

# The Epistle

November 2007

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

[www.iksynod.org](http://www.iksynod.org)

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Dear Partners in Mission,

I have a confession to make. I started listening to Christmas music even before the Advent season began. I couldn't help myself. It was Tuesday, November 20 and I was riding in my car. It was right there in front of me... on my XM radio... on channel 106, the classical Christmas station. I spend so many hours in my car and it is such a temptation. I said to myself, "I will listen to just one song." But I couldn't listen to just one. The JOY of hearing the Christmas classics overwhelmed me.

Joy is the right word. Joy overwhelmed me because of the anticipation of the season. The darkness of these days does not have the last word. The Light that enlightens the world is coming. The incarnation does make a difference.

And what will be the sign that this is about to take place? At the birth of Jesus, the angel of the Lord said to the shepherds, "This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." In this baby born in Bethlehem 2000 years ago is the Light of the world. In his life, death and resurrection is the salvation of the world. He is the way, the truth and the life.

Joy is the right word. Joy overwhelmed me because of the anticipation of the season. The darkness of these days does not have the last word. The Light that enlightens the world is coming. The incarnation does make a difference.

I need to be reminded of this hope often. For in many ways these are dark days. Just as we do not celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on just one Sunday of the year, but every Sunday, so we cannot celebrate the incarnation on just one day of the year, but everyday. It is in the proclamation of this hope that it appears. When the Word is proclaimed and we say, "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again," the promise is fulfilled and the joy is given and hope is restored.

As ministers of the Word, we are privileged to proclaim this Word, the Word made flesh. During this season we point to the Christ child and in that act of pointing, the Child is born again into our hearts and the hearts of those who hear and receive.

May the joy and hope of the promise of the Incarnation bless you once again this year in your Advent and Christmas proclamation.

Your brother in Christ,

*Bishop Jim Stuck*

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

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## EcuCamp 2008

*Indiana Partners for Christian Unity and Mission* will hold its annual EcuCamp April 11-13, 2008, at Waycross Episcopal Conference near Lutheran Hills Camp in Morgantown, Indiana.

EcuCamp is an opportunity for up to 30 high school youth from many denominations to gather to learn new ways of leading God's church into more visible unity.


- Cost \$135.
- Registration deadline is January 28.

Youth accepted for EcuCamp will be sent a workbook, "Packing for the Journey," to prepare them to share their faith tradition with others.

Those who attend ecumenical events such as this find that the experience has grounded them even deeper in their own faith tradition while also expanding their understanding of the whole body of Christ.

**Calling all Parish Nurses!**

The ELCA Board of Pensions is updating the ELCA parish nurse database. If you are a parish nurse or if there is a parish nurse in your congregation, please email Rebecca Westfield at [rwestfield@elcabop.org](mailto:rwestfield@elcabop.org).



## World AIDS Day



World AIDS Day is Saturday, December 1, a day of shared global action and awareness to the AIDS epidemic.

- The ELCA is in the process of developing a national church strategy on HIV and AIDS.
- The church hosted a consultation on HIV and AIDS September 7-9 that called together about 65 Lutherans from the United States and overseas to help guide the church's work in developing the strategy.

*"Be attentive to the voices of those living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. Together we will find the courage to confront the continued marginalization and stigmatization that impacts those living with and affected by HIV and AIDS."*

*Rev. Mark S. Hanson, ELCA Presiding Bishop*

- The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance has produced an devotional calendar titled "Keep the Promise - Advent in a Time of AIDS" that offers daily scripture readings and meditations. The photography is stunning.
- You can request up to 20 free copies while supplies last by calling Augsburg Fortress at (800) 328-4648.

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## **Leadership in Congregations**

Richard Bass, editor

*A book review by Rev. Steven Schwier*

*Christ the King Lutheran Church, South Bend, Indiana*

As with most collections of essays, there is some chaff with the wheat in Leadership in Congregations, published by the Alban Institute and edited by Richard Bass, but also much to be valued. The subject matter is timely, for who can deny “that while there are multiple factors influencing the vitality of congregations and congregational systems, clergy leadership is a central point of attention and diagnosis?”

Those who are concerned about faithfulness and the future of the church will give attention to the topic of leadership in congregations. As Scott Eblin writes in an essay on “Pastors and Managers: An Executive Coach Assesses Leadership Skills,” it is “hard to think of a more complex leadership challenge than pastoring the average church congregation.”

This collection “gathers the collected wisdom of over ten years of Alban research and reflection on what it means to be a leader in a congregation, how our perceptions of leadership are changing, and exciting new directions for leadership in the future.” Those who are familiar with Alban will recognize such names as James Wind, Gil Rendle, and Edward White, who are among the authors of the 21 essays.

In the foreword Diana Butler Bass challenges a rather common paradigm which suggests that perhaps the Titanic is not our story, but that our story is that of the Mayflower. In the story of the Titanic, leaders lead while the ship is sinking. In the Mayflower story, leadership stabilizes a pilgrim community in choppy seas as they head for an unknown world.

To give you a brief flavor for the book I suggest reading an essay entitled, “Action and Reflection: A Rhythm of Ministry,” which suggests that “pastors could benefit from adopting a rhythm of action and reflection” while offering tools for personal reflection as well as tools for congregational reflection.

The subject matter is timely, for who can deny “that while there are multiple factors influencing the vitality of congregations and congregational systems, clergy leadership is a central point of attention and diagnosis?”

In “What Kind of Pastor Will Most Likely Empower Laity?”

Ed White offers some grist for reflection on one’s own leadership style.

Another essay focuses on “Pastoral Authority” and includes a reminder that a pastor’s first and foremost job is to love the congregation that has been given to the pastor’s care while reminding us that not to love the congregation will most certainly mean that a pastor’s call to be prophetic will fall on deaf ears. “Loving every member of the congregation, even those who are the hardest to love, is an important part of pastoral identity. It is also a powerful Christian witness.” I would add that it also is foundational to being a leader in a Christian faith community.

It is helpful to be reminded of what we know and to be guided in reflecting on wisdom like “as people work together to accomplish a goal, they need to hear regularly what is going well,” and that one of the key roles of a pastor is “to stand with a people to discern together a future that is faithful to God’s call.” Faithfulness means taking one’s role as leader seriously. Leadership in Congregations can assist you in doing that.

*Leadership in Congregations*, edited by Richard Bass ISBN# 978-1-56699-334-0 Alban No. AL324, 2006. Richard Bass is the director of publishing at the Alban Institute. He is also editor of *Congregations* magazine.

### **Lutheran Partners magazine: New Year—New Look—New Focus**

Starting with the January-February 2008 issue, *Lutheran Partners* magazine will have a new look and a new focus, reflecting our new mission to “connect rostered leaders of the ELCA by publishing the voices of real people doing real ministry in the real world.”

Listen in on the thoughts and reflections of your colleagues as they write about what keeps them up at night, what gets them up in the morning, and everything in between—the joys and the dead ends, the passion and the practicalities of all kinds of ministry.

**Real people. Real ministry. Real world.**  
[www.elca.org/lutheranpartners](http://www.elca.org/lutheranpartners)

#### **Lutheran Partners Themes for 2008**

##### **Jan/Feb** *Transforming Suffering*

How faith in Christ is shaping the powerful experience of human suffering

##### **March/April** *Vocation Lived Out*

(Higher Education and the church/Lifelong Learning issue) Vocation, a central Lutheran motif, fixes our sights on how God is calling us to serve our neighbor. We will hear the voices of students and professors; pastors and lay persons speak about their God-driven vocation.

##### **May/June** *In the Middle of the Night*

God never sleeps nor slumbers. But what might this mean in the wee hours of the night in places such as hospitals or Bible camps? Or through ecumenical urban “night” ministries? Or even when one is dreaming?

##### **July/Aug** *Taking Center Stage*

Our culture places a high premium on entertainment and the arts. Our authors will speak about the place these values have in the life of the church and how they both support and detract Christians as they worship God and follow Christ.

##### **Sept/Oct** *Real People Read the Bible*

The Bible is where Christians believe the voices of God can be heard through the words of its many human authors. Ordained and lay leaders reveal how they study, read, and use these life-giving words.

##### **Nov/Dec** *The Changing Church*

In today’s congregations, worshipers may have little background regarding how Lutherans have commonly organized worship. We will examine how congregational leaders deal with their reality.

## **Synod Calendar 2007**

### **November 2007**

#### **I-K Synod Christian Education Committee Meeting**

November 26, 2007, 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.  
St. Paul Lutheran School, Michigan City, Indiana  
Contact Karen Seykowski at [kjseykow@juno.com](mailto:kjseykow@juno.com)

#### **I-K Synod Conference Deans Meeting**

November 29, 2007  
I-K Synod Office Chapel  
Contact Karen Eppert at [keppert@iksynod.org](mailto:keppert@iksynod.org)

#### **I-K Synod Church in Society Meeting**

November 29, 2007, 10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.  
I-K Synod Downstairs Conference Room  
Contact Pr. Cindy Geisen at [matterofcat@hotmail.com](mailto:matterofcat@hotmail.com)

### **December 2007**

#### **I-K Synod Global Mission Meeting**

December 8, 2007, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
I-K Synod Downstairs Conference Room  
Contact Jean Eisen at [eisenj@bellsouth.net](mailto:eisenj@bellsouth.net)

#### **I-K Synod Office Closed for Christmas Holidays**

December 24-26, 2007

### **January 2008**

#### **I-K Synod Candidacy Committee Meeting**

January 4-5, 2008  
I-K Synod Office  
Contact April Lynch at [alynch@iksynod.org](mailto:alynch@iksynod.org)

#### **I-K Synod Interim Pastors Meeting**

January 7, 2008  
I-K Synod Downstairs Conference Room  
Contact Karen Eppert at [keppert@iksynod.org](mailto:keppert@iksynod.org)

#### **Lilly Foundation Task Force Meeting**

January 16, 2008, 10:00 a.m.  
I-K Synod Downstairs Conference Room  
Contact Pr. Tom Weitzel at [LiturgybyTLW1@aol.com](mailto:LiturgybyTLW1@aol.com)

#### **I-K Synod Finance Committee**

January 17, 2008  
I-K Synod Chapel, 2:00 p.m.  
Contact Karen Eppert at [keppert@iksynod.org](mailto:keppert@iksynod.org)

#### **I-K Synod Pastoral Counseling Committee**

January 23, 2008  
I-K Synod Chapel, 1:00 p.m.  
Contact Karen Eppert at [keppert@iksynod.org](mailto:keppert@iksynod.org)

#### **I-K Synod Conference Deans Meeting**

January 24, 2008  
I-K Synod Office Chapel  
Contact Karen Eppert at [keppert@iksynod.org](mailto:keppert@iksynod.org)

#### **I-K Synod Council Meeting**

January 25-26, 2008  
I-K Synod Office Chapel  
Contact Karen Eppert at [keppert@iksynod.org](mailto:keppert@iksynod.org)

#### **I-K Synod Leadership Support**

January 31, 2008  
I-K Synod Office Chapel  
Contact Karen Eppert at [keppert@iksynod.org](mailto:keppert@iksynod.org)



**Invite Allie and Sam to come to YOUR congregation to talk about summer camp!**

Lutheran Hills • Lutherwald • Lake Luther

They will:

- come to your church at no cost
- play camp music
- bring the message "COME TO CAMP!"

**Available most Sundays from January-May**

Contact Allie Burbrink at (812) 371-1439 or [burbrinka@gmail.com](mailto:burbrinka@gmail.com).

**Do you have a passion for sweets and for social justice?  
Give the give of chocolate this year for Christmas!**

Put your faith into action and make the world a little sweeter by participating in the Lutheran World Relief Chocolate Project.

Lutheran World Relief is an investing partner in Divine Chocolate Inc., a pioneering farmer-owned Fair Trade chocolate company, that makes life better for thousands of Ghanaian cocoa farmers in the Kuapa Kokoo cooperative.

As part owners of Divine, the co-op's members benefit twice: once when they sell their crops at Fair Trade prices, and again when they receive a share of the company's profits. The farmers of Kuapa have decided to use their Fair Trade premium to re-invest in their communities, supporting schools, health clinics, and community wells.



You can help cocoa farmers in Ghana and sweeten up your congregation at the same time! Here are just a few ideas for using Divine Chocolate:

- Youth groups can sell chocolate bars as a fundraiser
- Sell chocolate bars during your church's coffee hour after the Sunday morning service.
- Include bars of Divine Chocolate in welcome baskets for new members

**For more ideas, resources, and information visit [lwr.org/chocolate](http://lwr.org/chocolate).**



**Have you sent your list of college students to the I-K Synod Campus Ministry referral service yet?**

Remember to visit [www.plm.org/forms/referral.htm](http://www.plm.org/forms/referral.htm) and fill out the simple form. Students who are involved in campus ministry today often grow to be enthusiastic and effective leaders in our congregations. *Some students*

*eventually hear a call to service in the church.*

*Great idea!*

# Transformations

## *Prayers of Celebration and Concern:*

**Pr. Greg Smith** (Faith Lutheran, Fort Wayne, Ind.), who had gall bladder surgery.

**Pr. Fred Jordan** (Holy Trinity, Lafayette, Ind.), whose father Edgar Jordan, passed away on September 26.

**Sister Nora Frost** (Deaconness, Grace Lutheran, Elkhart, Ind.), who was hospitalized with MRSA, Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus, a superbug infection and a recurrence of Crohn's disease.

**Judy Rehmel**, I-K Synod Vice President, who continues aggressive chemotherapy treatment for cancer.

**Pr. George Silavs** (retired), who recently underwent heart catheterization.

**Anne Benson and Tom Pairan**, who were married in October.

**Pr. Len Jepson** (First English, Mishawaka, Ind.), whose wife Linda's sister-in-law Linda Kuhl died in Oct.

**Sylvia Ore** (I-K Synod bookkeeper) and family whose son Ryan was married to Krysten in Oct.

**The family of Esther Hillila**, widow of Pr. Bernhard Hillila, who died in Oct.

**Pr. James Cress** (Grace Lutheran, Columbia City, Ind.) who underwent spine surgery in Nov.

**Michelle Magee** (candidate for ordination in the I-K Synod) and Pablo Rovere, who celebrated the birth of daughter Trinity Irene Rovere.

**Merle Holden** (Interim Lay Minister, St. Mark, Saint Joe, Ind.) whose home was damaged in the Nappanee tornado.

**Pr. Fred Hubert** (retired, Greenfield, Ind.) who underwent hip surgery.

**Pr. Scott Moore** (I-K Synod) and Pr. Claudia Bermgann (Metro Chicago), who celebrated the birth of daughter Sophia Brigitte Nancy Moore in Oct. in Germany.

**Pr. Doug Givan** (Christ, Crawfordsville, Ind.), whose stepson Craig mourns the death of his father who died in Oct.

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

## *Ordinations and Installations:*

**Pastor Chad Adamik** was installed at St. Peter Lutheran Church, Milton, Ky. on Nov. 4, 2007.

**Pastor Joseph D. Faust** was installed at Trinity Lutheran Church, Linton, Ind. in Oct. 2007.

**Pastor Jane Aicher** was installed at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Chesterton, Ind. On Nov. 18, 2007.

**Julie Stegelman** was consecrated as Diaconal Minister at Trinity Lutheran, Goshen, Ind., and now serves the Pathways Retreat Center in Goshen as Spiritual Director and Retreat Ministry Leader.

**Pastor Arlene Oakey** was ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament on Nov. 3 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in New Martinsville, West Virginia. Bishop Jim Stuck presided. She has been called to Emanuel Lutheran Church, Evansville, Ind. and will be installed there on December 16, 2007.

## **Deaths:**

† We mourn with the family and friends of **Pastor Kurt Simerman**, who died on November 7, 2007. Pr. Simerman formerly served at **Come2go Ministries, Fort Wayne, Ind.,** and was currently on leave from call. Pr. Simerman leaves behind his wife Anne and children Logan and Lauren. Memorials may be directed to:

Trinity Lutheran Seminary (for scholarships),  
2199 East Main Street, Columbus, OH 43209

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always remain confidential.)*

# Congregations in the Call Process:

As of November 19, 2007

## 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, Cromwell, IN	Interim Sr. Elsie Fregeau
Calvary, Louisville, KY	
Christ, Madisonville, KY	
Christ, Terre Haute, IN	
Cross of Christ, Crown Point, IN	Interim Pr. David Norland
Holy Cross, Rockport, IN	
Hope, Indianapolis	Interim Gina Bridgewater
Prince of Peace, Bellevue, KY	Interim Pr. Jerry Cantrell
Prince of Peace, Russell Springs, KY	
Redeemer, Jasper, IN	Interim Pr. Jennifer Faust
Resurrection, Madison, IN	
St. George, Edinburgh	Interim Pr. Jerry Curry
St. James, Holland, IN	Interim Pr. Cindy Geisen
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. Tom Weitzel
St. Mark/Mt. Pleasant, Albion, Kendallville, IN	Int. Pr. Thelma McGill-Cobbler
St. Paul, Michigan City, IN	Interim Pr. Richard Poole
Trinity, Logansport, IN	
Zion, Bristol, IN	Interim Pr. Karen Strietelmeier

Zion, Pershing, IN	
Zion, North Manchester	Interim Alice Smith
Zion, Sunman, IN	

## Searching for Candidates:

Christ the Savior, Fishers, IN	Staff Position
Come2go, Fort Wayne, IN	Staff Position
Cross and Crown, Indianapolis	Staff Position
Faith, Owensboro, KY	
First, Columbus, IN	
Hebron, Hebron, KY	Staff Position
Resurrection, Marion, IN	
St. Mark, Fort Wayne, IN	
St. Paul's, Frankfort, IN	Interim Pr. Mary Frohs
St. Paul, Versailles, IN	Interim Pr. Dennis Zimmerman
St. Peter, Stendal, IN	
Trinity, Goshen, IN	Interim Pr. Laura Meier
Trinity, Union City, IN	Interim Pr. Bonnie Sparks

## Interviewing and Extending Calls:

Bethel, Gary, IN	Interim Pr. Chris Armiger
Gethsemane, Fort Wayne, IN	Staff Position
Grace, Elkhart, IN	Interim Pr. Richard Vonesh
Holy Trinity, Lafayette, IN	Interim Pr. Fred Jordan
Mt. Zion, LaGrange, IN	Interim Pr. Howard
Buchholz	
St. James, Greenfield, IN	Interim Pr. Joyce Gerwing
St. John, Lawrenceburg, IN	Interim Pr. Marlyn Nelson
St. John, Loogootee, IN	
Trinity, Terre Haute, IN	Interim Pr. John Stacy
Trinity English, Fort Wayne, IN	Staff Position
St. Paul, Seymour, IN	Interim Pr. Ken Witt

## Calls Accepted in 2007:

Bethlehem, Chesterton, IN	Pr. Jane Aicher (Sept)
Culver Academy, Culver, IN	Pr. Curtis Heyde (Sept)
Bethlehem, Gary, IN (Interim)	Pr. Mike Steinke (Sept)
Greencroft, Goshen, IN	Vanette Kashmer, AIM (Sept)
Lindsey Wilson College, Columbia, KY	Pr. Steve Scott (Sept)
Pathways Retreat Center, Goshen, IN	Julie Steggelman, Diac. Min. (Sept)
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)

### ➔ A Note from I-K Synod Bookkeeper Sylvia Ore

The synod's fiscal year runs from February 1 to January 31. In order to guarantee that your congregation's benevolence is posted in the correct fiscal year, please specify whether the amount should be credited for January or February.

I will keep the books open until February 12; any benevolence amounts received after that date will be posted in the next fiscal year.

Any benevolence gifts posted for 2007 that are received after January 31 will be dated January 31, 2008, and those posted for 2008 will be posted on the date the benevolence is deposited in February.

**Questions?** Call me at (317) 253-3522 or email me at [sylore@iksynod.org](mailto:sylore@iksynod.org).

**"I Love to Tell the Story"  
I-K Synod Academy for Mission  
Evangelism Gathering**



March 29-30, 2008  
Christ Lutheran Church  
9212 Taylorsville Road,  
Louisville, KY 40299

*Learn to be an evangelist!*

Presented by the I-K Synod Academy for Mission Team, participants will learn what it means to be a "missionary" in the church.

Cost is \$30. You must register at least two weeks before. Childcare will be provided.

For a registration form or for questions, call Pr. Jamie Gallagher at (812) 687-4221 or Pr. Vicki Garber at (859) 331-4694.



**Special focus:**  
*Celebrating 100 years of  
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*... where every member is a missionary, every pastor a mission director, and every congregation a mission center.*