



# ed.network

A networking newsletter for the Christian Education ministries  
of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the ELCA

## Pentecost: Not an ordinary time at all

By Pastor Denise Grant

On the day of Pentecost, the rushing winds of the Spirit swirled, tongues of flame danced above the heads of the gathered people, the assembled were filled with the Holy Spirit and many living in Jerusalem heard the word of proclamation uttered in a familiar tongue. The Holy Spirit, the Advocated, had entered the scene and stirred the people to receive Peter's affirmation: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him, this man who was crucified has been raised from the dead. Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that

God has made him both Lord and Messiah. (Acts 2:1-6, 22-24)

Through out the season of Sundays and weekdays after the celebration of Pentecost, at times called Ordinary Time (though there is nothing ordinary about it!) "we await the gift of tongues-- the ability to hear and speak the word, each as we come to know it, understand it and proclaim it in the uniqueness of our personhood." \* In essence, we seek to discern our God-centered mission both personally and as a community.

The seasonal texts and their images call us to growth in faithfulness and witness. We hear about the power of God in the lives of the chosen, we experience Jesus, the Bread of Life, the healer, the one who stills storms, and we encounter the winds of the Spirit who breathes life into us and stirs us to our mission of word and deed and to bearing good fruit.

The seasonal color green, adorning our sanctuaries and in full leaf and bloom in God's creation, speaks to life and growth. This is the time, ordinary or not, when seeds of faith are planted, watered, tended and nourished through word and sacrament, prayer and study. As we are drawn into the mysteries of faith and life through Our Lord, grow in grace, and discern our God centered mission, then we recall that like the first disciples we are called to go into the world and proclaim in word in deed that Jesus, who was crucified, has been raised from the dead; that he is the Messiah; and that through him is life and salvation. There is much work, much mission, to be done in the world and in this time of growth we are called to join in the joyful tasks of showing to

others who Jesus is and what he does.

Then as our Northern hemisphere summer gives way to the changes in color and we are drawn to



the end of our calendar year, we move into the last days of the church year with its focus and images of the end times and the proclamation of the ultimate reign of Christ!

This rich season, not ordinary at all, is filled with ever changing visual images that prompt our thinking about the reign of Our Lord and our mission of witness to him. Consider places where these images (received directly from our lectionary texts) can be shown and highlighted: bulletin covers, banners, bulletin boards, the explanation of symbols as part of summer education (VBS, Sunday School, Children's Homily), newsletters, items for touching and exploration on a small table in the chapel or narthex, and more! Walk through your church building and identify places where symbols can be richly used and placed to create a sense of wonder and draw each one who encounters it into the mysteries of faith. Go! Make Disciples! Share the good news of Our Lord!

\* Gertrude Mueller Nelson, To Dance with God: Family Ritual and Community Celebration, Paulist Press, 1986, p. 188

## Website teaches about Pentecost

By Karen Seykowski

Go to this web site: [www.spirithome.com](http://www.spirithome.com). Inside the wide rectangular box, select "Between now and Pentecost." At the next screen entitled "Pentecost Sunday," there are six topics:

- ◆ What is Pentecost?
- ◆ How did the Spirit's work change?
- ◆ The Debabelizer.
- ◆ The Spirit gives life.
- ◆ Where am I in all of this?
- ◆ How can I celebrate Pentecost?

Spirithome is an information resource on Christian spirituality created by Robert Longman, Jr., a member of the ELCA.

**I'm Reproducible!** Please copy this issue of **ed.network** and pass on to: Christian Education staff, committee members, teachers and volunteers.

# Teach kids to witness with the Wordless Book

By Judy Scharpenberg

Have you ever wished you could get your class excited about and trained for witnessing to their faith in Jesus? This can happen when you help them create and use the Wordless Book. The size of the book should be based on the age of the person being witnessed to (the younger the person, the larger the pages).

The Wordless Book contains five pages (six if you add the blue); each page is a different color and contains no words. Below are the colors for the pages and what each color represents. Teach your students to associate the different colored pages with their special meanings. The colors for the pages are:

- ◆ Yellow: God the almighty Father made me and all the world. God's plan is that I serve Him and enjoy the creation He gave me as a gift;
- ◆ Gray: When sin entered the world we were separated from our creator and His creation.



We could no longer serve Him of our own accord;

- ◆ Red: God loved us so much that He sent His only Son Jesus to shed blood on the cross and bring us back into a relationship with our Creator Father;

- ◆ Purple: As children of the King the Holy Spirit now lives within us keeping us in that relationship and moving us to deepen that relationship;

- ◆ Green: As we pray, worship, and study His Word, we grow in our relationship with God; we learn and practice serving Him and sharing His message with others.

Include a blue page for the fellowship we share with other Christians. Put the books together with a staple. Practice telling the story to each other and then pray about finding someone else to share that message with. Check back to see how their witness is going with that person. Discuss other ways to witness perhaps with a special servant event for the whole class.

## Kids need adults who care this much

By Carolyn Steinfeldt

His name was Ken. He was the high school Sunday school teacher in the only Lutheran church in the community. Every Sunday Ken passionately shared the Scriptures with this less than captivated audience! Every Sunday the teenagers returned to hear more. They didn't come to a comfy youth room with sofas and lounge chairs—their class met in the only room available, the kitchen.

What made Ken's class worth attending? Ken did. He prepared to teach. He studied and was able to give the students insight into

the life and times of people from a different time and place. He brought the Biblical stories and characters alive. And most of all, he cared about the students.

Search Institute tells us that young people need at least 6 significant adults, besides their parents, in their lives. Ken was one of those significant adults long before the research was done. Do you have a Ken in your life? Why not send him/her a note of thanks for being that person for you?

## Faith Formation Roundtable

August 2, 2003

9:00 a.m.-Noon

This Roundtable will feature Dr Karen-Marie Yust ; Her focus will be on helping adults (parents, godparents, grandparents, teachers etc, *of children under five*) develop practices of faith in the family. The event will be held at Resurrection Lutheran Church (the south side of Indy) on Saturday morning - probably with lunch after for those who might want to talk longer. This event is sponsored by the Learning Roundtable of the Indianapolis Conference. For more information contact Susan McMahon by phone: (317) 201-8149, or by e-mail: <smcmahon@cts.edu>.

## Developing Faith Practices for Youth

September 27, 2003

10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Kenda Creasy-Dean, co-author of The Godbearing Life: the Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry, will be the keynote speaker for the day. She'll focus on developing faith practices with high school youth. For most Lutheran congregations, this is the *post*-confirmation group. The workshop is for all adults who care about youth. This event is being co-sponsored by the University of Indianapolis and Disciples House for Youth. For more information contact Susan McMahon by phone: (317) 201-8149, or by e-mail: <smcmahon@cts.edu>.