

The Epistle

July 2008

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

www.iksynod.org

Economic Challenges Facing Pastors in Our Synod

Dear Colleagues:

For this month's Epistle, I was asked to share some of the information that I presented at our Synod Assembly in June regarding the economic challenges facing rostered leaders that are bringing forth the establishment of the new Freed to Lead Fund.

Those challenges begin with the rising cost of seminary education. The average annual tuition at an ELCA seminary is \$12,000 and the typical student also incurs living expenses ranging from \$15,000 to \$26,000. That brings the cumulative cost of attending three years of seminary to a range of \$70,000 to \$102,000. Many have college debt also.

Rising seminary education debt averaged \$38,000 in 2006 in the ELCA. Presently, 70% of seminary students take out loans to fund their education and can anticipate monthly loan payments of \$300-600. Those who take first calls to small congregations are not always able to handle those payments.

Why?

- The traditional income of rostered leaders in smaller churches is low (and most of our I-K Synod churches are small). Low income means low pension contributions, which impacts retirement and creates another economic challenge.

Why are those incomes low?

- Average giving of annual income in the ELCA is 2%, which is below the biblical tithe of 10%.
- There is a perception of scarcity in a Church that is blessed with abundance from our Lord and God.

There are a number of interrelated issues that combine to create the economic challenges faced by rostered leaders in our synod and across the whole Church in this country. Lilly Endowment has been a blessing in inviting our synod and all of the Protestant denominations in Indiana to examine and confront these issues and offer concrete financial assistance to rostered leaders.

The new Freed to Lead Fund will:

- receive \$570,000 from Lilly Endowment to begin the Fund along with another \$171,000 to administer the Fund,
- run a 4-year capital campaign to raise a goal of \$3.5 million in new money,
- receive applications and award grants for education debt, seminary scholarships, pension equity and special circumstances,
- provide financial training and planning for seminarians and rostered leaders receiving grants to assist in their skill development and financial stability, and
- empower fund administrators to address systemic issues relating to costs of seminary education, low compensation in parishes, and general stewardship in our synod.

Thank you for prayers and support as we await word from Lilly Endowment on our grant proposal.

The Rev. Thomas L. Weitzel
Project Director, Freed to Lead Fund

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

SALT 2008: Speaking As Lutherans Together in Indonesia

Beginning on July 15, a group of eight representatives of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod (ELCA) will visit the people of the I-K Synod Companion Synod, District V of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan, the largest Batak Lutheran Church in Indonesia. As they travel and cultivate friendships with the Batak people that they meet, they will worship and pray together as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. If you followed last year's SALT blog, "God In Between," in which I-K Synod members wrote vivid descriptions of their experiences in Chile, you already know that reading the blog is a great way to be an armchair traveler. **Visit <http://inkysalt2008.blogspot.com/>.**

"Food for Life: Recipes and Stories on the Right to Food"

Global recipes, stories, and table blessings from the Lutheran World Federation

Use this collection of recipes, stories, and table blessings to prepare global dishes for your family and congregation, and to highlight the Lutheran World Federation and ELCA World Hunger.

The global recipes, adapted for North American cooks, are categorized by the agricultural cycle (dishes for growing, planting, harvesting, and "hungry" seasons); the religious cycle (dishes for religious celebrations and observances); the life cycle (dishes for important days like birthdays, weddings, and funerals); and daily life (breakfast, lunch, dinner, desserts and snacks).

Co-produced by the LWF, the ELCA, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the book will be ready to ship by October 1, 2008. Cost: \$14 plus shipping.

Visit www.augsburgfortress.org/elcahunger; look for item # 978-6-0002-2174-4.

I-K Synod Assembly 2008 Recognition Luncheon and Celebration of Commissioning, Consecration, and Ordination Anniversaries



Photo by Paul Row

Front Row: Pr. John Stacy, Pr. Richard G. Whonsetler, Richard Dunning, Pr. Jane Aicher, Pr. Frederick W. Meuter, Pr. David D. Yoder, Pr. Jeffrey Romer **Back Row:** Sister Diane Marten, Associate in Ministry, Pr. John Kost, Pr. Donald Luck, Pr. Blair Fields, Pr. Pr. Frederick D. Hubert

"Word of God. Word of Life" I-K Synod Worship Workshops

The I-K Synod Worship Committee has planned three worship workshops, the first of which will be on November 22, 2008, at Christ the King Lutheran Church, South Bend, Ind., 9 a.m. - 3 pm.

Purpose of these workshops:

To become more familiar with ELW and to enhance and learn about worship and liturgy

Who should attend:

Anyone involved with worship leadership; lay worship leaders; synodically authorized ministers; rostered leaders; choir members, musicians; assisting ministers; lectors

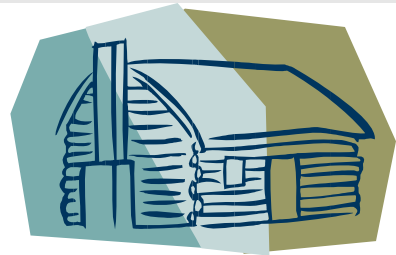
Workshop topics:

- Principles of liturgical language
- Lector's and Assisting Minister's Communication
- Lectionary - Sunday and Daily Lectionaries and their use in daily devotions
- Writing intercessions
- Singing the Word
- Non-verbal communication

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org.

Guest Cabins At Lake Luther

Lake Luther has two new guest cabins at its family campground. These cabins have a half-bath and sleep a family up to six. These will be available to pastors and their families for summer getaways *at no cost*. "We hope to have these cabins up and running sometime in August," says Mark Radloff, IK Synod Director of Outdoor Ministries. Contact Mark (260.667-7750) for more information.



Trinity Days 2008

Sojourners' Jim Wallis to speak at Trinity Lutheran Seminary

Preacher, speaker, activist and author Jim Wallis will talk about the "meaning of prophetic politics in an election year" during Trinity Days 2008 on Thursday, September 25, in the Gloria Dei Worship Center at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio.

Trinity Days begins on Thursday with worship at 10 a.m., lunch at 11:30 a.m., and Wallis' presentation at 1:30 p.m. The lecture will be followed by a book signing at 2:45 p.m. and public forum at 4 p.m. The cost is \$50 and \$25 for a spouse. More information available on the seminary's Web site, www.TrinityLutheranSeminary.edu, or by contacting Brenda Grubb at 614-235-4136.

Christian Spanish Words Course:

Learn how to make effective introductions to Latino visitors to your church, understand telephone numbers spoken in Spanish, spell names in Spanish and use Spanish words for some major Christian concepts and vocabulary.

- amor de Dios
- la salvación
- la Palabra
- poder de Dios
- omnipotencia de Dios

This program was created by Barbara Capers, Lamb of God Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, Ind., to provide a methodical plan of action for the non-Spanish speaking church member. The course is accompanied by a CD that gives precise instructions, skill building drills, and pronunciations of all words.

The cost is \$70.00 (includes shipping).

Contact Barbara Capers at (317 347-0048) or Barbara.Capers@yahoo.com for information.



Financial assistance is available for the ELCA 2009 Youth Gathering in New Orleans, Louisiana, but hurry!

There is still time to submit requests for financial assistance -- the deadline for applying is July 31, 2008.

The ELCA is committed to helping young people get to New Orleans, and organizers have received applications from almost every synod. Download the financial assistance application form and fax the completed form to 773-380-2109. You can also mail completed application forms to: *Financial Assistance, ELCA Youth Gathering, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631*. Congregations will be notified prior to September 15 if financial assistance is granted.



You can download a PDF of the registration brochure and find other registration details at <http://archive.elca.org/youth/gathering.html>.

I-K Synod Calendar
Visit www.iksynod.org for more event listings

August 2008

I-K Synod Finance Committee Meeting

August 2, 2008

11:00 a.m.

I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Marty Mielke at

mmielke007@sbcglobal.net

Candidacy Committee Meeting and Retreat

August 6-9, 2008

Waycross Retreat Center

Contact April Lynch at alynch@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Transitions Workshop

August 11, 2008

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Salem Lutheran Church, Indianapolis

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Leadership Support Meeting

August 21, 2008

9:30 a.m.

I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Pre-Retirement Seminar

August 22-23, 2008

Lutherwald Camp & Retreat Center, Howe, Ind.

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Conference Deans Meeting

August 28, 2008

I-K Synod Office Chapel

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

September 2008

I-K Synod Council Meeting

September 26-27, 2008

Camp Lutherwald, Howe, Indiana

Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Christian Education Retreat

September 15-16, 2008

Camp Lutherwald, Howe, Indiana

Contact Karen Seykowski at kjseykow@verizon.net

I-K Synod Global Mission Team Meeting

September 20, 2008

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

I-K Synod Downstairs Conference Room

Contact Jean Eisen at eisenj@bellsouth.net

Church on the Edge of Somewhere Ministry, Marginality, and the Future

By George B. Thompson, Jr.

The Alban Institute, 2007; Herndon, Virginia

*A book review by Mary Jo Mikulski, Associate in Ministry
Light of the Cross Worship Center, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

When I was given this book to review my first thought was “Oh no, not another book giving us the perfect prescription of how to do church.” I was pleasantly surprised at the author’s approach and his prescription. His premise is to find what type of rut your church is in and learn how to move forward and become a church on the edge where you can become people of The Way. Members of a church on the edge witness to others by connecting religious beliefs to civic and economic needs. Dr. Thompson says, “inherited forms of thinking and acting no longer work. Tinkering and adapting are not enough. We need reinventing and transforming.” I realize this sounds very familiar but he does have a rather unique twist.

Using the old poster saying from the 60’s “When given lemons make lemonade!” Dr. Thompson describes where your congregation might be on his map and how to move to the edge of somewhere instead of being the edge of nowhere, the middle of anywhere, or the middle of somewhere. He maintains that we can view our differences and difficulties as “lemons of opportunity.” Dr. Thompson places churches on a grid, putting them on a horizontal plane, focusing on the world from inter-directed to empathetic, and the vertical plane focusing on the conventional to the marginal.

As you move through the chapters you can plot where your congregation is by using an example of a church in each quarter of the grid. The most common edge is on the “edge of nowhere,” which is a church with inner-directed marginality. This church with a strong ethic background serves the people of the church and emphasizes serving their needs, perhaps out of a fear of the world around them. The “middle of anywhere” church is inner-directed. This congregational model is one where the church “fits in” and is comfortable with the status quo. The “middle of somewhere” serves others because of its abundance. The members are very involved and energetic with an emphasis on service. The fourth part of the grid depicts the church on the “edge of somewhere” that “serves others with itself.” The members are active in several ways and serve from a conviction of the heart.

In each chapter Dr. Thompson shows how the church, through leadership, can move to become more marginally empathetic. He gives two examples of large urban churches that are on the edge of somewhere and how their leadership moves them forward. One of the two churches is Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, a church that has been very much in the political news.

The difficulty I had with the book was that the author emphasizes social and cultural change for the already-churched and there is little discussion on sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and his salvation. His premise, I believe, was that if you touch people’s lives by working within their social and cultural church communities, then it will follow that the Gospel will touch them also.

Dr. Thompson emphasizes using the lemons of your church to create new opportunities for growth and spirituality. A church leader reading this book might think differently about how to move forward with an effort to make a difference in people’s lives.

Transformations

Prayers of Celebration and Concern:

Pr. Judy Brennan (Grace & Glory, Goshen, Ky.), and husband Dan to whom Rebecca May Brennan was born May 16, 2008.

Pr. Joe Trester (Gethsemane, Lexington, Ky., I-K Synod Council), and sister Nancy, whose husband, Larry Dyer passed away May 30, 2008.

Pr. Pamela Thiede (St. Peter, Bear Branch, Dillsboro, Ind.), whose father, Rynold Thiede was hospitalized in Michigan City, Ind., with serious kidney problems.

Pr. Ralph Easterhaus (St. John's, Fort Wayne, Ind.), whose mother Daisy underwent surgery to amputate a leg.

Pr. Roger Drews (retired, Wisconsin), who recently suffered a minor heart attack.

Pr. Tom Herbon (retired, Goshen, Ind.), who also suffered a heart attack.

Pr. John Stacy (Trinity, Terre Haute, Ind.), who had a transient ischemic attack (mini-stroke), and is now recovering.

Pr. John Peterson (Chaplain, Lutheran Hospital, Fort Wayne, Ind.), who is at home recovering from by-pass surgery.

Pr. David Shockey (Hebron Lutheran, Hebron, Ky.), who is recovering at home from valve replacement surgery.

Pr. Jerry Mielke (St. Paul, Richmond, Ind.), who is recovering from total left hip replacement.

Pr. John Sturz (St. Mark, Uniondale, Ind.) and wife Carol, who are first-time grandparents and celebrate the birth of Noah Gregory Abington on June 20, 2008.

Pr. Ed Boone (retired, Columbus, Ind.) and family, who is recovering from flood damage to his home from severe storms during the beginning of June.

Pr. Jennifer Osheim-Owen (St. Peter, Stendhal, Ind.), whose step-grandfather, Dan Callen, was injured in an accident and is undergoing rehab therapy.

Pr. Richard Hartman (Epiphany, Fort Wayne, Ind.), whose grandmother Jeanne Hartman is recovering from a stroke and sinus infection.

Pr. Roger Dierks (retired, Iowa), who has been hospitalized and unconscious for several weeks.

Ordinations and Installations:

Pastor Liberty Ann Lausterer was installed as pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Owensboro, Ky., on June 1, 2008.

Pastor Timothy Carl Linstrom was installed as pastor of Grace and Peace Lutheran Church, Evansville, Ind., on June 6, 2008.

Pastor Jennifer Sue Osheim-Owen was installed as pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Stendal, Ind., on June 22, 2008.

Pastor Scott Meier was installed as pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Jeffersonville, Ind., on June 22, 2008.

Pastor Larry Gember was installed as pastor of St. James Lutheran Church, Greenfield, Ind., on July 20, 2008.

Deaths:

† **We mourn with the family and friends of Pastor Mary Poston (OLFC) whose husband Rev. Robert Poston died July 5, 2008, at his home in Newburgh, Ind.** A memorial service was held at Christ Lutheran Church on July 14, 2008. Memorial gifts may be made to The Mission of Grace, 200 S. Boeke Rd, Evansville, or to Christ Lutheran Church, 1900 N. Main St., Madisonville, Ky. 42431.

† **We mourn with the family and friends of Pastor Wilbur Dean Miller (retired) who died July 13, 2008, in Goshen, Ind.** Pr. Miller leaves behind his wife, Joann; son, Stewart C. Miller of Houston; daughter, Kathy (LaVern) Nisley of Goshen; sisters, Luella Eash of Goshen, Mary (John) Culp of Hesston, KS, and Miriam (Dilman) Black of Millersburg; and brothers, Ronald Miller and Leroy (Tawney), both of Goshen. The funeral was held July 17, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. at First English Lutheran with Pastor Gene Hollingsworth preaching and presiding. In lieu of flowers, memorials are to be made to First English Lutheran Church 406 S. Fifth St., Goshen, Ind. 46526.

Congregations in the Call Process:

As of July 17, 2008

Mission Discernment:

Bethany, Indianapolis, IN	Interim Pr. Martin Bomhoeft
Bethany, LaPorte, IN	Staff Position
Bethany, Louisville, KY	
Bethel, Gary, IN	Interim Pr. Chris Armiger
Bethlehem, Gary, IN	Interim Pr. Mike Steinke
Calvary, Bluffton, IN	Interim Pr. Gene Kinney
Calvary, Louisville, KY	
Christ the King, South Bend, IN	
Church of the Cross, Muncie, IN	Interim Elaina Salmon
Emmanuel, Merrillville, IN	
Faith, Logansport, IN	
Faith United, Richmond, IN	
Grace, Huntingburg, IN	
Grace/St. Paul, Greensburg, Smyrna, IN	
Holy Cross, Rockport, IN	
Holy Trinity, Muncie, IN	Staff Position
Hope, Indianapolis	
Messiah, Brownsburg, IN	Interim Donn Abdon
Messiah, Fort Wayne, IN	Int. Pr. Joyce Gerwing
New Joy, Westfield, IN	Staff Position
Prince of Peace, Bellevue, KY	Interim Pr. Neal Boese
Prince of Peace, Russell Springs, KY	
Resurrection, Madison, IN	Interim Pr. Tom Weitzel
St. George, Edinburgh	Interim Pr. Jerry Curry
St. John, Nappanee	Interim Pr. David Stephey
St. Mark, Fort Wayne, IN	
St. Paul, Milan, IN	
St. Paul, Vincennes	Int. Pr. Cindy Geisen
St. Peter/St. Matthew, Camden, Delphi	
St. Stephen, Louisville, KY	Interim Pr. Laura Meier
Third, Louisville, KY	Interim Steve Renner
Zion, North Manchester, IN	Interim Alice Smith
Zion, Sunman, IN	

Searching for Candidates:

Calvary, Cromwell, IN	Interim Sr. Elsie Fregeau
Come2go, Fort Wayne, IN	Staff Position
Cross of Christ, Crown Point, IN	Interim Pr. David Norland
First, Columbus, IN	
Resurrection, Marion, IN	
St. Mark/Mt. Pleasant, Albion, Kendallville, IN	
	Int. Pr. Thelma McGill-Cobbler
St. Mark, Batesville, IN	Int. Pr. Jane Ellen Jarrell
St. Mark, Evansville, IN	Interim Pr. Karen Husby
St. Paul's, Frankfort, IN	
St. Paul, Michigan City, IN	Interim Pr. Richard Poole
Zion, Franklin, KY	

Zion, Pershing, IN

Interviewing and Extending Calls:

Antioch, Hoagland, IN	Interim Pr. Richard Vonesh
Christ, Jeffersontown, IN	Staff Position
Christ, Madisonville, KY	Int. Pr. Mary Poston
Christ, Terre Haute, IN	
Christ the Savior, Fishers, IN	Staff Position
First, Attica, IN	
Gethsemane, Fort Wayne, IN	Staff Position
Hebron, Hebron, KY	Staff Position
Holy Shepherd, St. John, IN	Staff Position
Hopeful, Florence, IN	Staff Position
Mt. Zion, LaGrange, IN	Interim Pr. Howard Buchholz
Redeemer, Jasper, IN	Interim Gretchen Enoch
St. James, Holland, IN	
St. Paul, Versailles, IN	Interim Pr. Dennis Zimmerman
Trinity, Logansport, IN	Interim Pr. Dwayne Daehler
Trinity, Terre Haute, IN	Interim Pr. John Stacy
St. Paul, Seymour, IN	Interim Pr. Ken Witt
Zion, Bristol, IN	Interim Pr. Karen Strietelmeier

Calls Accepted in 2008:

Faith, Owensboro, KY	Pr. Liberty Lausterer (Apr)
St. Peter, Stendhal, KY	Pr. Jennifer Osheim-Owen (Apr)
Indianapolis, IN	Marilyn Smith, Associate in Ministry
St. James, Greenfield, IN	Pr. Lawrence Gember (May)
Grace, Elkhart, IN	Pr. Tim Diemer (May)
Trinity, Union City, IN	Gil Krouse (June)
Trinity, Goshen, IN	John Hickey (June)
Christ—Interim, Madisonville, KY	Pr. Mary Poston (June)
Mt. Zion, LaGrange, IN	Pr. Sandy Hutchens (June)
Mt. Zion, LaGrange, IN	Pr. Tom McShannock (June)
St. James, Holland, IN	Pr. David Darling (July)
Holy Trinity, Lafayette, IN	Pr. David Doane (July)

Refer a college student!

Do you know a student heading to college or a university for the upcoming academic year? Lutheran Campus Ministry helps students grow spiritually, develop friendships, worship together, and serve others.

Use the link below to send in the names and schools for students that you know.

<http://plm.org/forms/referral/htm>



**2008 Indiana-Kentucky Synod
Professional Leaders' Conference
September 28-30, 2008**

**Turkey Run State Park
Marshall, Indiana**

*Telling the Truth in Ministry:
Reflections on Several Central Tasks of Church Leaders*

**Rev. Dr. Gordon W. Lathrop
Professor of Liturgy Emeritus
Philadelphia Theological Seminary**

**Visit www.iksynod.org to download
and print a registration form.**

Registration is due by August 24, 2008.

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