

I-K Lutheran



Where mission meets the road

Installation of I-K Synod Bishop Bill Gafkjen



Photo by Pr. John J. Santoro

Over 500 people, including Indiana-Kentucky Synod pastors, lay leaders and congregational members, ecumenical and interfaith guests, friends and family worshiped together at the joyous installation festival liturgy as ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson installed the Rev. William O. Gafkjen as the new bishop Saturday, September 11 at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis.

Bishop Mark Hanson, regional bishops and other judicatory leaders joined in the laying on of hands on the head of Bishop Gafkjen as they prayed that the Holy Spirit empower and enlighten his ministry. In his energizing sermon, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson implored all who gathered together to "Go! Go out and proclaim!"

Among the people gathered to worship was a 100-member choir composed of the Valparaiso University Chapel Kantorei and members from synod congregations. A percussionist and instrumental and vocal ensembles celebrated the world's cultural diversity with music from Chile, Indonesia, Central America, as well as Native American music.

Bishop Gafkjen wore a chasuble (like a poncho) and stole created by former synod vice president Judy Rehmel. The chalice used at the altar was commissioned and given by Mitch and Charisse Phillips.

Bishop Gafkjen lists among his priorities as bishop:

"Overall, my concern is that the ELCA Lutherans in Indiana and Kentucky grow deeply as people who live with open hearts and open hands, freely receiving and sharing the abundant grace and goodness of God. A number of challenges present themselves to us and are on the minds of our congregations and their leaders:

- (1) We need to rediscover the deep unity in Christ that enables us to live and work together across profound differences of perspective on important issues;
- (2) Like nearly every not-for-profit organization that I know of, our congregations are struggling financially and, consequently, so are the ministries beyond and between congregations that are dependent on funding from these congregations;
- (3) Most of our congregations are still trying to figure out how to most faithfully be the body of Christ in a rapidly-changing and confusing context.

A first order priority for me is to draw us deeply into the reality of Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world as we discover new, creative and effective ways to empower, equip and encourage the leaders and congregations of the ELCA who live and work in Indiana and Kentucky, and to address these challenges and move energetically and effectively into the world to share the many and varied gifts God has given them for the world around them."

About Your Synod: Freed to Lead Success Stories

The Freed to Lead Grant Board recently approved another eight awards to pastors of the I-K Synod. *Awards now total \$504,706 in grants to 16 pastors.*

In addition to the original Lilly Endowment seed grant of \$570,000, gifts and pledges from individuals, churches, and other organizations total \$347,823. Included in that amount is \$33,980 in honor of Bishop James Stuck.

Annual reports from pastors who received grants a year ago have been received with the following comments being typical: "The grant has had a huge impact on my personal life, my marriage and my stress level. My wife and I attended Dave Ramsey's Peace University at our church and that coupled with the grant we have learned how to handle money. We have been blessed beyond our expectations because of our grant." Learn more at www.iksynod.org/

ELCA News - ELCA Presiding Bishop's Third Town Hall Forum

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- Presiding ELCA Bishop Mark Hanson responded to a variety of questions in a live online "Town Hall Forum" Sept. 19, including topics such as evangelism, relationships with Muslims, human sexuality, signs of hope, mission funding, church unity, Middle East concerns and full communion relationships.

The first question came from an online participant who asked the presiding bishop for suggestions on what Lutherans might do to take "more evangelical action" within their congregations and community.

Hanson said that the question points to "exactly the orientation that we have taken as a churchwide organization for the future of the ELCA. We have placed directors of evangelical mission on every synod staff. It is our vision that every congregation is growing as an evangelical center for mission."

"We have a tendency to be a bit reserved as Lutherans about naming the name of Jesus," he said. "Together as the ELCA, one of our themes is that we are called during our Baptism to be everyday evangelists in Word and deed, testifying through the good news of God's love in Christ for the whole creation. But that doesn't come naturally to us. We have to be bold."

Video and transcripts of the Town Hall Forum will be posted Sept. 22 at www.ELCA.org/townhall on the ELCA website.

2010 I-K Synod Events & Opportunities

Renewing Mission Workshop October 11-13, 2010 Camp Lutherwald Howe, IN

- ◆ congregation organizing skills
- ◆ strategies for developing lay leaders
- ◆ how to empower and equip congregational outreach

Presenters: Pr. Tim Linstrom, Pr. Ron Luckey,
Bishop Bill Gafken

\$55, includes three meals on Tuesday; one on Wednesday

Learn more and download and print a registration form at www.iksynod.org/events/RMTworkshopregistrationform.pdf

Contact Tim Linstrom at t.linstrom@att.net



NEW! Advent Reflections:

I Wonder as I Wander

Readers will focus on one of four themes - hope, love, joy and peace. Daily readings and reflections, weekly Bible study, and activity ideas for families to link church and home.

\$6.99 (1 - 19) and \$5.59 (20 +)

www.augsburgfortress.org



Indiana-Kentucky Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.