

The Epistle

January 2008

For clergy, lay leaders, and friends of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

www.iksynod.org

Dear Partners in Mission,

The season of Lent arrives early this year and that may be helpful for some of us. Recently I attended a meeting in which representatives of many mainline denominations were present. As I engaged in conversation with one of our full-communion partners, they asked which church body I represented. I responded, “The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.” One of them answered, “Oh, Lutherans? You are the ones who are hung up on guilt, aren’t you?” Then they laughed and (probably out of guilt) I laughed with them.

I did not have a witty comeback to that comment, probably because I was initially offended by my denomination being identified as the “guilty” ones. Then I began to think about some recent feelings that I have experienced as I fulfill my duties as your bishop:

- At a Conference of Bishops meeting, hearing all the things that I should and could be doing and am not doing, I felt guilty.
- Reading the annual reports of rostered persons submitted to the bishop and signing the cards that identify persons as rostered in the ELCA, reminded me once again of what I am not doing to serve you.
- Every time I preach I am disappointed because it is never as good as I imagined it could be. I should have prepared better!

The reason we can tell and hear the truth about ourselves is because we know the truth about God. During Lent we are reminded of what God has done for us in the suffering and death of Jesus. Our sinfulness, our lack of measuring up, and most importantly, our lack of trust in God’s mercy gets swallowed up in the actions of a loving God.

I could list more ways in which I feel guilty. I am sure that you have your own list. We are good at “guilt” and the law is deeply imbedded in us. We know that we do not measure up. If we think we measure up, it does not take long for us to be knocked off that pedestal.

The season of Lent is arriving just in time. Yes, we Lutherans emphasize this season of the church year for a good reason. We know that we are guilty. We know we do not measure up and we are committed to telling the truth about ourselves.

The reason we can tell and hear the truth about ourselves is because we know the truth about God. During Lent we are reminded of what God has done for us in the suffering and death of Jesus. Our sinfulness, our lack of measuring up, and most importantly, our lack of trust in God’s mercy gets swallowed up in the actions of a loving God.

When we recognize this truth about God, then our relationship to guilt changes. Instead of being paralyzed we are driven to our knees to ask forgiveness and to be given wisdom to do what God would have us do.

Yes, Lutherans are “hung up on guilt.” But not for long because we look for and trust the Grace of God in the midst of our weakness.

I invite you to join me once again in this season of truth telling... about ourselves and about God. For this is our only hope.

Your brother in Christ,

Bishop Jim Stuck

Empowering, Equipping, and Encouraging the People of God to Make Christ Known

 **2008 Lutheran Outdoor
Ministries Summer Camp
Brochures Have Arrived!**

Lutheran Hills Lutherwald Lake Luther

One copy has been sent to each church with an order form. To order more, call 260.667-7750 or email Mark Radloff at mradloff@iksynod.org.

You can also view and download a summer brochure at www.lomik.org.

ONE THE CAMPAIGN
TO MAKE
POVERTY HISTORY



Now available - ONE Lutheran sermon helps!

These sermon helps are topical in nature and include background on how they relate to **ONE: The Campaign to Make Poverty History**, scriptural support, stories, quotations, and hymn suggestions from ELW.

Visit www.elca.org/advocacy/one/helps.html.

**Toward Excellent
Congregational Communication**

ELCA synod communicators and staff joined to produce "*Effective Communication: A Guide for Congregations*," online resources to help congregations improve internal and external communication. Resources include:

- how to conduct a communication audit
- how to establish a communication committee
- news releases
- telephone ministries
- bulletin boards
- Web pages
- newsletters
- radio
- video resources

Visit
[www.elca.org/
communication/
effectivecommu-
nication.html](http://www.elca.org/communication/effectivecommunication.html) to
learn more.

ELCA Election Resource for 2008

- A resource guide to encourage, empower and equip Lutherans to engage responsibly in the 2008 election cycle, "*Called to be a Public Church*" is intended to encourage congregations, and college and seminary communities to participate in election activities.
- It also contains nonpartisan issue briefs on issues related to the ELCA social statements. Download the guide for free at www.elca.org/advocacy/publicchurch/index.html or call (800) 328-4648 and order from Augsburg Fortress: item number 9786000220617.

**Registration opens for Ecumenical
Advocacy Days 2008**

by Annie Lysen, ELCA News Service

Registration is open for **Ecumenical Advocacy Days 2008**, held March 7-10 in Alexandria, Va.

Under the theme "*2008: Claiming a Vision of True Security*," the event -- consisting of workshops, worship and a lobby day on Capitol Hill -- is expected to draw more than 1,000 religious advocates from an array of Christian communities. The ELCA and Lutheran World Relief are among the event's sponsors.

Workshops will focus on the event's theme, which is based on a quote from the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.: "True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice."

Topics include Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Middle East, Domestic, Jubilee and Economic Justice, Eco-Justice, and Peace and Global Security.

Registration discounts are available for students, and scholarships are available for young adults.

To learn more, visit [www.elca.org/
advocacy/](http://www.elca.org/advocacy/).

Lilly Initiative to Find Solution to Education Debt

The Lilly Endowment has approved the grant application of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, ELCA to enter into Phase One planning of the Economic Challenges Initiative, a program designed to assist rostered leaders of Indiana-based Protestant judicatories with the mounting burden of education debt.

The Phase One grant of \$50,000 from Lilly Endowment will allow the synod to hire a part-time project director and cover expenses for a task force that will research the needs of rostered leaders with education debt, find ways of raising and endowing monies that can be brought to bear on education debt, and develop a system of grant applications by rostered leaders and churches in order to access those monies.

The synod announced in October that Bishop James Stuck had appointed the Rev. Thomas L. Weitzel of Alexandria, KY, who wrote the initial grant application, to be the project director for Phase One of the Economic Challenges Initiative.

The goal of the task force will be to complete Phase One work by September 1, 2008, at which time they will present the results of their planning in a grant application to the Endowment for Phase Two of the Economic Challenges Initiative. This could bring to the synod \$570,000 as seed money to assist rostered leaders with education debt, as well as an additional 30 percent of that amount (i.e., another \$171,000) to assist with administration of Phase Two over a four-year period.

"I'm delighted to have received the green light from Lilly Endowment for the first phase of this important project," said Bishop Stuck. "And I am quite excited about the team that Pastor Weitzel has assembled to work on the planning. That team includes experienced financial planners, an attorney, creative pastors, pastors who have experienced the burden of education debt, and generally people who have been very active in and supportive of our synod."

For more information on the Economic Challenges Initiative, contact Pr. Thomas Weitzel at WebsByTLW@aol.com.

Task Force members:

- David Eickman of Hebron, Ky
- Kathy Groth of Napoleon, Ind.
- Gary Philpy of Zionsville, Ind.
- David Rees of Indianapolis, Ind.
- Pastor Robin Owen of Batesville, Ind.
- Pastor David Schreiber of Indianapolis
- Pastor Richard Frazier of Ft. Wayne, Ind.

"Perfect Potential: Seeking Excellence in Ministry" 2008 LSTC Leadership Conference - February 11-12, 2008

Explore the questions:

- What is the Christian understanding of excellence?
- What does it mean to talk about excellence in ministry?
- How do we simultaneously celebrate and survive ministry?
- Keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. James P. Wind, president of the Alban Institute, will present *"Stories That Take Us Somewhere: The Narrative Work of Congregations."*
- Rev. Dr. Kurt K. Hendel will present *"Faithfulness: Luther's View of Excellence."*
- Pastor Heidi Neumark will preach.

Kelly Fryer, author of *Reclaiming the "L" Word: Renewing the Church from its Lutheran Heritage*, writer for the "No Experience Necessary Bible" study series, and co-founder of A.R.E.: A Renewal Enterprise, is a featured workshop leader.

Visit www.lstc.edu or email leadershipconference@lstc.edu.

Important Synod Assembly Deadlines

- February 6** Call to Assembly mailing
- March 7** Reports from synod committees, ministries, institutions and synod officers and program staff due
- April 4** Breakout proposals due
- April 11** Nominations (names, bios) due
Early Registration Discount ends
- April 18** Lunch Conversation requests due
Celebration of Ministries table reservation requests due
- April 21** Resolutions from all but conferences due
List of nominees and biographies due
- May 4** Last day of guaranteed room reservations at the Hyatt
- May 5** Approval copy of material for information packet due
Deadline for Mission Moment requests
- May 6** Mailing of Bulletin of Reports
- May 19** Pre-Assembly Registration closes
Last day of guaranteed room reservations at the Radisson
- May 21** Nominations from conference assemblies due
Resolutions from conferences due
- May 23** Deadline for 800 copies of materials for information packet
- June 5** Reference & Counsel proceedings due
Assembly begins

I-K Synod Calendar 2008

January—Synod Office Closed MLK, Jr. Day-1/21

I-K Synod Council Meeting

January 25-26, 2008

I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Assembly Planning Committee Meeting

January 25, 2008

3:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Jan Philpy at gphilpy@indy.rr.com

I-K Synod Christian Education Committee Meeting

January 28, 2008

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Karen Seykowski at kjseykow@juno.com

I-K Synod Worship Committee Meeting

January 29, 2008

I-K Synod Office Chapel, 10:00 a.m.

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Stewardship Meeting

January 29, 2008

I-K Synod Office Downstairs Conference Room

10:00 a.m.

Contact Pr. Heather McCulloch at

hmcculloch@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Leadership Support Meeting

January 31, 2008

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

February

I-K Synod Church in Society Meeting

February 21, 2008

10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., I-K Synod Chapel

Contact Pr. Cindy Geisen at matterofcat@hotmail.com

I-K Synod Nominating Committee Meeting

February 23, 2008

9:30 a.m.

I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

March

I-K Synod Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Meeting

March 1, 2008

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Pr. Mark Radloff at mradloff@iksynod.org

Synod Office Closed for Good Friday

March 21, 2008

I-K Synod Conference Deans Meeting

March 27, 2008

I-K Synod Office Chapel, 10:00 a.m.

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

"Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible"

The 2007 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA adopted "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible," a sweeping five-year initiative to boost study of the Bible throughout the 4.8-million member church body.

The companion recommendation gives specific suggestions for ways to "invite and encourage all members, expressions, institutions, and partners of this church to commit themselves regularly and increasingly to hearing, reading, studying, sharing, and being formed by God's Word." It calls for use of existing resources and developing new material for use in studying the Bible.

The main point of the initiative is to "study Scripture as the primary source about itself," with "more people reading the Bible more often, at all levels of this church."

How can we be a part of Book of Faith?

The first year of the Book of Faith initiative centers on inviting everyone to join the conversation, to make a commitment, and to become part of the initiative.

Each individual, each congregation, each synod, and each church-related organization is invited to participate and to help make the vision of the Book of Faith initiative a reality throughout the church.

You can become part of this initiative by:

- Joining and making a commitment
- Encouraging all the people in your congregation, synod, or organization to become part of the initiative in whatever ways your community has made a commitment
- Contributing your idea, practices, and suggestions to the Book of Faith Forum
- Signing on to the Book of Faith initiative — each congregation, synod, and church-related organization is invited to create its own Book of Faith Pact, to be updated and renewed each year of the initiative.

Book of Faith Forum – A Place to Share Resources and Ideas that Work

Share resources you have used or are using that are helpful in the Book of Faith Forum. What are you trying? What is working? What resources are needed to help, need to be developed?

e-Updates

Keep up to date by subscribing to the Book of Faith e-Update. Periodic mailings will alert you to new additions to the website, publications, and events.

Visit www.elca.org/bookoffaith/ to learn more.

Transformations

Prayers of Celebration and Concern:

Nancy Hebel (Associate in Ministry, OLFC) who is recovering from double knee replacement surgery on December 10.

The family of Pr. George K. Swartzfager (Ohio), formerly served at Zion Lutheran Church in Manchester, Ind., who passed away on Dec. 10, 2007.

Brenda Dembroski (Mission Investment Fund, I-K Synod Stewardship Team), whose father, Larry Simons, died on December 6, 2007.

The families of Pr. John and Barbara Hofer (retired) who celebrate the birth of great granddaughter RaeAnna.

The family of Pr. Rudy Mueller (I-K Synod Assistant to the Bishop) whose father, Theodore Mueller, is recovering from a ruptured appendix.

The family of Pr. David Seifert (St. Paul's, Michigan City, Ind.) whose wife mourns the death of her brother Gene Kalkwarf, who passed away on December 23, 2007.

Pr. Mary Poston (St. Mark, Evansville, Ind.), whose husband Bob was diagnosed with cancer of the larynx.

Bishop and Mrs. Jim Stuck, who celebrated the wedding of daughter Jodi to Jim Dalton on January 4, 2008.

The family of Pr. Mack Goeglein (retired), whose grandson, Luke Bishop, has been battling leukemia for the second time. He is home from Riley Hospital and no further efforts will be made.

Please pray for the following as their lives and ministries take new directions:

Pr. Jeff Zell was installed at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in South Bend on January 15.

Deaths:

† We mourn with the family and friends of **Pastor Frank L. Stevenson, who died on January 22, 2008.** Pr. Stevenson was ordained in 1938 and was living in Muncie, Ind. Pr. Stevenson is survived by a daughter and two sons. The funeral took place at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Muncie, Ind. on January 26, 2008.

† We mourn with the family of **Pr. Fred Hubert (retired), whose wife and mother Hermina Hubert died on December 3, 2007.** The funeral took place on December 8, 2007.



2008 Summer Global
Mission Event
July 17-20, 2008
University of
Wisconsin-La Crosse
La Crosse, Wisconsin

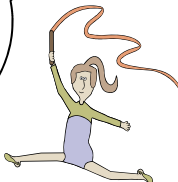
www.iksynod.org

Stay in touch with all the news
from the Indiana-Kentucky Synod
by subscribing to the weekly
e-mail newsletter.

To subscribe, visit www.iksynod.org.
Enter your e-mail address into the box in
the upper right corner.

It's a Leap Year!

You have until February 29 to send in your 2007 annual Congregational Report to the I-K Synod office. You can also file your report online at www.elca.org/ScriptLib/OS/FormAC/facLogin.asp.



Congregations in the Call Process:

As of January 15, 2008

Mission Discernment:

Antioch, Hoagland, IN	Interim Pr. Richard Vonesh
Bethany, Indianapolis, IN	Interim Pr. Martin Bomhoeft
Bethany, LaPorte, IN	Staff Position
Bethany, Louisville, KY	
Bethlehem, Gary, IN	Interim Pr. Mike Steinke
Calvary, Bluffton, IN	
Calvary, Cromwell, IN	Interim Sr. Elsie Fregeau
Calvary, Louisville, KY	
Christ, Madisonville, KY	
Christ the King, South Bend, IN	Staff Position
Cross of Christ, Crown Point, IN	Interim Pr. David Norland
Grace/St. Paul, Greensburg, Smyrna, IN	
Holy Cross, Rockport, IN	
Holy Shepherd, St. John, IN	Staff Position
Holy Trinity, Muncie, IN	Staff Position
Hope, Indianapolis	Interim Gina Bridgewater
Messiah, Brownsburg, IN	Interim Donn Abdon
New Joy, Westfield, IN	Staff Position
Prince of Peace, Bellevue, KY	Interim Pr. Jerry Cantrell
Prince of Peace, Russell Springs, KY	
Resurrection, Madison, IN	Interim Pr. Tom Weitzel
St. George, Edinburgh	Interim Pr. Jerry Curry
St. John, Louisville, KY	Staff Position
St. John, Nappanee	Interim Pr. David Stephey
St. Mark, Evansville, IN	Interim Pr. Karen Husby
St. Mark, Batesville, IN	Interim Pr. Jane Ellen Jarrell
St. Mark/Mt. Pleasant, Albion, Kendallville, IN	Int. Pr. Thelma McGill-Cobbler

St. Paul, Michigan City, IN	Interim Pr. Richard Poole
St. Stephen, Louisville, KY	Interim Pr. Laura Meier
Zion, Franklin, IN	
Zion, Pershing, IN	
Zion, North Manchester	Interim Alice Smith
Zion, Sunman, IN	

Searching for Candidates:

Christ, Terre Haute, IN	
Christ the Savior, Fishers, IN	Staff Position
Come2go, Fort Wayne, IN	Staff Position
First, Columbus, IN	
Grace, Elkhart, IN	
Hebron, Hebron, KY	Staff Position
Holy Trinity, Lafayette, IN	Interim Pr. Fred Jordan
Mt. Zion, LaGrange, IN	Interim Pr. Howard Buchholz
Redeemer, Jasper, IN	
Resurrection, Marion, IN	
St. James, Holland	Interim Pr. Cindy Geisen
St. James, Greenfield, IN	Interim Pr. Joyce Gerwing
St. Paul's, Frankfort, IN	Interim Pr. Mary Frohs
St. Paul, Versailles, IN	Interim Pr. Dennis Zimmerman
Trinity, Logansport, IN	
Trinity, Terre Haute, IN	Interim Pr. John Stacy
Trinity, Union City, IN	Interim Pr. Bonnie Sparks
Zion, Bristol, IN	Interim Pr. Karen Strietelmeier

Interviewing and Extending Calls:

Bethel, Gary, IN	Interim Pr. Chris Armiger
Faith, Owensboro, IN	
Gethsemane, Fort Wayne, IN	Staff Position
Trinity English, Fort Wayne, IN	Staff Position
St. Paul, Seymour, IN	Interim Pr. Ken Witt
St. Peter, Stendal, IN	Interim Pr. Russ Vance
Trinity, Goshen, IN	Interim Pr. Laura Meier
St. Mark, Fort Wayne, IN	

Find out why Pearl has chained herself to a flagpole outside the American embassy in Ireland and gone on a hunger strike.

Read along with Bishop Stuck and the I-K Synod Staff!

During the month of January, they are reading

Pearl: A Novel
by Mary Gordon.

Calls Accepted in 2007:

St. Peter, Milton, KY	Pr. Chad Adamik (Sept)
Gloria Dei, South Bend, IN	Pr. Jeff Zell (Sept)
St. Paul's, Haysville, IN	Pr. Charla Grieves (Oct)
St. Paul, Middlebury, IN	Pr. Bill Steinke (Nov)
Faith, Jeffersonville, IN	Pr. Scott Meier (Nov)
Nightingale Hospice, Indianapolis	Pr. Robert Lim (Nov)
Valparaiso University, IN (Nov)	Pr. George Heider
St. John, Loogootee, IN	Pr. Jennifer Faust (Dec)
St. John, Lawrence, IN	Pr. Marlyn Nelson (Jan)



Chrism Mass Schedule 2008

Worship begins at 10:00 a.m.

Bishop Stuck will preside and preach at the following places:

Thursday, February 7

Evansville Conference
Redeemer Lutheran Church
140 E 32nd Street
Jasper, Ind. 47546
Contact: Pr. Mary Poston
(812) 490-6916

Tuesday, February 12

East Central Indiana Conference
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Elkhart, Ind. 46515
Contact: Pr. Paul Krebs
(765) 643-4122

Wednesday, February 13

Eastern Kentucky Conference
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
2718 Dixie Highway
Crestview Hills, Ky
Contact: Pr. Barry Neese
(859) 254-3726

Tuesday, February 19

South Central Conference
Grace and Glory Lutheran Church
Goshen, Ky 40026
Contact: Pr. Shirley Ross-Jones
(502) 447-9341

Wednesday, February 20

Indianapolis Conference
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
6118 Crawfordsville Road
Indianapolis, Ind.
Contact: Pr. Dan Strobel
(317) 243-6684

Thursday, February 21

North Central Conference
Grace Lutheran Church
203 East Main Street
Syracuse, Ind. 46567
Contact: Pr. Steve Schwier
(574) 272-4306

Wednesday, February 27

Lafayette Conference
St. Peter Lutheran Church
Camden, Ind. 46917
Contact: Pr. Steve Rye
(765) 743-2398

Thursday, February 28

Northeast Conference
Epiphany Lutheran Church
6606 Maplecrest Road
Fort Wayne, Ind. 46835
Contact: Pr. John Peterson
(260) 435-7720

Tuesday, March 4

Southeast Indiana Conference
St. John Lutheran Church
Napoleon, Ind. 47034
Contact: Pr. Pamela Thiede
(812) 667-5881

Thursday, March 13

Northwest Indiana Conference
Cross of Christ Lutheran Church
99 S. County Line Road
Crown Point, Ind. 46307
Contact: Pr. Charles Strietelmeier
(219) 942-3574

†If rostered leaders would like to have time with the bishop following the Mass, they may contact Karen Eppert at (317) 253-3522 or keppert@iksynod.org to set up an appointment. Bishop Stuck will remain on site for those appointments.

Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
911 E. 86th Street, Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240-1840
www.iksynod.org
Phone: (317) 253-3522
Fax: (317) 254-5666

... where every member is a missionary, every pastor a mission director, and every congregation a mission center.