

In the meantime I've driven cross-state several times in the last month and it has made me remember a Synod Assembly report from a few years ago when I reported on the incredibly lush and beautiful quilted land we steward. My reflections on that occasion had to do with the varieties of green growth one could witness from a car window and an abundant sense of thanks for the farmers and families who tend this land, producing our food.

On this occasion I've seen a different kind of quilted wonder in the last month and it prompts this thank you. Thank you to all the women and men who so faithfully produce beautiful quilts each year! In our office we've seen picture and after picture of quilts adorning the pews for a Sunday prayer of blessings.

Thanks to the women and their faithful groups who meet each month to design, cut, tie, and pack quilts for shipment all over the world! Thanks to the men who set up tables, design contraptions to raise the tables to the right height, and design and build the elaborate storage shelves and bins needed for just the

perfect quilting room! At Our Savior, Twin Falls, and Lord of Life, Kennewick, these new quilting rooms became the pride and joy of the new building!

From the deft hands of our women come these soft expressions of our compassion and care for people all over the world. Some quilts become baptismal blankets; some quilts adorn camp beds at Lutherhaven, Luther Heights, and Holden Village; other quilts are packed for shipment through Lutheran World Relief and become warmth after a natural disaster. In Tanzania, at the Lutheran Church in Jerusalem, and in our Augusta Victoria hospital on the West Bank, I've seen these quilts wrapped around newborns, hospital patients, and the elderly poor. These blankets are the very tangible embrace reflecting our prayers for those in need. They are the sweet offerings and widow's mite extended from woman to woman. They are often a child's most precious possession and they are a remembrance shared from congregation to first-year students headed to college, the military or trade school.

Thank you quilters and helpers!  
This season has been rich with the colors and textures of your work and we give thanks!

Pastor Martin Wells, bishop



## A New Ministry for 18-25 year olds; ALT YEAR

by Pastor Helga Jansons (Director for Evangelical Mission)

Last April I went on to Toledo to visit my son, Erik, who is part of the ALT Year program that Pr Josh Graber is leading. If you haven't heard about this 9 month GAP program for 18-25 year olds you can read about it in July 2013 The Lutheran [http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article\\_id=11515](http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=11515) or go to [www.altyear.org](http://www.altyear.org) It is for young adults from anywhere in the country; not just the NW Ohio synod.

Eight young adults have lived in downtown Toledo in a large apartment. Their studies and activities are led and overseen by pastoral staff, in addition to Josh, who is balancing his time between the Toledo group and trying to grow the program nationally in other synods. They have support from their "home base" ELCA church -St Paul's – in downtown Toledo, a block away from their apartment.

Each participant has host parents and worships with them in their churches. People from these congregations share meals with all the ALT participants and spend time with them. Those connections have meant a lot to the group. ALT participants meet individually with a pastor once a month who talks to them about their personal goals and how they are progressing with those. The young adults said how much they appreciated this and that they didn't know a pastor could be available for that kind of thing.

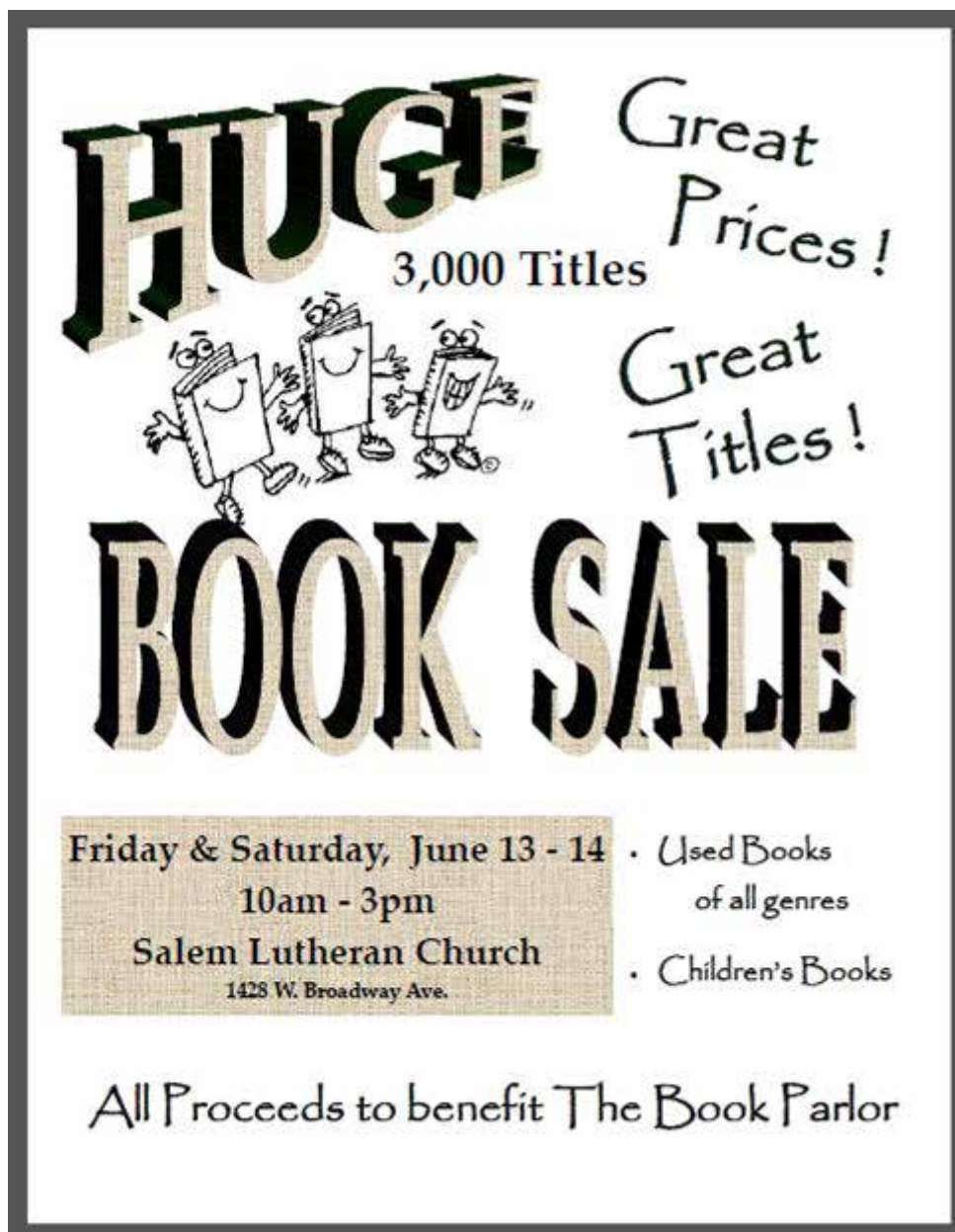
Every morning they do devotions and a bible study. Their activities and learning revolve around a monthly theme. They have read and discussed books together like *On Our Way*; *Christian Practices for living a whole life* edited by Dorothy Bass and Susan Briehl, and *Irresistible Revolution* by Shane Claiborne. Community members come and meet with them to talk about their leadership and work. The participants help lead worship and prepare presentations on various subjects.

They have made trips to the Holocaust Memorial, anti-racism events, worship spaces of other faiths, prayer walks...to longer trips such as a wilderness experience and media "fast" where they could not use technology for a week. They lived on a farm and got a taste of rural life and have spent many hours in service projects. They also have visited the Lutheran Center in where they attended a Lay Ministry School conference, learned about community organizing and took the Myers Briggs test. My son turned out to be an extrovert! Could the ALT program have transformed someone's personality like that?

Perhaps the most unique learning is not the planned experiences but the day to day coexistence together. These eight people have lived in the same apartment and spent their days learning together. They are a diverse group from very different walks of life. There have been tensions between them, a death in the family, ill health and at times some have wanted to leave. The challenging circumstances that come up in daily life have been processed under pastoral and committee leadership.

Our son has learned how to be responsible in this shared life and get along with people who did not choose each other, bear each other's burdens and enjoy each other. His values seem to have changed and now he cares more about those in poverty than his own comforts and desires. It is a huge investment to put into so few people. As one young man said "Now I want to be in all the nooks and crannies of the church". I think this ministry and the people who participate in it have the potential to make an impact and give back to the ELCA for the future. You might know of someone who would like to participate in this program. Or, your church or cluster may like to host one in your community.





**HUGE** Great Prices!  
3,000 Titles  
Great Titles!  
**BOOK SALE**

Friday & Saturday, June 13 - 14 • Used Books of all genres  
10am - 3pm • Children's Books  
Salem Lutheran Church  
1428 W. Broadway Ave.

All Proceeds to benefit The Book Parlor

The advertisement features a central illustration of three smiling, anthropomorphic books with faces, arms, and legs, standing together. The text is arranged around and below this illustration. The word 'HUGE' is in large, bold, 3D-style letters at the top left. To its right, 'Great Prices!' is written in a cursive font. Below 'HUGE' is '3,000 Titles'. To the right of the book illustration is 'Great Titles!' in a cursive font. The words 'BOOK SALE' are in large, bold, 3D-style letters at the bottom center. Below this, a light brown rectangular box contains the event details: 'Friday & Saturday, June 13 - 14', '10am - 3pm', and 'Salem Lutheran Church, 1428 W. Broadway Ave.'. To the right of this box are two bullet points: '• Used Books of all genres' and '• Children's Books'. At the very bottom, the text 'All Proceeds to benefit The Book Parlor' is written in a simple font.

## ***Don't Forget!***

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, 2014***  
**Speaker will be Rev. Dr. Timothy Wengert**

## Call Process Status

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

POS	LOCATION/CONGREGATION	STATUS	PASTORAL CARE	
P	Boise, ID – King of Glory	NV	Kari Sansgaard	LP
P	Bonnors Ferry, ID – Trinity	B	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



**Join us on Facebook!**

<https://www.facebook.com/EasternWashingtonIdahoSynodELCA>



# HOPE

## 2014 Synod Assembly

Spokane, Washington

May 16-18, 2014

We would like to thank the people who spent countless hours volunteering to make this year's Synod Assembly such a success. Ushers and programming, worship and decorations, facilities and music all play a part in the Assembly, and we had a lot of volunteer help to get the job done. Thanks for doing your part!



# Presiding bishop

Elizabeth A. Eaton

## Sharp sword, polished arrow

God equipped prophets—and continues with us—to bring hope to God’s people



MICHAEL D. WATSON

**P**icture this: Surrounded by an alien culture; worried about keeping young people engaged; a nonfunctioning government; a religious establishment in disarray; the economy is a mess; competing and beguiling demands on people’s attention, time and loyalty; a worship facility in serious need of repair; a dizzying rate of change; and people either

tempted to throw out all forms of the past or to cling mindlessly to tradition for fear of change.

Sound familiar? This describes the people of God in exile in Babylon after the fall of Jerusalem.

This was the world to which the prophet Isaiah was called to speak God’s word of judgment, promise and hope. Isaiah 49:1-7 is the Old Testament reading for Tuesday of Holy Week. It’s the day when our pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses and diaconal ministers are invited to renew the vows they made when consecrated, commissioned or ordained. It is the day when the oil for baptism or healing is blessed. It’s a time for these dear servants of the gospel to come to be fed with word and sacrament. It’s also a time to be encouraged to continue their ministry and the ministry entrusted to God’s servants throughout the ages.

The world in Isaiah’s time was in turmoil. It’s clear he doubted anything was being accomplished: “I have labored in vain, I spent my strength for nothing and vanity” (Isaiah 49:4).

We feel that way sometimes—the “parking lot meetings” that take place after church council, years of preaching and teaching about the death and resurrection of Jesus and yet we still argue about which group gets to use the church parlor (I once had two committees arguing over the use of a slot spoon), or worship wars over styles of music, contention between parishioners while wearing WWJD bracelets.

But it is to this wonderful, often frustrating, ever-changing mission that we have been called and have been equipped. Like Isaiah, God has given us God’s word that has the power of life. And, equipped with God’s word, we are armed with a

sharp sword and a polished arrow (Isaiah 49:2).

It is likely Isaiah might have felt a little underequipped when contending with kings. After all, in a world that decides the rise and fall of nations with real swords and arrows (or guns, money or political power), the metaphorical weapon of God’s word might seem like a feeble piece of equipment. In difficult, conflicted, intractable situations I sometimes feel a little naked armed only with the word of God. But time and time again God has sent prophets into the breach equipped only with God’s word of life.

One can imagine the reaction of opponents armed with real weapons when faced with the Lord’s servants armed with God’s word.

Think: Pharaoh when he saw Moses. The Canaanite kings when they saw Deborah. The lions when they saw Daniel. *Really?* Haman when he saw Esther. Goliath when he saw David. An ossified and compromised church when it saw an Augustinian monk. *Really?* Institutional racism when it saw Martin Luther King Jr. The Montgomery Transit Authority when it saw Rosa Parks. The Salvadoran generals when they saw Oscar Romero. The Liberian warlords when they saw Laymah Gbowee. Death when it saw Jesus hanging on the cross. *Really?* A culture of cynicism and materialism. A culture gripped by anxiety. The indifferent and the hostile. The angry and the desperate ... when they see you. *Really!*

**It is likely Isaiah might have felt a little underequipped when contending with kings.**

“For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart’” (1 Corinthians 1:18-19).

In his commentary on Second Isaiah, Harvard Divinity School Old Testament professor Paul D. Hanson wrote, “For the human servant called to serve the world-embracing purposes of God, one of the chief temptations is to scale back the assignment to human dimensions.” We all do that from time to time. We lose sight of the cross. We are distracted by threatening forces around us. But it is to us, we earthen vessels, and for such a time as this that God’s mission has been entrusted. We may not see the fruits of our labor, but through us God will bring hope to God’s people. □

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

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



## ***We Made It!!! - Health Assessment Thank You!***

If you took the time to complete your health assessment, thank you. You are, in part, responsible for saving your congregation and yourself some money on the cost of healthcare coverage. You also are responsible for helping the synod recover a few thousand dollars from Portico, as an incentive to help us all take better care of ourselves. If you didn't take the assessment, you can still take it - it provides you with valuable information about you.

Find instructions for taking the health assessment at [myPortico.PorticoBenefits.org](http://myPortico.PorticoBenefits.org)



Not "Where in the Synod is That".  
Groundbreaking at Luther Heights.

### **MISSION INTERPRETER TRAINING**

**June 14, 2014**

We have a wonderful ELCA, one worth knowing about and sharing. Mission Interpreters share the story - and the stories - about what our ELCA is doing around the country and around the world. Can you be a part of that mission?

Pastors, do you know someone who would be a good storyteller?

There will be a training session for Mission Interpreters on Saturday, June 14 from 9 am to noon at Central Lutheran Church, 512 S. Bernard in Spokane. Contact Betty Krafft at 509-768-3138 if you can attend.

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# Companions on the Journey

by Wendy Healy

On May 4, as ELCA congregations recall the Luke 24:13-35 text, the well-known road to Emmaus story, congregations in the ELCA South Dakota Synod took the less traveled route called *Companeros de Camino*.

The Spanish translation means companions “along the way,” or “on the journey,” and the South Dakota Synod hopes to engage as many congregations and communities as possible on this special Sunday to learn about the lives of immigrants who are our companions on the way. The activities and worship resources pay particular attention to young adults who have lived here undocumented since they were very young and now desire to attend college.

“*Companeros de Camino* Sunday is a time to connect the road to Emmaus story with the new U.S. Deferred Action legislation that provides a path to education,” said Jeanette Clark, mission developer and pastor serving *Pueblos de Dios* in Sioux Falls, S.D. Jeanette hopes that all Lutheran congregations embrace the biblical connection between Jesus welcoming orphans, widows and strangers, and walking with immigrants today. “We need to support youth and adults as they try to make their way in the United States.”

South Dakota, as is the case with a number of states, receives new immigrants — both documented and undocumented — every day, particularly in areas with improving employment rates and growing economies.

The idea for *Companeros de Camino* came from conversations among South Dakota synodical leaders and *Pueblo de Dios*, a new ministry under development that reaches out to the Latino community and works in close partnership with Augustana Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls. *Companeros de Camino* Sunday focuses on young adults who have lived in the United States since they were very young and now wish to attend college. Jeanette has been pastor at *Pueblo de Dios* for the past 18 months. Set in a diverse neighborhood, their Spanish-language and bilingual ministry draws mostly first-generation immigrants and their children.

“The Spanish-speaking population in the area has grown substantially in the past eight years,” said Jeanette, “now estimated at 8,000 to 12,000 residents, so it’s a really growing area.” She says the goal of *Companeros de Camino* is to raise awareness for Deferred Action federal legislation. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said that children of immigrants who came to this country under the age of 16 are not at risk of being removed and can attend college.

Bill Tesch, director for evangelical mission in the South Dakota Synod, carries a keen sense of relationship between the present and future when it comes to the implications of Deferred Action for young immigrants. “I believe that following Jesus means seeing past issues and complications to the person that God has put right in front of us. That’s what Jesus did every time,” said Bill.

“Each Wednesday evening my wife and daughter and I are blessed to be placed in the midst of six middle and high school-aged boys, several of whom could one day benefit from Deferred Action. They love hearing the story of God, and they dream about their future. Together we can help countless kids like them realize their dreams.”

One of the young people this ministry is helping is Erika, an 18-year-old who immigrated to the United States from Mexico when she was 8. A beneficiary of Deferred Action, Erika has graduated from high school and is going to college to study business management. Erika has had challenges: feelings of fear, coming to a new country with no friends, and having to weather cold South Dakota winters. Erika says she’s glad she’s here now, because she “wants to be something.”

Special offerings from *Companeros de Camino* Sunday will be used, said Jeanette, to help defray college application costs for Deferred Action students, which can often exceed \$450.

“People of faith can disagree,” said Bill, “but quite apart from the politics of this issue, we hope that we can all see the real human need and the opportunity to make a life-changing difference in the lives of these amazing young companions on our way.” Jeanette hopes that this Sunday will be a conversation-starter and will help allay people’s fears and prejudices.

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## "God's work. Our hands." Sunday Sept. 7, 2014



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,  
"God's work. Our hands." Sunday celebrates who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America — one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. On **Sunday, Sept. 7, 2014**, ELCA congregations will gather once again for a day dedicated to serving the communities in which we live. Every day you do the work of serving your neighbors and sharing God's love with others. "God's work. Our hands." Sunday provides us with the opportunity to do God's work together.

The first "God's work. Our hands." Sunday, held in 2013, gave members of all ages an opportunity to live out their faith in service to others. As a church that believes God is calling us into the world together, we shared Jesus' love with our neighbors through a multitude of service projects — from preparing meals for people who are homeless to cleaning up beaches and parks, from visiting with the elderly to writing letters to military personnel. We did all of this and more.

We hope you are considering plans to organize a day of service. To help guide your congregation's planning, download a toolkit at [www.ELCA.org/dayofservice](http://www.ELCA.org/dayofservice). T-shirts are once again available from Old Lutheran to help increase the visual impact across the ELCA. Sign up your congregation for the day of service by following the simple steps listed below. This will allow us to keep your congregation updated with new information for what we pray will be another remarkable day of service.

### Register in four steps:

1. Click [here](#) to go to the **Registration** page
2. Insert your Congregational ID number
3. Insert your ELCA member number: **L022791**
4. Provide contact information and answer a few questions

Shortly after Sept. 7, we will invite you to share stories about your congregation's participation. Send your stories and photos to [LivingLutheran@elca.org](mailto:LivingLutheran@elca.org), so that together we can celebrate what God accomplishes through you. We are church together. We are church for the sake of the world. With our hands, we do God's work of restoring and reconciling communities in Jesus Christ's name throughout the world. I look forward to doing this work together on "God's work. Our hands." Sunday and every day.  
In Christ who frees us,

*Elizabeth A. Eaton*

Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

[Register your congregation](#) for  
"God's work. Our hands."  
Sunday.



Plan your day from start to  
finish using this [toolkit](#).



Order your [T-shirts](#) today!

Yellow: wear it, share it.





**Northwest Washington Synod**  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
 God's work. Our hands.

### For Those Who May Serve In A Church Where Clergy Misconduct Has Previously Occurred

**Friday June 6th 10am - 4pm at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Renton**

Clergy misconduct, and the resulting violation of trust, is a devastating event in the life of a congregation. While steps are taken to prevent misconduct, the unhealthy dynamics it can create within the congregation may persist for years. ELCA Misconduct Consultant Barbara Keller will lead a workshop for all pastors who, intentionally or unintentionally, find themselves in this ministry situation. Interim pastors are especially encouraged to attend, and all clergy are invited.

Cost is \$20, includes materials and lunch.

## Boundaries Workshop

**For Those Working With Children & Youth**

**Saturday June 7th 9:30am - 12:30pm at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Renton**

The NW WA and SW WA synods are hosting a half-day workshop on healthy boundary issues for those in congregations and ministries who work with children, youth, and other vulnerable populations. This is a perfect event for full-time or part-time staff members and volunteers. ELCA Misconduct Consultant Barbara Keller will lead this workshop.

Cost is \$10, includes materials and morning refreshments.

[Online Registration Click Here](#)

For more information:  
 Northwest Washington Synod, ELCA  
[susan@lutheransnw.org](mailto:susan@lutheransnw.org)

### Icicle River Middle School Community Solar Project You Can Help Bring Solar Power to Leavenworth!



The **Community Solar Project** will be the first one installed in Chelan County under a WA State program allowing a community to finance a solar-electric installation on local public property.

*Those who invest become temporary owners of the solar system recouping their investment, with a modest return, through cost recovery payments from Chelan County PUD over six years.*

*Then the solar system will belong to the School District and continue to produce electricity for 30 or more years.*

*Students & the public can see the solar system work on the Internet.*

**We can do this!**

**You can put solar power on our middle school**

Anyone can make a donation to support the project.

**To invest** you must be a PUD customer and you, or a relative, have participated in some way with the Cascade School District (the government entity receiving the project) or with Faith Lutheran Church (the project administrator), or come to the meeting!

**Applications to receive an offer to invest accepted starting April 18, 2014**  
 Applications will be processed based on USPS postmark date on or after April 18<sup>th</sup> - first come, first to receive offer. \$9,000 to be raised. Investments can be made in increments of \$500 up to \$10,000

For more information go to: [www.faithleavenworth.org](http://www.faithleavenworth.org)

## Community Solar Project Coming to Leavenworth

<http://www.kohoradio.com/news/community-solar-project-coming-Leavenworth>

The Earth Stewardship Group, under the direction of Faith Lutheran Church in Leavenworth, is working to get a Community Solar Project off the ground for Icicle River Middle School. It will take thousands of dollars of donations and investments, but Lisa Therrell feels it's a win-win for not just the upper valley, but the entire state.

# The Mission House At Redeemer



The Mission House at Redeemer is centrally located in Midtown Atlanta and is a ministry of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. We are within walking distance to public transportation, the Fox Theatre, numerous restaurants, and shops.

Located on the Redeemer campus, the Mission House offers an attractive meeting space, sleeping accommodations for twelve on comfortable, convertible sofas (with air mattresses for additional sleeping space), bathrooms, and a fully equipped kitchen that makes meal preparation easy!



Call today to arrange your group's stay at the Mission House! We are excited to work with Church youth groups, college groups, service projects, and retreats. Email [missionhouse@redeemer.org](mailto:missionhouse@redeemer.org) or call 404-874-8664 x 239.

Don't forget to like our [Facebook page](#) !

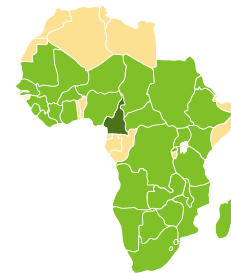
Be sure to call and ask about our three great packages or check them out on our [website](#). Perfect for the needs of any group!



## A Ministry of Service and Hospitality

# Mission of the Month

STORIES FROM THE GLOBAL CHURCH SPRING 2014



## A priceless gift

**Nathalie Lassang is an International Leader with a passion for medicine and for her home country of Cameroon.** "I have wanted to help ill people for as long as I can remember. My desire is to return to Cameroon to work there as a physician," says Nathalie, who is now a medical student.

While growing up in Cameroon, Nathalie saw many people suffer from disease, and although she had always wanted to help people, she only began to consider a career in medicine when she began high school. One afternoon after church, a couple invited her family to their house for lunch. While talking with the husband, Nathalie learned that he was a surgeon and was inspired. When he asked her what she wanted to do, she knew that she wanted to get involved in medicine.

Now Nathalie is studying at Ross University School of Medicine, which is located on the Caribbean island of Dominica. She will finish there in May of 2016, thanks to a scholarship she received through the ELCA's International Leaders program. One component of the program is that it requires participants to return to their home churches after finishing their studies. Once she completes her residency, Nathalie will return to Cameroon to serve as a physician

with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon. "I know that I can work as a physician anywhere in the world, but I feel my calling is to work in Cameroon. Being present with and comforting people is what I believe God has given me as a gift."

Thanks to gifts from ELCA members like you, Nathalie is able to pursue her passion. "The education that I am getting is a priceless gift for which I am eternally grateful. I'm excited to go home and help the people in my community because I know that I will be able to make a difference."

## Get involved!

*Gifts to International Leaders – Women provide scholarships for women like Nathalie. Learn more at [www.ELCA.org/internationalleaders](http://www.ELCA.org/internationalleaders).*



**ELCA Global Church Sponsorship**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
 God's work. Our hands.



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## Building Relationships in Hungary

Ole Schenk describes his transition to living and working in Hungary as a Young Adult in Global Mission as an incredibly fast-paced journey. “I was handed chalk and classrooms of elementary students (right away), and just as soon the students showed me their energetic appetite for learning,” he explains. “The pace has been swift, but it’s a joy to see how keen students bring out the best of past teaching experiences.”

Originally from Canada, Schenk is making good use of his English as a Second Language certification as he teaches English to elementary students and religious studies to high school students. “Sometimes when I’m (teaching), I’m tempted to doubt that anything has been communicated. There are days when their lit-up faces remind me that the word of God lights its own fire.” He is also working to build relationships with the Roma, a marginalized group in Hungary.

The men’s group at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Waverly, Iowa, who have a covenant relationship with Schenk, recently had an opportunity to skype with him about this. “One of the main issues we heard about was how Ole’s working to connect with and understand the Roma people, who are treated as outcasts in that society,” says Paul Frantsen, director of youth and family ministry at St. Paul’s. “He’s looking for ways to be a bridge between that group and the rest of the population: walking alongside them, establishing trust and being a Christ-like example.” “I hear negative things about Roma people. To come to a worship service with them, and be there as brothers and sisters in Christ, all that is cleared away,” Schenk explains.

The Northeastern Iowa Synod has shown strong support for the Young Adults in Global Mission Hungary country group. Schenk says: “It was stunning to us in the program to see the support from the Northeastern Iowa Synod, especially St Paul’s Lutheran in Waverly, Iowa. It’s a reminder of what’s happening in the wider church. It reminds me of who I am and orients me here. I believe that God is calling me here.”

Your Mission dollars help make the ministries of ELCA Global Mission possible. Gifts to ELCA Global Church Sponsorship directly fund Young Adults in Global Mission like Ole Schenk as they work hand in hand with our neighbors around the world.

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## Bountiful Bushels of Potatoes

by Megan Nuehring

“Your help is needed for hungry neighbors in need ... The 2014 Seed Potato Cutting sessions are Saturday, April 26, 1-5 pm and again Sunday, April 27, as needed 1-5 pm ... Bring your own snacks and knife.” This is the announcement on IHartHarvest’s website, an appeal for volunteers willing to get their hands dirty with The Potato Project.

In 2009, Walt and Linda Zawaski, members of Trinity Lutheran Church in Kutztown, Pa., started The Potato Project in Berks County with funding from an ELCA Domestic Hunger Grant. This was a project created to provide produce to neighbors who were hungry and also utilize vacant farmland. Since then, The Potato Project has experienced great growth. According to the 2013 Potato Project Report, 202,276 pounds of potatoes were harvested — nearly 100,000 more pounds than expected. Walt states in the report, “I quietly confided to a friend that if we had a real good year, we might be able to make 160,000 pounds. But we harvested 202,276!”

*continued on page 12*

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*continued from page 11*

This increase in production couldn't be managed solely by Walt and Linda, so in 2013 approximately 1,367 volunteers from ELCA congregations, Mennonite youth groups and Roman Catholic parishes helped with the work. The project has consistently brought individuals from all faith backgrounds together to serve their neighbors.

"The fall harvest is completely donated to local food pantries and the Greater Berks Food Bank for hungry neighbors in need," stated The Potato Project Seed Cutting announcement for 2014. The food that is distributed to the Greater Berks Food Bank then serves about 300 charitable food programs, including Kids Cafes, pantries, soup kitchens and more. The Greater Berks Food Bank valued The Potato Project donation at \$153,729 in 2013. With this donation and donations to three local pantries, The Potato Project reaches six counties serving 22,680 people.

"The Potato Project has grown into one of our largest suppliers of fresh produce," said Doug Long, manager of marketing and development for the Greater Berks Food Bank. "What they are able to provide us is a blessing to thousands of local families in need and we truly appreciate the massive effort that is put into this wonderful project." As the project continues to grow and volunteers prepare for the 2014 harvest — the sixth — the goal is to harvest 80,000 to 115,000 pounds of potatoes to distribute to the community. The Potato Project has even planned a service event for "God's work. Our hands." Sunday on Sept. 7, 2014.

"There is some Scripture that reads, 'the harvest is plentiful but the harvesters few.' With the greatest harvest we have ever completed in 2013, more people came together to help neighbors in need than ever before," said Walt. Though the production and impact of The Potato Project is bountiful, no one is resting on their accomplishments. The project continues to seek more acres of land for the program, new volunteers, equipment and support. They are even trying new crops.

Their growth and mission remains grounded in Jesus' words and actions, inspiring them to love and serve their neighbors in need through offering food from the land they have been given to manage — land that provides bounty and nourishment for everyone.



**H O P E**  
LIVING  
IN

**2014 Synod Assembly**  
Spokane, Washington  
May 16-18, 2014

The 2014 Synod Assembly has come and gone. By all accounts, it was a success, inspiring worship, an incredible Hymn Sing, discussing our ideas and then voting on the business matters of the Synod, recognizing ministry partners and members of the Synod, and the reuniting of friends in Jesus from across the Synod.

Thank you to Rev. Heidi Torgerson-Martinez for her report from churchwide and information about the Young Adults in Global Mission Program. Your sermon at the closing worship program was extraordinary!

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## A Priceless Gift

by Charity Springer

Nathalie Lassang has a passion for medicine and for her home country of Cameroon. “I have wanted to help ill people for as long as I can remember. My desire is to return to Cameroon to work there as a physician,” says Nathalie, a medical student and participant in the ELCA’s International Leaders program.

While growing up in Cameroon, Nathalie saw many people suffer from disease, and, although she had always wanted to help people, she only began to consider a career in medicine when she began high school. One afternoon after church a couple invited her family to their house for lunch. While talking with the husband, Nathalie learned that he was a surgeon and was inspired. When he asked her what she wanted to do, she knew that she wanted to get involved in medicine.

Most of the people who inspired her to consider medicine though are not health care professionals. “They are the people in my community back home, the community where I grew up. While growing up, many of us kids would fall sick, especially with malaria, very often. I saw people who were sick and I wanted to do something to help them.”

Now Nathalie is studying at Ross University School of Medicine, located on the Caribbean island of Dominica. She will finish her medical studies there in May 2016, thanks to the scholarship she received through the ELCA International Leaders program. One component of the program is that it requires participants to return to their home churches after finishing their studies. Once she completes her residency, Nathalie will return to Cameroon to serve as a physician with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon.

“I know that I can work as a physician anywhere in the world, but I feel my calling is to work in Cameroon. One of the reasons why I look forward to practicing in Cameroon is because I know that there I will have as much time as needed to spend with patients. I hope to inspire not only my patients, but the people I will be working with. My hope is that the people I get to assist in the healing process will feel God’s love and presence with them.”

Although medical school has been challenging, Nathalie reminds herself why she is going through all of the hard work and study. “Every time I go through hard times in medical school, I remind myself of why it is important that I not lose hope. I know that I did not make it this far on my own. God, who brought me this far, will not abandon me now.”

Thanks to gifts from ELCA members, Nathalie is able to pursue her passion. “The education that I am getting is a priceless gift for which I am eternally grateful. I’m excited to go home and help the people in my community because I know that I will be able to make a difference.”

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## Your Church in Action *We Pray*

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 . . .

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. Ginny Krekling (Ellensburg, WA) for continued healing after knee surgery.

Rev. Jeryl Phillips-Kelly as she recovers from a horse riding accident.

The family of Cathy Steiner, on the passing of her father Art Manor.



**EASTERN  
WASHINGTON  
IDAHO SYNOD**

of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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



June 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

<http://www.ewaidsynod.org/synodpublications.html>.

*Deadline for articles is the 5th of each month.*

Synod Calendar

**May 2014**

30-31 Service Learning Youth Event at  
Messiah Lutheran - Spokane

**June 2014**

- 6 "After Pastor " Boundaries Training in NW  
WA Synod
- 8-13 Immersion Event at Rocky Boy  
Reservation, Montana
- 14 Mission Interpreter Training  
at Central Lutheran Spokane
- 17 VA Sponsored Training Event  
Welcoming and helping Returning Vets  
Christ Lutheran - Walla Walla
- 19 VA Sponsored Training Event  
Welcoming and helping Returning Vets  
Our Savoie - Twin Falls



**Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our Hands

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# THE PARISH PAPER

## IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

Coeditors: Herb Miller and Cynthia Woolever - [www.TheParishPaper.com](http://www.TheParishPaper.com)

June 2014 - Volume 22, Number 6

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### Caring for the Caregivers

Rosalynn Carter pointed to the universal nature of caregiving when she said that there are four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.<sup>1</sup> The church plays a unique role by helping many people realize that they are already engaged in some form of this ministry. Caring for a family member or loved one is a vocation that can be supported and celebrated by the congregation. Still, part of this support requires acknowledging that caregivers often put their own needs last and risk losing their ability to continue as caregivers.

#### What the Caregiver Experiences

Caregivers deal with immense personal stress, and often without much awareness of its effects. In the face of a problem or situation that cannot be fixed, feeling overwhelmed, helpless, and frustrated are common responses. Over time, isolation, loneliness, or depression can surface. All caregivers feel guilty, angry, or resentful at some point. Most caregivers express physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual concerns. Unfortunately, caregivers typically wait too long before seeking out personal medical care too.

The caregiver is also struggling with the feelings and needs of the care-receiver. Their loved one may experience physical limitations, lack of independence (such as no longer driving or an inability to care for self), poor health, and loss of the family home, church, and friends. Both the caregiver and care-receiver must try to find pathways to acceptance. This acceptance may take the form of understanding that some kind of end has occurred; grieving the loss or change; and feeling a sense of gratitude for what has ended. People fall prey to the “focusing illusion”—focusing on what is lost after a major surgery, illness, or large life change. The illusion neglects the fact that we have extraordinary capacity to adapt and enjoy a new life that is not “perfect.”<sup>2</sup>

Those who care for the caregivers can help them realize that all these feelings are normal. Gently ask

caregivers what they are doing to take care of their own needs. For example: How are you kind to yourself? What do you do or whom do you talk to when you are discouraged? Do you allow others to help you? What blessings have you received as a caregiver? Point them to online resources that identify the warning signs of caregiver burnout.<sup>3</sup> Depending on the circumstances, consider sharing with them the Caregiver’s Bill of Rights.<sup>4</sup>

#### Ideas for the Caregiver

Caregivers need to care for themselves in order to care for others. Starting or strengthening spiritual disciplines such as prayer, worship, meditation, Bible reading, journaling, or singing help family caregivers handle their own emotional needs. Continuing to engage in activities that bring joy such as physical exercise, hobbies, reading, or time in nature also provide some respite. Doing social things like lunch or an outing with a friend, playing with children, going to a movie or concert, or shopping for oneself give people a break from care giving. Time away generates the most benefit if caregivers start early in the care giving process.



BOB REALIZED KAREN WAS APPROACHING BURNOUT WHEN SHE BEGAN SLIPPING INTO CAREGIVING MODE WITH TOTAL STRANGERS.



### Ideas for Church Members

Individual church members can take actions that help caregivers—offering to do grocery shopping, assisting with transportation, or staying with the family member while the caregiver takes some much-deserved personal time. Prayers, cards, phone calls, and visits always bring comfort. Finally, never underestimate the power of listening to the caregiver’s concerns.

### Ideas for the Congregation

Beyond what individual, caring church members can do for caregivers, the congregation as a whole can leverage resources and coordinate efforts to support caregivers. Here are some examples of how congregations can support caregivers.

*Develop a Care Team or Stephen Ministry.* Congregations of every size need a care team or system for providing care to one another. Without such a team or system, some members fall through the cracks. Details on establishing a care team are in a free resource on *The Parish Paper* website (Church Effectiveness Nuggets # 9: How to Develop a Congregational Care Team; [www.theparishpaper.com](http://www.theparishpaper.com)).

Thousands of congregations have trained their staff and members to be Stephen Ministers, a way to provide one-on-one confidential Christian care. This nonprofit organization ([www.stephenministries.org](http://www.stephenministries.org)) offers training to equip local trainers, who in turn train others, who offer care and support to people in the congregation or community. After completing the training, a Stephen Minister is assigned to a care-receiver, who they visit once a week. Participants who complete the training report that the skills they learned were useful in many other settings where caring ministry was needed.

*Start a caregiver support group.* A staff person or member organizes a group of people who share the common situation of care giving. The group provides nonjudgmental support, and helps participants deal with emotions that accompany the role of caregiver. The group can also be a place to hear about community and governmental resources that could assist in the care of the family member. The group coordinator or convener should not currently be a caregiver and should encourage the full participation of the group members in choosing meeting times, topics, and guest speakers.

*Coordinate a prayer shawl ministry.* Some congregations gather a group of people who love knitting or crocheting to make shawls. Those who make a shawl offer prayers and blessings for a caregiver or their loved one. More information about this ministry is available at [www.shawlministry.com](http://www.shawlministry.com)

*Offer workshops, lectures, or series about care giving.* Caregivers and members who want to support them benefit from additional information about particular illnesses, conditions, technologies, and other topics related to caring for loved ones. Presentations could range from a single session on Alzheimer’s disease to a series on multiple topics related to community resources. Many local social service agencies are willing to send a speaker for such a program.

*Create a resource directory.* Compiling a directory of local organizations or services (such as Adult Day Care, respite care) is a time-saver for caregivers. The directory can also assist members who wish to make contacts on behalf of the family.

*Share weekly worship services.* If worship services are recorded or streamed on the internet, find out if families who can no longer attend services are interested in the opportunity to worship weekly.

*Hold services of prayer and healing.* Many congregations prepare special worship experiences several times a year where time is devoted to prayers for healing. Making extra efforts to invite and include caregivers in these services is greatly appreciated.

*Organize additional outreach at Christmas, Easter, and during other religious seasons.* Holidays and other busy times stress the already overwhelmed caregiver. Conversations with caregivers and their families can reveal ways that the congregation could be part of making rituals surrounding holidays more meaningful and less stressful.

### Who Cares?

When we offer sympathy, empathy, compassion, concern, or the willingness to listen, we show our care and love. In Matthew 19:19, Jesus said, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” The young lawyer who pressed for the details heard the story of The Good Samaritan. Jesus’ story of compassion illustrates how we can overlook the one who cares unselfishly for another.

1. Rosalynn Carter, *Helping Yourself Help Others* (NY: Three Rivers Press, 1994), 3.
2. Maureen Dowd, “Decoding the God Complex,” *New York Times*, September 28, 2011.
3. <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/caregiver-burnout>.
4. Jo Horne, A Caregiver’s Bill of Rights, <http://www.caregiver.com>.

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