

The Epistle

March/April/May 2010

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,

As we prepare for the Synod Assembly I look forward to our time together. I often tell people that for the synod the assembly is like Sunday morning in the parish. This is when the faithful people of God who serve in diverse ways in the world gather to be empowered, equipped and encouraged for the mission and ministry we share. This is always a time of great joy and excitement for me as the believers gather for worship, sharing and support.

As pastor of the synod there is a trend that concerns me. From some I am hearing that they cannot attend the assembly this year due to financial difficulties in the congregation. I can understand the dilemma in which this puts the pastor if as a part of these financial difficulties, his/her salary has been frozen or cut. What I don't understand is how assembly attendance becomes a low priority for the pastor and congregation. We find a way to do what we think we should do.

There is a reason why our constitutions mandate that pastors attend assemblies and ministerium meetings. It has to do with the very fabric of our life together. When part of the body is absent we all are diminished. It is akin to folks skipping out on worship on Sunday morning. It weakens the life of the community of faith. You may think you do not need to be there, but we need you to be present. This is why the Synod Council will waive registration fees for those who are having trouble financially. We want you to be present.

I believe this trend also reflects itself in the practice of shared benevolence. Out of a desire to deal with local financial difficulties, congregations will first cut what they share with the wider church. Or, because of a desire to punish the church over actions taken by the ELCA, they will hold benevolence funds in abeyance or redirect these funds to other ministries. This action undermines the health of the whole synod, much like members in a congregation withholding their tithe because of personal financial hardship or disagreements within the congregation. It hurts the whole body, including the ones who practice it.

Somehow we have adopted the worldly notion and value that "it is my time and my money and I can do with it as I wish." From Scripture we learn that all gifts come from God's loving hands. God has decided not to withhold these gifts due to our actions or lack of action. And God calls us to share generously of time, talent and treasure for the sake of mission.

Cont.

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

At stake are ministries that we share together:

- ◆ Outdoor Ministries
- ◆ Campus Ministries
- ◆ Starting and redeveloping congregations
- ◆ Global Missions
- ◆ Leadership development
- ◆ Seminaries and universities
- ◆ Program and ministry assistance to congregations and leaders

These are just a few of the areas of mission and ministry that are in danger. To address the financial shortfall we have cut staff rather than ministries. The last 12 years we have reduced the number of assistants to the bishop from five to two. This reduction ultimately undermines the mission of the church and the ministry of each congregation.

Both of these issues speak to our practice of stewardship. Somehow we have adopted the worldly notion and value that “it is my time and my money and I can do with it as I wish.” From Scripture we learn that all gifts come from God’s loving hands. God has decided not to withhold these gifts due to our actions or lack of action. God calls us to share generously of time, talent and treasure for the sake of mission. These are times for acting in faith and courage knowing that God is blessing us richly.

Thank you for being open to that call. See you at the assembly.

Your brother in Christ,

Bishop Jim Stuck



Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Indiana-Kentucky: Camp Kickoff Breakfasts

At Lutheran Hills, Lutherwald, and Lake Luther, Camp Director Pr. Mark Radloff discussed the newly reorganization and incorporation of the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. He introduced the new Board of Directors, and presented the first annual report.

At the Lutheran Hills breakfast in April, Betty Darbro presented a portrait of her father, Dr. Walter Wick, to Bishop Stuck at Lutheran Hills where it will hang on the wall of the main dining room, Wick Hall.

Passing Peace

From Assistant to the Bishop Bill Gafkjen's blog, Table Scraps
livingcommunion.blogspot.com/

A funny thing happened on the way to the altar...

Not many moments after I had preached on a Sunday morning in one of our synod's congregations, as invited by the liturgy, I was moving down the center aisle of the worship space sharing the peace. As I turned this way and that offering and receiving that amazing gift among the good people of the congregation, I eventually noticed a gentle but persistent tug on the cincture (rope) hanging from my be-robed waist.

I looked around and, finally, down, to find the source: a 4 or 5 year old tow-headed bespectacled boy looking up with deep intention, his hand (the one not still holding the cincture) extended. I folded my 6 ½ foot frame to look him in the eyes. "Peace be with you," he whispered. "And also with you," I said, grateful for the mutual gift-giving his tugging evoked.

On the long drive home this experience brought biblically storied people tumbling to mind: priests hustling by a man who lies moaning in the ditch on their way to temple, a fragile woman grabbing at the fringe of a messianic cloak on the move, an alms-asker beckoning to pray-ers on their way to pray, a small boy standing among 5000 offering his boxed lunch to sate their hunger. I wonder how often I overlook either gift or need on my way somewhere else? As I look toward the horizon, the altar, the next task, whose need tugs for my attention just out of sight? Who waits patiently, persistently at my feet, by my side, to offer gift?

Turn our gaze, O Lord, to those nearby whose need or gift we will miss if we look only toward what's ahead.



ELCA Worship News

◆ Prayers and hymn suggestions in response to the spring storms, flooding and ecological disaster including prayer petitions for Sunday worship through June 6, 2010 are available for download at www.elca.org/worship.

◆ Have you written prayers, litanies or other resources to share with the church in response to flooding, tornadoes, ecological disasters or another crisis? Send them to worship@elca.org. They may be included in future disaster response resources.

◆ A choir camp for children in grades 4-8:

July 27-31 Fifth Annual Young Lutherans Sing choral camp at Valparaiso University. Clinician: Michael Burkhardt; Presenter: Walter Wangerin, Jr.

Registration form at <https://www.alcm.org/event/register/n/Young+Lutherans+Sing>

The Earth Continues to Tremble: *Chile Earthquake Update*

Summary Facts

- ⇒ Aftershocks as strong as 6.4 magnitude have shaken Chile in May.
- ⇒ The official Chilean government death toll from the February 27 earthquake and tsunami has remained at 486 and an additional 79 deaths are presumed to have been caused by the earthquake or tsunami but are still being investigated.
- ⇒ The Chilean government has announced that it reached its goal of having all students back to school by Monday, April 26.
- ⇒ Tens of thousands of families will be living in provisional housing for years before the government housing reconstruction program provides permanent solutions.
- ⇒ ELCA mobilized \$40,000 immediately after the earthquake for ELCA companions, IELCH, Popular Education for Health (EPES) and the Inter-Church Emergency Committee Chile 2010.
- ⇒ ELCA Disaster Response Appeal has received \$80,000 in gifts from ELCA members and continues to receive gifts at www.elca.org/chiledonate.
- ⇒ ELCA Disaster Response blog at: <http://blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse/>

Our I-K Synod companion church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH) has completed an inventory of the damage done to its physical infrastructure. The majority of damages have been sustained by the congregations Belén, Buen Samaritano and Trinidad in Santiago and Martin Luther, San Pedro and San Pablo in Greater Concepción.

An effort to raise the funds for the necessary repairs is being coordinated by the Lutheran World Federation and we have launched an initiative to raise \$20,000 for the IELCH to use in the reconstruction of its damaged infrastructure. The offering from the sending Eucharist at the Synod Assembly on Sunday, June 6 will be designated toward the IELCH reconstruction effort.

Popular Education for Health (EPES) is now two weeks into its implementation of two programs to promote emotional recovery among children and teens. Over the next three months these programs will use stories, sports and games to help 1,300 young people to address the fear and trauma caused by the earthquake, tsunami, social unrest, recurring tremors as well as the loss of loved ones and homes. The programs build on methodologies that have been used to address trauma in children following the collapse of the Twin Towers, hurricane Katrina and earthquakes in Haiti, Peru and China.

The I-K Synod has launched an initiative to raise \$20,000 for the IELCH to use in the reconstruction of its damaged infrastructure. The offering from the sending Eucharist at the Synod Assembly on Sunday, June 6 will be designated toward the IELCH reconstruction effort. More information can be found at www.iksynod.org/ministry/globalmission/chileearthquake.asp.

Transformations

Prayers of Celebration and Concern:

Carol Walker, wife of **Pr. John Walker** (First English, Richmond, Ind.), who underwent a successful kidney transplant.

Bishop Jim Stuck and wife Kris, who celebrate the birth of granddaughter Jaycee Lynne Dalton on March 5 and granddaughter Riley Noel Deckard on April 11.

Kathy Schwier, wife of **Pr. Steve Schwier** (Christ the King, South Bend, Ind.), whose mother Anna Louise Doenges passed away on March 11.

Jocelyn Smith, wife of **Pr. Greg Smith** (Faith, Fort Wayne, Ind.), who is recovering from a stroke.

April Lynch (Administrative assistant to Pr. Bill Gafken), who underwent surgery on April 1 and is now back at work.

Pr. Arlene Okey (Emanuel, Merrillville, Ind.) and family, whose son-in-law Danny McKnight has been diagnosed with stage four lung cancer.

Ellie Anderson, wife of **Pr. Lowell Anderson** (retired, Crawfordsville, Ind.), who fell and broke her femur and underwent surgery to repair it.

Pr. Phyllis Smoot (Mt. Pleasant, Kendallville; St. Mark's, Albion, Ind.), and husband Justin who celebrate the birth of Lillian on April 14.

Alice Curry, wife of **Pr. Jerry Curry** (Interim, St. George, Edinburg, Ind.), who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

Pr. David Yoder (retired, Indianapolis), who has been diagnosed with brain cancer.

Family of **Pr. Stephen Krueger**, who passed away January, 2010.

Family and friends of **Pr. Darlene Grega** (Chapel Staff, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Ind.) who died on April 7.

Pr. James Capers (Lamb of God, Indianapolis, Ind.) and family, whose son James died of a heart attack on April 9.

Pr. Steve Reshan (Augustana, Elkhart, Ind.) and **Pr. Mark Reshan** (St. Paul, Michigan City, Ind.), whose mother Patricia Reshan died on April 17.

Cecil Bultman (recent I-K Synod Council member) and family, whose father Cecil A. Bultman, Sr., died April 23.

Members of our companion church, the IELCH, who lost homes and who mourn the death of loved ones in the earthquake in Chile.

Ordinations and Installations:

Pr. Carolyn Rose Lesmeister was ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament at First Lutheran Church, Attica, Ind. on April 10, 2010. Bishop Jim Stuck presided.

Bonnie N. Harstad was commissioned as an Associate in Ministry on March 28 at Faith Lutheran Church, Lexington, Ky., where she has been called to serve as Associate in Ministry for Worship. Bishop Jim Stuck presided.

Deaths:

† **We mourn with the family and friends of Pr. Darlene Grega, who passed away on April 7, 2010 in Valparaiso, Ind.** Rev. Grega served as university pastor at Valparaiso University. She was the former pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Canton. She leaves behind a son, Nathan E. Grega Larson, and parents Edward and Beatrice Grega; brother Jim Grega, and niece Amanda and nephew Jimmy. Valparaiso University held a series of nightly prayer services and a memorial service on April 17. The funeral took place April 13 at Dr. Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, Ohio.

† **We mourn with the family and friends of James Darnell Capers, son of Pr. and Mrs. James and Barbara Capers of Lamb of God Church, Indianapolis, Ind., who died of a heart attack on April 9.** James leaves behind his wife, Shana; one son, Julian Hiroshi Capers; one daughter, Carla Takako Capers; a brother-in-law Aaron Bohn; his mother-in-law, Cindy Bohn; two sisters, Kiesi Bouger and her husband, Milton, and Lee Ara Capers; his niece, Morgan Ashley Capers; two nephews, Malcolm H. Julian and Mitchell E. Julian; three cousins, Shakema Cowans, Glen Jawara Capers and Calvin Kibwe Capers; two uncles Calvin Capers and his wife, Sheila, Joseph Cowans and his wife, Estelle; two aunts, Rev. Olivia J. Capers and Luerene Cowans Easley; the mother of his children, Hiromi Capers. A memorial service was held on Saturday, April 17 at Lamb of God Church in Indianapolis and a graveside service was held on May 4 at Arlington National Cemetery.

2010 Synod Assembly Calendar

Visit www.iksynod.org/events/Assembly10/assembly10main.asp for more I-K Synod Assembly details.

May 13-Last day of guaranteed rooms at the Embassy Suites and Hilton

May 20-Resolutions from conferences due to Pr. Rudy Mueller

May 21-Pre-Assembly Registration closes (including meals)

May 21-Deadline for 650 copies of materials for information packet to St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 4800 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076; (859) 441-2848

June 4-Assembly begins.



Springtime at the Lutheran Center
Photo taken by Karen Eppert, Administrative Assistant to Bishop Jim Stuck

Visit www.iksynod.org for more listings

May 2010

I-K Synod Renewing Mission Table Meeting

May 22, 2010, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

I-K Synod Lutheran Center Downstairs Conference Rm
Contact Pr. Tim Linstrom at t.linstrom@att.net

I-K Synod Deans Meeting

May 27, 2010, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

I-K Synod Lutheran Center Chapel
Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

Indiana-Kentucky Lutheran Center will be closed on May 31, 2010, in observance of Memorial Day.

June 2010

Indiana-Kentucky Synod Assembly 2010

June 4-6, 2010

Northern Kentucky Convention Center
Marriott Hotel, Embassy Suites Hotel
Covington, Kentucky
Contact April Lynch at alynch@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Council Meeting

June 4, 2010

I-K Synod Synod Assembly, Covington, Ky.
Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

I-K Synod Worship Committee Meeting

June 17, 2010, 10:00 a.m.

I-K Lutheran Center Chapel
Contact Karen Eppert at keppert@iksynod.org

Indiana-Kentucky Lutheran Center will be closed on June 7, 2010, the day after I-K Synod Assembly.

July 2010

Indiana-Kentucky Lutheran Center will be closed on July 5, 2010, in observance of Independence Day.

I-K Synod Finance Committee Meeting

July 10, 2010, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

I-K Synod Chapel
Contact Kate Knoerzer at hsckate@sbcglobal.net

I-K Synod Renewing Mission Table Meeting

July 10, 2010, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

I-K Synod Lutheran Center Downstairs Conference Rm
Contact Pr. Tim Linstrom at t.linstrom@att.net

Congregations in the Call Process:

As of May 4, 2010

Mission Discernment:

Bethany, Indianapolis, IN	Interim Pr. Martin Bomhoef
Calvary, Angola, IN	Interim Pr. Ken Witt
Cross and Crown, Indianapolis, IN	
First, Louisville, KY	Int. Judy Brennan
Gethsemane, Lexington, KY	Int. Pr. John Hawkins
Grace, Columbia City, IN	Int. Pr. Joyce Gerwing
Grace and Glory, Goshen, KY	Int. Pr. Brian Fingerson
House of Prayer, Elizabethtown	Int. Ms. Pam Thorson
Redeemer, Bryant, IN	
Redeemer, Elkhart, IN	
St. George, Edinburgh	Interim Pr. Jerry Curry
St. John, Sunman, IN	
St. Mark, Fort Wayne, IN	Int. Pr. Nathan Wadewitz
St. Mark, Uniondale, IN	Interim Pr. Richard Vonesh
St. Peter, Milton, KY	
St. Peter/St. Matthew, Camden/Delphi	Int. Pr. Scott Vana
St. Thomas, Richmond, KY	Interim Cindy Geisen
Third, Louisville, KY	Interim Steve Renner

Searching for Candidates:

St. Paul, Smyrna	
St. Stephen's, Louisville, KY	Interim Laura Meier
Zion, Pershing, IN	
Zion, Sunman, IN	

Interviewing and Extending Calls:

Calvary, Bluffton, IN	Interim Pr. Gene Kinney
Gethsemane, Indianapolis, IN	Interim Pr. David Furuness
Faith, Logansport, IN	
Hilltop, South Bend, IN	Interim Pr. Bill Hoerger
Messiah, Brownsburg, IN	Interim Pr. Donn Abdon
Resurrection, Madison, IN	Int. Pr. Dennis Zimmerman
St. John, Otwell, IN	Int. Pr. John Stacy
St. Paul, Milan, IN	Int. Pr. Ron Haseley
Zion, Hartford City, IN	
Zion, North Manchester, IN	Interim Pr. Jeff Hawkins

Calls Accepted in 2010:

LOM Executive Director Faith, Lexington, KY	Pr. Mark Radloff Bonnie Harstad, Associate in Ministry
Messiah, Fort Wayne, IN	Pr. Timothy Graham
First, Attica, IN	Pr. Carolyn Lesmeister
St. Paul, Michigan City, IN	Pr. Mark Reshan
St. Mark/Mt. Pleasant, Albion/Kendallville, IN	Pr. Phyllis Smoot
Antioch, Hoagland, IN	Pr. Kris Madsen



ELCA World Hunger
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

2011 ELCA Domestic Hunger Grant Applications Are Available

In 2009, five grants were awarded in the I-K Synod for ministries that provide emergency food and shelter as well as safe cribs and child car seats. Applications, criteria, and guidelines are available at www.elca.org/domestichungergrants.

Contact Pr. Joe Young, Director for Community Development Services at 800-638-3522 ext. 2683.

ELCA World Hunger addresses the root of the hunger and poverty problem. In addition to relief programs, ELCA domestic hunger grants fund projects in organization and development that strengthen the foundations of communities.

Free! Hunger Jeopardy (PowerPoint game)

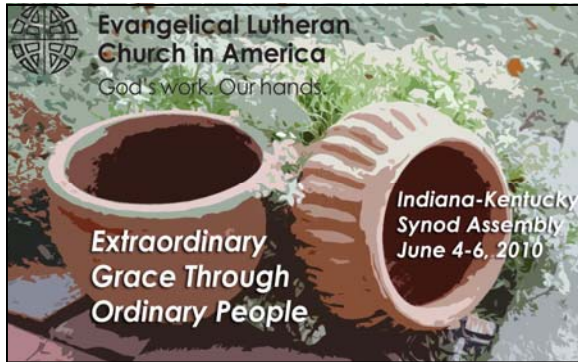
Test your knowledge about world hunger! This fun and interactive activity is designed to educate Lutherans and others about ELCA World Hunger and its work. This game works well with teenagers, adults, or both (as an intergenerational activity).

Download game at <http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-World-Hunger/Resources/For-Congregations/Activities/Jeopardy.aspx>

Beginning of the Good News: Live Performance of Mark's Gospel


Phil Ruge-Jones, Associate Professor of Theology at Texas Lutheran University, and member of the Network of Biblical Storytellers, performs the entire Gospel of Mark from memory in a two hour performance on DVD. Use for summer adult education classes, as focus for a retreat or break it down into chapters as part of a bible study. A study guide accompanies the disk and is divided into 16 sessions to match the 16 chapters of the Gospel of Mark. Questions from the study guide can be adapted to fit your context. Available from Select Learning at www.selectlearning.org. Cost is \$49.

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



**23rd Indiana-Kentucky Synod, ELCA
June 4-6, 2010
Northern Kentucky Convention Center
Covington, Kentucky**

ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson
Keynote Speaker: Diana Butler Bass
Assembly Musician: Ken Medema

 **Hurry! Registration ends May 21. We cannot guarantee meals after this date. If you plan just to attend the Saturday Celebration dinner for Bishop Jim Stuck, you must call April Lynch at (317) 253-3522 before registration closes.**

What's happening at this year's Synod Assembly?

Election of a bishop, thanksgiving, farewell and Godspeed for Bishop Stuck, inspiring worship, celebrative dinners, fellowship-rich receptions, presence and leadership of ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, inspiring and informative break out sessions, a Fair Trade Fair, a labyrinth, and all the other aspects that help us to be the church in assembly.

I-K Synod Assembly 2010 Breakout Sessions

- Ministry on Campus: A Mission We All Share
- Identity Theft
- Living Into the Future Together as the ELCA
- Youth and Family Ministry
- Freed to Lead: It's About Improving Everyone's Financial Abilities
- Diakonia: Lay Education for the Spiritual Journey
- Walking/Praying the Labyrinth
- Congregational Record-Keeping
- Faith and End of Life Care
- Renewing Mission in Your Congregation
- 2011-2012 Budget
- Open Scripture. Join the Conversation
- That You May be Well
- Seeing Is Believing: Multi-sensory Worship in Your Congregation.
- Embodying Grace (for ordinary people)
- Pending Resolutions
- Gathering of Associates in Ministry, Diaconal Ministers, ELCA Deaconesses

Full descriptions, times and locations for the breakouts will be distributed at assembly check-in on-site.

Walk the prayer labyrinth.



The labyrinth is considered a means to calm the mind, relax the body, reduce stress and provide a space that guides the mind and heart in prayer.

*Check it out at
Synod Assembly
2010.*



Visit www.iksynod.org/events/Assembly10/assembly10main.asp
for more I-K Synod Assembly details.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.