



Gospel Seeds... May 2009

A Monthly Update from the
Western North Dakota Synod Office

God's Work... Our Hands:

You may recognize the headline above as the new "Branding" of the ELCA. Western ND Synod leaders have been at work dreaming how churches in our part of God's world can be involved in God's Work of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ to the ends of the world.

In mid-April I participated in an all staff meeting for Directors of Evangelical Mission, one of the hats I wear. A part of that work was to define mission goals for my work in the synod. Here are the goals:

1. Re-energize partnerships with congregations to
 - build trust
 - to encourage generosity
 - to foster a spirit of Evangelical Imagination
2. Build a mission mind set into already existing teams, structures and events of the Western North Dakota Synod
3. To gather a team who begin the work of dreaming congregational revitalization into reality.

Some of that dreaming has begun as a small group of people attended a workshop at Churchwide headquarters. Synod Vice President Nancy Montgomery, Rev. David Halaas, Rev. Scott Fredrickson and myself spent two days working through a process of strategic missional planning. This team will be working to draw others into the process. Why? Because God is on a mission. Every congregation in Western North Dakota has a role to play in proclaiming God's grace. It does not matter how large or small your congregation is, it is called to proclaim God's grace through Word and Sacrament.

God has blessed us abundantly. We live in a place of beauty and productivity. We live among people who are creative. We live at a point in time when God's redeeming word is deeply needed. But do believe the Holy Spirit can work through us, to be God's hands in the world?



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

Call to Prayer:

I invite you to join me in prayer. Please pray for the people of your church and the churches of our synod. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance in our daily lives and in our ministry. Let us pray for the wisdom to discern where the Spirit is leading us. Let us pray for the strength to go where we are called.

Flood Recovery:

We have friends, neighbors and family members who are struggling with the after effects of spring flooding. Once the waters leave hard work begins, months of work. Lutheran Disaster Response continues to coordinate recovery efforts. If you are interested in lending a helping hand call LDR. Volunteers will be needed for a variety of jobs. If you are unable to help physically financial gifts would also be appreciated. You can send financial gifts to the Synod office with a note telling us to direct the money to LDR Flood Relief.

Walk to Wellness:

Lace up the shoes, it's time to head outside for a walk! Rostered Leaders are invited to sign up for the Walk to Wellness. This is an effort to encourage healthy living. Walking can be a gift both to physical health and mental health. Learn more at elca/bop.org

Creativity abounds!

If you are looking for a way to liven up your Sunday School space I invite you to visit First Lutheran in Harvey or First Lutheran in Rugby. Members of these congregations have created imaginative and inviting environments for the teaching of Bible Stories. Give them a call to tour their facilities.

Pastor Carol Wendel at Metigoshe Lutheran has been working to help connect families with faith. Pastor Carol strives to creatively engage these families. In the process God is at work forming faith.

Pastor Gerald Roise has worked with Lutheran Men in Mission to provide a Father – Child retreat. The retreat is aimed at helping Dads become comfortable talking about faith with their kids through hands on activities. It is hoped that this retreat will be replicated.

Thanks be to God for faithful and creative leaders in our synod!

Rev. Mark Narum

Serving as Bishop of the Western ND Synod ELCA