



Gospel Seeds... October 2009

A Monthly Update from the Western North Dakota Synod Office

A Cup of Coffee, A time of Quiet, A call to Conversation:

Since the Churchwide Assembly your synod staff has been honored to be involved in deep conversation with many faithful Christians from Western North Dakota. We have heard from people who celebrate the changes in rostering policy adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in August. We have heard from those who are grieving those changes.

Conversations have taken place in Minot, Harvey, Watford City, Medora, Tioga, and Reeder. I have had hard but meaningful conversation on the telephone. I expect in the weeks ahead there will be more invitations to visit congregations and individuals.

In the midst of the conversations my goal is to listen. The mantra that I carry with me at all times is that this is Christ's church. The mission we are called to is God's mission. Christ is our focus.

Conference Meetings:

In the coming weeks 6 or our 7 conferences will be meeting. You are needed at these meetings. Those organizing the events work to provide an opportunity for you to grow in your faith. It is also at these meetings that leadership is chosen. Each conference will be lifting up the names of people, both lay and clergy, to serve as voting members to the next Churchwide Assembly. Conferences also choose their synod council members, TEAM members and more. Ask your pastor for more information about when your conference meets.

Rural Clergy Conference:

Applications are available in the synod office for the Virginia Theological Seminary's 2010 Collegium. 25 clergy are selected to participate in this ecumenical event.

Congrats & Welcome!

- to Rev. Ben Loven on his ordination and the beginning of his first call as Associate Pastor at First Lutheran in Williston.
- to Rev. Jay Jackson on his ordination and the beginning of his first call to Peace in Lincoln and First in Bismarck.
- to Rev. Kari Williamson as she begins her ministry as the Campus Pastor at Minot State University.
- to Rev. Muriel Lippert as she begins her ministry with the Shepherd of the Prairie Parish which includes Good Shepherd and West Prairie of Williston.
- to Dana Lockhart as he begins his internship at St. Olaf in Grenora and United in Zahl.
- to Joel Skindlov as he begins his internship at First Lutheran in Williston.

Seminarians:

At the beginning of September, I traveled to Wartburg Seminary and Luther Seminary. In both places I met with students from our synod. What I hear from them is excitement for their studies, dreams about ministry and thankfulness for the continued support from congregations.

One of the congregations I want to tell you about is St. Paul's in Butte. They are giving a \$1,000 scholarship this year to one of the students from Western ND. With rising seminary costs St. Paul's gift is a blessing. If your congregation would like to help financially support a seminarian call the synod office, we would love to connect you with a student.

Missionary Sponsorship:

Another missionary from Western North Dakota has been commissioned for service. The Rev. Dr. Mark Nygaard and his wife Linda are now in Cairo, Egypt. Mark graduated last spring from Luther Seminary with his Doctorate.

Mark will be involved in the training of others to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. If your congregation would like to help sponsor his ministry, contact the synod office for information on how you can help.



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

Rev. Mark Narum

Serving as Bishop of the Western ND Synod ELCA