



## **Report of the Coordinator for Ministry Leadership, ELCA Region 6 Indiana-Kentucky Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

**Marilyn Smith, Associate in Ministry**

**June 4 – 6, 2009**

---

### **Southeast Michigan, North/West Lower Michigan, Indiana-Kentucky, Northwestern Ohio, Northeastern Ohio, and Southern Ohio Synods**

---

Regions are the intersection mission and ministry shared and supported by the synodical and churchwide expression of the ELCA. This intersection leads to networking and conversations that ultimately equip congregational leaders to more fully engage ministry both within and beyond the context of their locale. To accomplish this, the regional coordinator facilitates a variety of conversations, networks, and consultations that provide advice and information and promote partnerships. Some examples of this are:

*-Candidacy:* In Region 6 the three Ohio synods cooperate in their efforts under one umbrella committee; the two synods in Michigan's Lower Peninsula also have a joint committee; and Indiana-Kentucky has a candidacy committee.

*-Assignment of First Call Candidates:* Working with bishops and synod staffs, the seminaries, and the ELCA Department for Synodical Relations, the regional office facilitated the assignment of approximately 30 candidates for all the rosters. Region 6 produces and sends out to other regions of the church more candidates than we receive, but the candidates we receive include both candidates from the synods of our region and from other regions, as well. This process of mobility and assign seeks to enhance opportunities for congregations to receive leaders that will strengthen and support ministry in their midst.

*-First Call Theological Education:* Last year five of the six synods began planning for a joint FCTE Retreat to be held Apr 26-28. This gathering will offer newly rostered leaders the opportunity to come together to reflect on their initial experiences in ministry and gain information and insight for their growth as leaders in the church. This gathering also includes a seminar for those serving as mentors to first call leaders and candidates.

*-Vital Congregations:* The IK Synod Church in Society Committee partnered with the ELCA Unit for Church in Society to train congregational leaders in aspects of community organizing that encourage congregations to be more present and involved in ministry opportunities in their neighborhoods. Other synods in Region 6 were also invited to participate and encouraged to explore how this model for assessing and carrying out ministry can be utilized in congregational and synodical settings.

*-Regional Archives:* Archivist Jennifer Long provides her own report, but just a word of appreciation for the fine work she does with records of our closed congregations and to Trinity Lutheran Seminary for providing the space to house the archives.

Amidst the ongoing work of the region there were also significant changes that took place during 2008. For many years Bp John Schreiber had served the region as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Steering committee. I am profoundly grateful for his faithful partnership and leadership in the region. Also, Ms Judy Rehmel has faithfully served as the Chair of the Region 6 Steering Committee since 1995. With the culmination of her service as Vice-President of the IK Synod, Judy also concluded her work with the region. The church is profoundly grateful for her generous service and leadership. In addition, the region's liaison with the Depart. for Synodical Relations, Ms Tammy Jackson, moved to a position with the ELCA Unit for Global Mission. She was a tremendously faithful partner with us in Region 6. At the Dec 2008 meeting of the Region 6 Steering Committee we welcomed Pr Walter May, now Ex Dir of the Depart. for Synodical Relations as our new liaison, Ms Kathleen Lemmerbrock of the NW Ohio Synod Staff assumed the responsibilities of Secretary-Treasurer, and Dr Thomas Taylor, Vice-President of the Southern Ohio Synod is the newly-elected chair of the Steering Committee. For all these gifted partners in ministry, I give thanks to God and the church.

Funding patterns also changed beginning in 2009. The churchwide expression now covers all the compensation and benefits for the regional coordinator. Synods partner to provide for travel, office operations, and bookkeeping services ably provided by Carol Webb of the IK Synod Staff.

*Marilyn McCann Smith, Associate in Ministry  
Coordinator for Ministry Leadership, Region 6  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

*911 E 86th St, Ste 200  
Indianapolis IN 46240- 1840  
317.253.3522  
317.254.5666 (fax)  
419.792.5564 (mobile)  
marilyn.smith@ecunet.org*