



Gospel Seeds... December 2009

A Monthly Update from the
Western North Dakota Synod Office

Prayers:

“On the Road Again...” might be the best song to describe your synod staff lately. We have been driving 2,500 to 3,000 miles a month around the synod. These have been for congregational meetings, gatherings of the candidacy committee, a sub-committee of the Ministry Trust Fund, a pre-retirement seminar, GIFTS events, LYO, and much, much more. In the midst of it we have prayed together, we have eaten together, we have worshipped Christ, we have laughed and we have had hard conversations. As a synod staff we continue to keep the churches, leaders and members of our congregations in prayers. We also often hear that we, as your staff, are being prayed for. Thanks, that means a lot to know that you are lifting us and this ministry that we shepherd up to Lord.

Planning for the New Year...

I have been encouraged by the news that several congregations have shared about their Bible Study plans for the coming year. A couple of congregations are entering into programs where members will be encouraged to read through the entire Bible. This is a wonderful faith practice. God has something to say to us; it is through God’s Word that the gift of faith is given. In dwelling in scripture God’s story has the power to come alive in us through the Holy Spirit.

What about your congregation? What are your plans for Bible Study in the coming year? What creative ways could you use to encourage all members to read scripture? What about those who don’t read well, could you encourage listening to scripture on CDs or audio tapes? Now is the time to begin planning. Remember Augsburg Fortress has published a new series of studies as part of the Book of Faith Initiative of our church.



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

Candidacy Committee Update...

The Western North Dakota Candidacy Committee met in late November. In that meeting three seniors were approved. This means these candidates will be available for the assignment process this spring. The Candidacy Committee also endorsed five candidates which means that these students will continue their seminary education by moving into internship next summer.

We give thanks to God for all of our candidates and pray that they would be enriched and challenged through their studies. We give thanks to God for the Western North Dakota Candidacy Committee and the hard work they do. We give thanks to each congregation that remembers our seminarians in prayer and supports them financially.

Your Church in Action...

A priority of our denomination is ***accompanying congregations as growing centers for evangelical mission***. This priority recognizes that the congregation is where the rubber hits the road. It is in the local congregation where the Word is preached and the Sacraments celebrated. It is from the local congregation that each of us are sent into the world to proclaim Christ’s saving love. As a commitment to accompany congregations the ELCA has provided funding for a Director of Evangelical Mission in each synod. In Western ND, I carry that responsibility.

I was recently talking to a Director for Evangelical Mission from a metropolitan area. She told me of the Somalian Missionaries she is working with. These are first generation Christians, who are risking their lives to tell others of Christ. They go door to door to invite others to know Christ. They hold worship in homes where God’s Word is proclaimed. They have a passion that others would know him.

Each Sunday we are sent from worship, to “God in peace and serve the Lord...” I invite you to become passionate about the Jesus story, to share it with others and to invite them to worship with you.

The mission field is not half a world away – it right out the door of your church and the door of your home. You have been given a gift, Christ! Share it with all around!

God Bless, Mark Narum – serving as your Bishop