

MAKING CHRIST KNOWN

December 2008/January 2009—Number 201



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From the Bishop

We were riding the Metro, the rapid transit train, in Washington D.C. while visiting our daughter and son-in-law over Thanksgiving. Advertisements adorn the inside of all the trains and promote everything from health care to military support systems. But it was the two ads related to God and Church that caught my eye, both on the same train, one to my left, the other to my right.

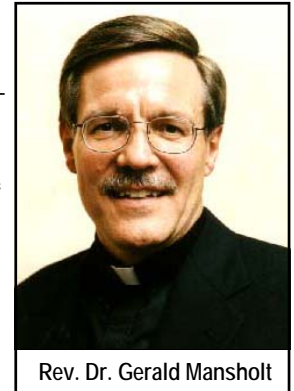
Invest in Someone Who Guarantees a Good Return, were the words on the sign to my right. *Come Home for Christmas*, proclaimed the advertisement that listed the names and locations of eleven Roman Catholic parishes. Nicely done, I thought, the ad connecting to the economic fears and realities of the recession, now officially upon us. The picture of the Holy Family and the animals of Christmas nativity warmed my heart as we were about to enter the season of Advent preparing for the celebration for the birth of the Christ.

Then to my left were these words above a picture of Santa Claus: *Why believe in a god? Just be good for goodness' sake!* This ad is sponsored by the American Humanist Association and invites people to consider a world without god. For more information you can check out the website at whybelieveingod.com. The site presents their arguments for a good life without the deity and provides some resources. Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, and Sam Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation*, are two of the more prominent apologists whose books are best sellers these days. But, lest you think this is some wierd movement on the coasts, let me call your attention to their billboards in Colorado and one here in Kansas City along I-35, sponsored by KCFreeThinkers.org.

This is the culture and the context in which we are called to give an authentic witness to the Christian faith. There is really nothing new in the AHA ad project; the arguments have been around for a long time. But these powerful forces and people of thought are tapping into a culture more than ready to listen. There are plenty of people, in our neighborhoods and in our pews, who have looked upon the witness of the Church and the witness of other religions and found it all less than convincing. They are ready to pursue another god, a lesser god. Remember Luther's dictum: your god is whatever you hang your heart on.

There is no proof for God's existence, only a witness to what we have experienced in our heart and soul and mind. While we may counter with arguments from Christian thought, it will be our witness, in word, thought, and deed that finally lead others to trust in God whose mercy and truth we have met in Jesus Christ.

But if in response, what we have to say or do comes from a watered down religion or sentimental faith or a Lutheran religious culture, then the Church is doomed and needs to die. We will fight a losing battle if we remain biblically illiterate and void of a life of prayer, Christian formation, and critical thought. A colleague had this line: *if you want to know the size of a congregation, measure the worship attendance; if you want to know the strength of a congregation, measure the number of people in Bible study.*



Rev. Dr. Gerald Mansholt

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The Purpose Statement of the Central States Synod reads: *Changed by Love, Sent in Love, to Serve*. We in the Church seek to follow Jesus faithfully because we have been transformed by the love of God. Christmas is the proclamation of the Love of God that has come in the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. This Jesus, born to a humble Mary, was the tender Love that welcomed wretched souls and brought healing and hope to despairing lives. He loved unto death and his resurrection brought Love to life on Easter morning. This Love has transformed our lives with a love that simply compels us to love others. In a world that is growing increasingly cynical about religion with the divisions it has spawned and the harsh rhetoric that poisons the environment, we have been transformed by Word made flesh, a Love filled with grace and truth (John 1).

As we celebrate this Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, I pray we will enter into God's story, and immerse ourselves in prayer, listening for the voice of God, whose Word made flesh, is life and light for all the world.



We Remember in Prayer

The students and faculty of Lutheran Seminary Program of the Southwest (an extension of Wartburg Seminary in Austin TX) as they prepare for the closing of the program, and for all of our seminaries as they work together to train leaders in a time of financial constraints;

Pr. Kenneth Zindle (retired, Sedalia MO, 4kzee943@charter.net) as he recovers from quadruple by-pass surgery in Columbia;

Pr. Steve Little (Seeds of Faith KS, swho@aol.com) as he recovers from surgery on his leg;

Lord, in your mercy ...

Pr. David Rossbach (retired in St. Francis KS, assisting in Area Ministry 1) and his family as they mourn the death of his mother, Darlene;

The family and friends of Pr. Alton Zenker, former bishop of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, following his death;

The family and friends of Pr. Wallace Wolff, who died on November 20 in Nebraska. Pr. Wolff served Trinity Lutheran in Kansas City KS from 1959 until 1961;

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia and all who mourn the sudden death of Bp. Julius Paul. Bp. Paul participated in Bp. Mansholt's installation in 2001, and was a leader in the Lutheran World Federation;

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine on them ...

Pr. Norma Vander Meer (njvdmeer@yahoo.com) and the people of Christ the King in St. Peter's MO following her installation;

Pr. Jean Vargo (backpacker55@live.com) and the people of Atonement in Florissant MO following her installation;

Pr. David Swan (dh.swan@sbcglobal.net) and the people of Good Shepherd in Hazelwood MO following his retirement;

Pr. John Reigstad (john_reigstad@sbcglobal.net) and the people of Resurrection in Florissant MO as they celebrate the re-opening of their building. The building

(PRAYERS continued on page 8)

In the Synod Office ...

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Making Christ Known

A publication of the Central States Synod

Published monthly by the Central States Synod, ELCA. Deadline for submission of materials is the 15th of the month for the subsequent issue. News may be directed to Dan Glamann, Central States Synod, 21 N. 12th St., Ste. 210, Kansas City, KS 66102.

Email: dglamann@css-elca.org.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provided by CIGNA. Go to www.cignabehavioral.com for more information.



BY MS AUBREY STREIT, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

At Bethany, blue and gold make green

LINDSBORG, KAN.—On November 6, board member Leon Burch presented Bethany College Green Team members with a \$589 check from the Smoky Valley Community Foundation.

The money, which will be used to purchase additional recycling bins for campus, represents only a small portion of the sustainability work taking place on campus.

The Green Team is composed of more than 200 Bethany students, staff, faculty and community members. The group jumpstarted activity on campus with an official Green Week in September.

Since then, events and meetings have celebrated, examined and promoted Bethany's core value of sustainability.

Bethany marked Campus Sustainability Day October 22 with open forums and a sustainability banner display, on which people wrote down progress reports and ideas.

Next up is America Recycles Day, which Bethany will celebrate Friday, November 14. The Green Team has organized a series of campus challenges, including creating an outfit using only recyclable items and photographing recycling in action.

Campus Pastor Noni Strand reflected on Bethany's progress in an October chapel talk: "Right here in our own community, over 200 people have stepped up in some way to act on behalf of God's creation. From making pledges to recycle more, use less electricity, take shorter showers, ride a bike rather than drive a car – the list goes on – to joining together to think

Synod Offices to relocate in January

BY BISHOP GERALD L. MANSOLT

Grace and peace to you as we live in the hope and peace of the advent of God.

I am writing to announce the synod offices will be moving to Kansas City, Kansas, in early January. We will be located on the second floor of the Bethany Medical Office Building, 21 North 12th Street in Kansas City, Kan. The office building is easily accessible from I-70 and prominently located near the intersection of Central Avenue and 12th Street.



The name "Bethany" refers to a particular area of Kansas City and Wyandotte County. Nearby is the Bethany Community Center and Bethany Park. The name, of course, has a familiar ring and warm associations because of our own Bethany College and Bethany Home in Lindsborg.

Bethany Medical Center once stood next to the Medical Office Building. The Medical Center closed several years ago and the building has been torn down.

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more deeply and act more decisively about what it really means for us to claim sustainability as our core value, members of this community are showing that we believe in something bigger than ourselves."

The Green Team has partnered with Bethany's Student Congress to implement recycling in all campus residence halls. Volunteer student groups collect and transport newspaper, glass and plastic for recycling. Aluminum cans are collected for "Kans for Karson," a drive benefiting Karson Schierling. Karson, who is in treatment for cancer, is the son of Devin and Jessica Schierling, Bethany's associate dean for student life and director of career services.

Office paper recycling has been introduced to the campus for the first time. "Paper accounts for as much as 40% of the volume of waste in public landfills. College campuses are heavy

users of paper, so whatever we can do to reduce the amount of paper we use, and recycle what we can't avoid using, will make a big difference," said Jayne Norlin, associate vice president for development, who wrote the recycling bin grant.

Initially, a three-yard bin to collect office paper was placed between Anna Marm Hall and Alma Swensson Hall on campus. When it filled within days, it was exchanged for a larger, six-yard bin. The paper is recycled through McPherson Solid Waste Utility.

By decreasing the weight and volume of trash collected on campus, office paper recycling will help with both environment and fiscal sustainability. Another step in this direction includes the work of a newly-formed Energy Audit Team. The team includes twenty students, staff and faculty who will act as energy deputies, assisting Bethany

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book of faith

Open Scripture. Join the Conversation.

Book of Faith is an ongoing initiative that will grow and develop—including resource options for you and your congregation. Be the first to know about upcoming resources and sign up for [Book of Faith resource eUpdates](#).

The <http://bookoffaith.ning.com> site is a place for sharing all that is happening across the ELCA in relation to the **Book of Faith Initiative**. As we live into this vision of becoming more fluent in the first language of faith, we're sure to have successes and challenges. Here, we can teach and learn from others how we are being called, renewed, empowered, enlivened and sent by God's Word. To get started in your congregation, use the [Book of Faith assessment tool](#).

For more information visit the [Book of Faith Web site](#) or email Dave Mareske, the CSS Book of Faith Advocate at holliscenter@kc.rr.com.

Look for engaging the initiative at the Synod Assembly in Lindsborg in June. Area Ministry Advocates will be trained this winter/spring. If you have an interest in the Book of Faith Initiative and would like to be considered as an advocate for your area ministry, please contact Dave Mareske or Cynthia Schnaath.

Lutheran House of Studies Announces a New Course: Introduction to the Old Testament

When: Sundays, January 4, 11, 18, 25, 2009, from 2:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Where: Hollis Renewal Center, Edwardsville, Kan. (1.5 miles South of Rte 70, exit for 110 Street – for a map, see the Hollis website: www.holliscenter.org)

Who: Lectures by Ralph Klein (Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and Katheryn Schifferdecker (Luther Seminary, St. Paul), on SELECT Multimedia Resources DVD.

Facilitator: David Mareske, Associate in Ministry, Executive Director of Hollis Renewal Center. Dave received his BA in English from Iowa State University and a masters in theology from Luther Seminary in St Paul, Minn. Dave has taught New Testament and Christology at Avila University and has taught the New Testament course for Lutheran House of Studies. Dave is also the synod advocate for the ELCA *Book of Faith Initiative*.

Textbook: *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*, by Michael D. Coogan. New York, Oxford University Press, 2006. (Available from Amazon.com; new and used copies are available at Amazon participating bookstores)

This course is one of the six required core courses for candidates for Parish Ministry Associate certification. The course will meet for twenty-four contact hours, and a 8-10 page reflection paper is required for students seeking PMA credit. The for-credit fee is \$150. This is a fine opportunity for lay members of congregations who want to deepen their knowledge of the Bible. Auditors are welcome, and the auditing fee is \$50.

For additional information, please contact Dave Mareske at Hollis Center, holliscenter@kc.rr.com, Marilyn Clark, msclark@tlclawrence.org, or visit: www.css-elca.org/lhs.html

'How to Handle Conflict in the Congregation'

This affordable workshop is being lead by Rev. Dale Kuhn, Executive Director of the Care and Counseling agency. He is a pastor and counselor who works daily with congregational leaders in conflict.

It is a class for clergy and laity interested in learning how to keep congregations healthy and what to do when leadership goes wrong in the congregation in the early, mid and late stages of conflict.

Rev. Dale Kuhn, Executive Director of Care and Counseling agency. M.A., STM, LCSW, and the current national president of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors.

When: January 17 & 31
9 a.m.-12-noon

Location: Care and Counseling
12141 Ladue Rd.
Creve Coeur, MO 63141

Tuition: \$33

Offered by Lutheran School of Theology, *an educational ministry of the Metro St. Louis Coalition – ELCA*, 6325 Clayton Rd., St. Louis, MO 63117

QUESTIONS? Call the LST office at 314-725-9710 or email: registrar@lststl.org or contact Penny or Keith Holste, Administrators at 314-962-0918, pkholste@hotmail.com

Association of Lutheran Church Musicians National Conference Milwaukee, Aug. 2-5, 2009

"Brimmed for Pouring: Pastors, Musicians and the Whole People of God" is a summer continuing education opportunity for all Lutheran pastors, musicians, and worship leaders.

For more information and to register, visit www.alcm2009.com.

Boundary Workshops to be held in May

Barbara Keller, ELCA consultant for misconduct prevention, will provide an overview of misconduct prevention, address particular concerns regarding internet pornography, and talk through ministry with sex offenders.

These workshops are for all Pastors, Associates in Ministry, Diaconal Ministers and Parish Ministry Associates in the Central States Synod.

The Boundary Workshops will start at 9:30 a.m. and conclude by 3 p.m. at the following locations:

May 5: St Thomas/Holy Spirit
St. Louis, Mo.

May 6: Atonement Lutheran
Overland Park, Kan.

May 7: Redeemer Lutheran
Salina, Kan.

Because this is a matter of great importance for all of our congregations, congregations are asked to cover the \$50 registration fee for the workshops. The registration fee includes the cost of the workshop and lunch. This is **not** considered a continuing education event and should not be paid out of rostered leaders' continuing education budget.

This is a good investment in the ministry of the Church and promotes health and well-being for all of our congregations. It is thus most appropriate for a congregation to cover the cost and provide for the time involved in training.

All certified PMAs and PMA students are asked to attend. Rostered leaders who are retired and interested in pulpit supply and /or interim work are also expected to attend. The fee is waived for all retired leaders.

Congregational Reports

Online filing opens January 1. Reports are due February 15, 2009

BY SANDY VAN TUYL, SYNOD STATISTICIAN

You will receive a password from the ELCA. Please go online to <http://www.elca.org/ScriptLib/OS/FormAC/facLogin.asp> to file your report.

Please note: If you file online you do not need to mail a copy to the synod office.

Filing is important ...

1. This is valuable information that aids your congregation, the synod and the church as a whole;
2. These reports are used to determine the number of voting members allocated to Central States Synod at upcoming Churchwide Assemblies; and
3. These reports are viewed by pastors and rostered individuals considering calls.

If you have questions or can't find your password please email me at svan-tuyl@css-elca.org. Thanks! Looking forward to seeing your reports soon!



Discernment Event offered in February

Nothing can motivate and inspire more than for someone to see and affirm in us God-given gifts for life and ministry. You and I are in a unique and privileged position to encourage and support others to see the gifts that lie within them, and assist them to discern ways to set those gifts free in service to others.



This coming February (February 13 & 14, 2009) we are hosting for the young adults (18 and older) of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod and beyond a special 24 hour retreat/conversation to assist them in the discernment of gifts for ministry. Many in your congregation, on your campus or in your personal lives are asking questions about what it is they want to do with their life. What is their calling or "vocation"?

We invite you to consider what persons you know that would benefit from being a part of this conversation and what they will receive from our gifted presenters. Sponsored by the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod Leadership Team, the event will be held at Mt. Sequoyah Conference Center in Fayetteville, Arkansas. It begins with registration at 6 p.m. on Friday and concludes Saturday afternoon at 3:30 p.m., early enough for your travel home.

We ask each young adult if possible to attend with a mentor, perhaps you or someone they know who they would like to invite to attend with them.

For more information, call 501-922-1865 or call the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod office, 918-492-4288.

Please give this your careful consideration and prayer.



2009 Youth Gathering Update

BY MINDY TILLBERG, CENTRAL STATES SYNOD COORDINATOR

The Gathering web-site is updated with the latest information regarding the gathering. It is our best resource of information. Visit: www.elca.org/gathering

- Registration is at 35,000.
- Housing will be assigned as soon as registration closes.
- The plans for *In-Kind* giving are still being worked out. Information will be available on the web-site as soon as those plans are finalized.
- *Getting Ready* materials will be distributed over 6 months beginning in December.
- Community Life will have 12 central venues.
- MYLE has 833 people registered.
- DAYLE registration is going well and has 55 registered.
- Every adult bringing a group to the gathering is encouraged to attend the Extravaganza and the Intensive Care Course prior to the Extravaganza. Since hotel assignments will be made before the Extravaganza, they would be able to check out their hotels as well as get to know the city. <http://www.elcaymnet.org/Extravaganza>
- Donate hair for Chemo patients: The Interaction Center in New Orleans will have a donation station for hair that is 8-10 inches in length. Come to the IC with clean, washed hair and a licensed hairstylist will give you a stylish haircut and send the hair to an organization working with cancer patients who are receiving chemotherapy treatment.

Questions? Contact Mindy at mindy@immanuelsalina.org.

Trinity Lutheran Summer Seminary Sampler

Two events in 2009: June 7-27 or July 5-25

For young adults who have finished 10th, 11th, or 12th grades of high school.

Congregations are asked to help with a sponsorship fee of \$500. It is important for congregations to support youth willing to explore theological education. At the end of the program the money raised plus \$100 from the program is returned to the youth with a comment about the value of ministry and encouragement to save the money as a mini-scholarship for college books or tuition. Participants pay for their travel.

For more information, visit www.summersampler.com

Time with God ...

A MONTHLY DEVOTION FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN BY REV. MIKE BROWN

"A MODERN DAY MIRACLE"

John 9: 1-25b

Do you know anyone in school who wears eye-glasses? We see them everywhere, especially on people like grandparents and older folks we know in church. As you know, they help people see. If you need them, try to catch a baseball from the outfield, a football way down the playing field, or reading school book explaining how to do math problems without glasses! It can be very frustrating and sometimes, other children laugh because they do not understand. It's like taking away your hearing so you cannot listen to music, birdsong, or laughter shared with a friend. It's like not being able to reach the cookie jar for an after school snack!

I have a very special friend named Ed. Ed had to wear glasses since the 4th grade. He said, "It was one of those silly health and vision checks done by the school nurse, and explained why I could not see the (writing on) the black-board from the front row." Ed wore glasses and later on contact lenses for awhile. As he grew older and retired from work, Ed eyes developed an eye problem called "cataracts" which clouded his vision making him nearly blind. That's a lot of baseballs missed in the outfield!

Recently, Ed had a special surgery that restored his eyes. Now he can see the stars at night and the smiles of family and friends across the room and down the street! Ed can do and SEE so much more before his surgery. It truly is a modern day miracle.

Ed told me about "another man who was born blind centuries ago. When Jesus saw him, our Lord performed a miracle 'to show the works of God' (John ch. 9). Jesus placed clay in the man's eyes; the man bathed, cleansing his eyes and immediately he could see!" When asked how this happened, nobody believed him. Finally, all the man could say was, 'One thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see.'"

Ed also said, "That's exactly what happens when Jesus touches us!" Sometimes our eyes of faith can become clouded ... and we become doubtful and afraid. But when Jesus touches us, we see clearly again how Jesus' good hand is at work blessing us wherever we go. It's like seeing a vast night sky filled with countless beautiful stars! May God bless you!

Rev. Mike Brown is a retired ELCA pastor living with his wife Kathy in the Central States Synod.

Area Ministry Visits

Congregational leaders, PMAs and Rostered leaders are invited either to a Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon gathering (depending on location); and overnight retreats are scheduled (see below) for Rostered and PMAs, which may group more than one Area Ministry.

Area Ministry 5

Saturday, January 24

Lord of Life, Wichita KS
9 a.m.-noon. Lunch provided.

Area Ministry 8

Sunday, January 25

Prince of Peace, Springfield MO
3-6 p.m. Dinner provided.

Area Ministry 2

Saturday, January 31

Bethlehem, WaKeeney KS
10 a.m.-1 p.m. Lunch provided.

Area Ministry 1

Sunday, February 1

Emmanuel, Goodland KS
2-5 p.m. (MST)
(or 3-6 p.m. CST)
Dinner provided.

Area Ministry 3

Saturday, February 7

Immanuel, Salina KS
9 a.m.-noon. Lunch provided.

Area Ministry 4

Sunday, February 8

Peace, Manhattan KS
3-6 p.m. Dinner provided.

ELCA Seminaries Face Financial Challenges with Courage and Careful Stewardship

The eight seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America encounter significant challenges in the current economic climate. As presidents of these schools we appeal to members of the ELCA for understanding, support and continuing strong commitment.

ELCA seminaries have kept tuition costs as low as possible in order to avoid increasing burdens for students who will serve the church at modest compensation levels. Low tuition rates, and a gradual decline in church support, call seminaries more and more to rely on outside fundraising. Recent economic downturns have affected fundraising and increased pressures on each school. In addition, as endowment value declines, there is less ability to rely on long-term income-generating sources. In order to balance budgets, the seminaries search for ways to make expenditure reductions as we explore opportunities for new sources of revenue. Seminaries that carry debt incurred in addressing major deferred maintenance and other capital projects are experiencing especially high stress levels as the economic recession deepens.

ELCA seminaries have historically been good stewards of funds provided by tuition, fundraising and church support, consistently providing high quality theological education at the lowest per-student cost among mainline denominations. Now, in particularly trying times, the presidents express gratitude to all in the church who understand the centrality of theological education in forming and supporting leaders for congregations and other ministries. We are grateful for the unwavering support of Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson and the ELCA's Vocation and Education Unit, as well as strong stewardship response from individuals, congregations and synods throughout the church. As we redouble efforts to be the best possible stewards of funds entrusted to us, we seek to realize additional economic savings through seminary clustering and other strategic alliances with all willing partners. We join with our academic deans, who recently committed to lead faculties toward "unprecedented levels of collaboration" among our schools.

Finally, we remind you, our many supporters, that now more than ever your generous gifts are critical for us to fulfill God's call and the ELCA's mandate of preparing faithful mission leaders for the Church.

Contact: Michael Cooper-White 215/280-5833 (mcooper@ltsgeu)

The ELCA Seminary Presidents: Phyllis Anderson (PLTS), Richard Bliese (Luther), Duane Larson (Wartburg), James Echols (LSTC), Mark Ramseth (Trinity), Michael Cooper-White (Gettysburg), Phillip Krey (Philadelphia), Marcus Miller (Southern)

Retreats for Ministry Leaders

The retreats are intended for all those on Roster of Ministers: pastors, associates in ministry, diaconal ministers, as well as our parish ministry associates and youth leaders.

The retreat theme will be *Rhythm*, as we explore the rhythm of our lives and our alignment with God. We will incorporate themes from the Wellness Wheel, and practice "holy habits" together as we study scripture, worship, play and build collegial relationships.

Questions? Call Sandy or Erin in the synod office.

DATES AND LOCATIONS

January 21-22, Rickman Center, Jefferson City, Mo.

February 3-4, Mercy Center, St. Louis, Mo.

February 10-11, Heartland Presbyterian Center, Parkville, Mo.

March 24-25, Spiritual Life Center, Wichita, Kan.

April 22-23, Heartland Center for Spirituality, Great Bend, Kan.

Lingering Devastation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast

Ocean Springs, MS, November 24, 2008 – Everything is NOT okay. Three years out from Hurricane Katrina there remains a lot of devastation across the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Organizations like Camp Victor Ministries are working hard to rebuild the homes of storm survivors with limited resources. Camp Victor has assisted over 1,800 families with cleaning, repairing and rebuilding their homes and housed over 15,000 volunteers from every state and over 30 foreign countries. The camp is still operating as a disaster relief volunteer camp in spite of decreased funding and dwindling volunteer numbers; a challenge that many disaster relief organizations are facing along the Gulf.

There is still much work to be completed. Lutheran Episcopal Services in Mississippi estimates over 5,000 families still live in FEMA trailers or MEMA cottages. The RAND Corporation reports that roughly 77,000 homes were destroyed in Mississippi during Hurricane Katrina. To date, only 30 percent of those homes have been rebuilt. Additionally, RAND estimates it will take another three years and approximately \$4 billion for the Gulf Coast to be completely rebuilt.

"We currently have 40 families on our construction waiting list and the list keeps growing every day. These people have been waiting for three years, and if we don't have volunteers at camp they'll wait even longer," said Suzie Harvey, the camp's Site Director. "It's hard to have so many in need and only be able to contribute a small amount to the problem."

Funding from large organizations like FEMA, MEMA, the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army no longer exists for building materials. Camp Victor Ministries is dependent on volunteer labor and donations to fund the camp's costs and to purchase building materials outside of their funded projects. Despite these challenges the camp has continued to rebuild for its clients, host volunteers and help with the revitalization of Jackson County. To continue doing so, they need volunteers and donations.

For additional information on Camp Victor Ministries' disaster relief efforts please contact Kendall Gordon or visit www.campvictor.org.

CONTACT:

Kendall Gordon, Camp Victor Ministries, 228-282-3754

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was burned to the ground in a fire on Christmas Eve 2006, and has been rebuilt to house the congregation;

Pr. Harlan and Barb Stutheit, (retired, Atchison KS, harbarst@excite.com) who are rejoicing at the safe arrival in the United States of their two new grandchildren, Aliya Grace (age 3) and Zachary Alan (age 2), born in Pavlador, Kazakhstan;

Fountain of Hope in Kansas City MO, who celebrated their final time of worship together Dec. 12;

For God's good and amazing grace, we lift our prayers of thanksgiving ...

To receive prayers throughout the month by email and/or be added to the prayer list, please email Janice Kibler at jkibler@css-elca.org.

(Continued from page 3)

Director of Operations Jeff Barkman in completing a survey of campus energy usage. The task involves counting and calculating use in order to determine ways energy could be conserved.

Looking towards the future, the Green Team also has formed a Community Garden Team, an Education/Information Team and an Earth Day Team on campus.

For more information, contact [Noni Strand](#) or visit the Green Team's [Facebook group](#).

Bethany affirms guiding principles

One year ago, under the guidance of President Edward F. Leonard III, Bethany began a strategic planning process. Students, faculty and staff have served on Strategic Planning Council to reexamine and recommend priorities for the college. Task forces also were formed to examine Bethany's mission, values, promise, and vision statements.

The college hosted the Bethany Leadership Retreat and Bethany Community Retreat; President Leonard held over 100 listening sessions on campus and visited alumni and friends around the country as part of 20 Future Forums.

The result of this process is Bethany's affirmation of revised mission, values, promise and vision statements.

"I believe these statements, which have garnered broad support across the Bethany community, are powerful reminders of the important calling Bethany has to serve the world. They will serve as the cornerstone of our work, of our faith, and of the Bethany renaissance," said President Leonard in a letter to alumni and friends in the fall Bethany Magazine.

These statements, which are already in use on campus, will help guide the college as it develops its strategic and operational plans for the future.

To learn more, visit: http://www.bethanylb.edu/content/gen/bethany_college_generated_pages/Mission_m608.html.

Justice for Women Conference

You are cordially invited to participate in the unprecedented conference, *Transformative Lutheran Theologies: Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives*. To be held at the Renaissance O'Hare Suites in Chicago, Illinois, January 23-24, 2009, the slate of speakers includes Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, Deanna Thompson, Alicia Vargas, and Marit Trelstad. Presentations and organized dialogue are focused on engaging constructively with Lutheran theology in theological anthropology, christology and soteriology, the Trinity, and ethics. Specific attention will be given to what these theologies might mean for this church.

Grants are available to assist rostered leaders and college and seminary students with the costs associated with the conference. Please consider attending and encouraging other leaders in the synod to attend. Early registration is now open!

For more information or to register, visit our Web site: www.elca.org/justiceforwomen/conference. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Juli Bey, Justice for Women administrative assistant, at juli.bey@elca.org or at 800-638-3522, ext. 2710.

Central States Synod Assembly "Changed by love, sent in love, to serve!"

BY REV. CYNTHIA SCHNAATH,

Plans are underway for the upcoming synod assembly in Lindsborg, Kansas. A postcard will be mailed out in January to let you know when information is available on the synod web site and when on-line registration will be available. The assembly is continuing our efforts to go "green" and try to keep our cost down. You have any questions contact Rev. Cynthia Schnaath at cschnaath@css-elca.org.

Central States Women's news

BY IRIS TURNBULL, PRESIDENT



Radical Welcome book discussion

In this third and most exciting part of our attempt to answer the question "How do we grow the organization?" we will learn how to go from being a hospitable organization to being a totally welcoming one.

Twenty-some years ago, Women of the ELCA's predecessor church bodies came together to envision a new women's organization. It was an energizing and exciting time. The question then was, "What should a new women's organization look like?" Today's question, "How can we grow Women of the ELCA?" builds on the principles and purpose statement that came from those early visionaries.

Today we are challenged to take hold of a vision that will help us grow and be energized and renewed. From January through May 2009, we will discuss the book *Radical Welcome: Embracing God, the Other, and the Spirit of Transformation* by Stephanie Spellers. The Rev. Spellers is an Episcopal priest working in the area of radical welcome. Look for her article in the January/February issue of *Lutheran Woman Today* magazine and join her in the online discussion and blog in 2009.

Now is the time to get started. Ask someone to volunteer to take book orders so that you can take advantage of the group discount. Do this before the holidays so that you can jump right into the discussion in January. You will have several online opportunities: a blog where you will hear from a panel of women who will comment on the chapters we read each month; an online discussion; and a live chat on the second Tuesday of every month. We also encourage you to have discussions with your congregation's women's group, whether face-to-face or by e-mail.



Be sure to check the web site for Association of Lutheran Older Adults at ALOserves.org.

"Making the Most of the Bonus Years"

ARIZONA LUTHERHOSTEL

March 9-13, 2009

The Redemptorist Center, Tucson, Ariz.

The Rev. Dr. Loren T. Kramer will be the keynote speaker at ALOA's annual Arizona Lutherhostel set for March 9-13 at the beautiful Redemptorist Center in Tucson, Ariz. His theme is: "Making the Most of the Bonus Years." Rev. Kramer exemplifies his topic. Retiring in 2000 as President of the Pacific SW District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Rev. Kramer continues to serve as President of ALOA and Chairman of the LCMS Commission of Theology and Church Relations. He is also employed part-time by Concordia-Irvine.

Cost for the event is \$525 per person, which includes double occupancy lodging at the Redemptorist Center, three generous meals each day, the tour, snacks and all programs. Commuters may register at a cost of \$360 per person. For a brochure and registration information consult the ALOA website: ALOserves.org. Click on "Events" and scroll down to the March 9-13 event. Or, contact Lutherhostel Directors Walter Schmidt (623-937-8836) or Rev. Arthur Mees (520-326-1174).

Around the synod . . .

Atonement (OPKS) to focus on Criminal Justice Ministry

BY LEROY ZIMMERMAN

The January Adult Education Series will focus on Criminal Justice Ministry and Atonement's call to seriously hear the Gospel voice of Matthew 25:34 - 46.

January 4 - Biblical Voice For Criminal Justice Ministry. Presenter: Georgia Walker, Catholic Charities Restorative Justice Advocate

January 11 - ELCA's Voice Concerning the Death Penalty. Presenters: Rev. John Kreidler, Central States Synod Bishop's Associate and former Prison Ministry Chaplain; and Cheryl Pilate, Attorney At Law, Innocence Project Advocate

January 18 - Voice For New Life Behind The Walls. Presenters: Elvera Voht, Arts In Prison, Founder; and Nancy Meis, Arts In Prison, Executive Director

January 25 - Voice For The Families Of The Incarcerated and The Church's Calling To Respond. Presenter: Shirley Miller, Executive Director, Gracious Promise Foundation

Atonement responders will participate at each Sunday morning session.

In conjunction with this Criminal Justice Ministry Series, **the Arts In Prison Concert will be held at Atonement on Sunday, January 18, 4 p.m.** The University Of Missouri - Columbia Chorus will join with the East Hill Singers to make it an inspiring combined concert.

(Continued from page 3)

The site is now owned by the not-for-profit Community Housing of Wyandotte County, Inc., which has broken ground for a senior living campus. Plans include assisted living facilities and independent living quarters for low-to-moderate-income seniors. The Bethany Medical Office Building is home to several health related offices, mental health services, the local chapter of the NAACP, and other community connected organizations.

The Central States Synod offices will be located on the second floor of this 25 year-old building. On the same floor is a large meeting room, which is available on a first-come basis to occupants of the building. The meeting room will easily accommodate Synod Council meetings. The building has more than ample free parking; is gracious and inviting; has security personnel during working hours; and a full-time, on-site building manager.

Leaving the Harold Thomas Center for Reconciliation in Kansas City, Mo. and our shared life with the Heartland Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was a hard decision to make and parting will be sad. We are grateful for our partnership in ministry and the six years of working in the same building.

Consideration of this move began after leaks in the roof severely affected the working conditions on the 4th floor, where the synod offices are presently located.

An Open House in the new facilities is being planned for the afternoon of Sunday, February 22. Notification will be sent when we have a firm date for the move, along with specifics for the Open House.

May the advent of God keep you strong in faith, hope and love.



For the past several years the Synod Assembly has designated the Season of Epiphany **our** Season of Global Awareness, encouraging congregations to study/highlight our overseas ministries, and specifically, our Companion Synods, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Russia and Other States (ELCROS).

Worship resources and educational materials from prior years are currently posted on the synod web site. The Companion Synod Team is developing new, additional resources for this year and will be posted soon. Go to www.css-elca.org and follow the Quick Link (at the right) to "Companion Synods."

POSITION OPENING

Holy Cross Lutheran, Creve Coeur, Mo., has an opening for a part-time (20 hours) Director of Christian Education. Apply online at www.holycrosselca.com.



Parishes in the Call Process

- (a) intentional interim/interim
- (b) developing congregational profile
- (c) interview phase
- (d) call pending

Area Ministry 2

- Great Bend, Trinity—associate (c)
- Hays, Trinity (d)
- Osborne, Faith (c)
- Seeds of Faith Parish (d)

Area Ministry 3

- Lindsborg, Messiah (b)
- Mankato, Evangelical (c)
- McPherson, Trinity (b)
- Salina, Redeemer (b)

Area Ministry 4

- Manhattan, First—associate (b)

Area Ministry 5

- Wichita, Lord of Life (b)

Area Ministry 6

- Rock Port, First (a)
- Upper Wolfe, Robinson & Zion, Everest (a)

Area Ministry 7

- Belton, Lord of Love (c)
- Independence, Abiding Savior (a)
- Kansas City, St. James (a)
- Lawrence, Trinity—associate (c)
- Lee's Summit, Martin Luther (a)
- Lenexa, Salem (c)
- Prairie Village, Faith (c)
- Raytown, Blue Ridge Trinity (a)

Area Ministry 9

- Cole Camp, Brauersville Immanuel and Stover, Pymont Trinity (a)
- Cole Camp, St. Paul (c)

Area Ministry 10

- Ferguson, Zion (a)
- Kirkwood, Trinity (c)
- St. Louis, Holy Trinity (a)



SYNOD CALENDAR

December

- 10-13 MLM Christmas Store — Immanuel, KCMO
- 15 Staff Retreat — Hollis Renewal Center
- 17 Harold Thomas Center Building Luncheon
- 20 National Lutheran Choir Concert — St. Louis
- 24-25 Christmas Holiday — Synod Office closed
- 31-1 New Year Holiday — Synod Office closed

January

- 2-16 ELCA Bishops in Holy Land
- 7 PLACE Meeting — Village Presbyterian, Shawnee Msn KS
- 8-10 Campus Ministry Meeting — St. Louis
- 16 Mission Budget Com. Meeting — TBA
- 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday — Synod Office closed
- 20-21 Rostered/PMA Retreat — Rickman Center, Jeff City MO
- 23 Synod Council Exec Com. — TBA
- 24 AM 5 Visit — Lord of Life, Wichita KS
- 25 AM 8 Visit — Prince of Peace, Springfield MO
- 31 AM 2 Visit — Bethlehem, WaKeeney KS

February

- 1 AM 1 Visit — Emmanuel, Goodland KS
- 3-4 Rostered/PMA Retreat — Mercy Center, STL
- 5 Staff Retreat — Hollis Renewal Center
- 7 AM 3 Visit — Immanuel, Salina KS
- 8 AM 4 Visit — Peace, Manhattan KS
- 10-11 Rostered/PMA Retreat — Heartland Presb. Center, KCMO
- 13-14 PMC Cluster — St. Louis MO
- 26-28 Covenant Cluster — Marillac Center, Leavenworth KS

Upcoming Metro Lutheran Ministry (MLM) Event

BY SUZANNE BARTLING, DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH MINISTRY

MLM Christmas Store — Ingathering Dec. 6 & 7, Setup Dec. 8 & 9, Christmas Store Dec. 10-13 at Immanuel Lutheran Church (1700 Westport Rd, KCMO) *Making Christmas a little brighter for 1,000 needy families in Christ's name.*



MLM Midnight Volleyball — This is a fun, fellowship activity for Lutheran high school youth. They will be playing noncompetitive volleyball with other Lutheran youth from midnight to 6 a.m. at Roeland Park Dome in Roeland Park, Kan. (a suburb of Kansas City, Mo.). The youth will also play fun games that raise awareness of the needy in our area as well as MLM's mission and ministry. Check-in starts at 11 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 30. Volleyball starts at midnight and continues until 6 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 31. All high school are welcome!

DO YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION? PLEASE CONTACT SUZANNE BARTLING, SuzanneBartling@mlmkc.org

Metro Lutheran Ministry, 3031 Holmes, Kansas City, MO 64109
816-931-0027 — www.mlmkc.org

Lutheran Planned Giving

Arkansas-Oklahoma & Central States Synod

December 2008

Life Insurance: The Forgotten Gift?

Do you have a life insurance policy you no longer need? Perhaps your other assets have grown to provide the protection you require, and the insurance policy lies forgotten in a safety deposit box.

Did you know that the policy could make a wonderful charitable gift to ministry organization(s)?

Instead of giving cash or stock, you could sign over your policy to ministry* and, generally, receive a charitable income tax deduction for the replacement value of the policy (or the cost basis if less). Lutheran Planned Giving can assist in cashing in the policy and put those dormant dollars to work right away.

Your gift of life insurance can be used to fund a future named memorial endowment fund, mission endowment fund, or distribution agreement. Or, the policy could also be used to assist with a capital campaign or simply give the annual fund a boost.

If you have insurance you may like to contribute, or if you are currently paying premiums on a policy and want to discover how this policy might work as a gift, contact Joyce "JP" Palmer our ELCA Regional Gift Planner. She will be pleased to meet with you and describe the various ways insurance can be prudently used to make a planned gift. She is available to meet with your life insurance professional, if you wish.

There are other ways to plan a planned gift to ministry using life insurance that may better meet your circumstances. Use the contact information below.

* Ministry organizations: LSTC, Lutheran Family and Children's Services, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Oaks Indian Mission, Hollis Renewal Center, Camp Tomah Shinga, Bethany Home, Bethany College, Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod, Central States Synod, ELCA ministries, congregations.

Lutheran Planned Giving Joyce "JP" Palmer

Director/ELCA Regional Gift Planner

21 N. 12th St., Suite 210

Kansas City, KS 66102

Cell: 816-204-5181

E-mail: jcpalmer49@aol.com

ELCA Lutheran Planned Giving is a service to ELCA congregations and individuals to help them plan for themselves, loved ones and the work of the Lord, by providing education and consultation in the area of stewardship of accumulated assets.

All services are available without cost or obligation.

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Lutheran Planned Giving

Arkansas-Oklahoma & Central States Synod
January 2009

IRA Charitable Rollover Renewed... ...New Law Extends Opportunities

Congress extended an excellent charitable planning opportunity for both 2008 and 2009. This new law* permits an IRA owner who is 70½ years of age and older to make a **direct** transfer from her/his IRA to charity. This transfer may be up to \$100,000 in one year and will exist for year 2008 and 2009.

Individuals 70½ years old or older may make a qualified charitable distribution outright to ministry in an amount up to \$100,000 per year directly from an Individual Retirement Arrangement ("IRA").

Another **benefit** of the IRA Charitable Rollover is that the charitable distribution may be used by the IRA owner to satisfy a portion or all of their annual *required minimum distribution (RMD)*.

You may take advantage of this new opportunity:

- + if you are age 70½ or older
- + for gifts up to \$100,000 each year
- + if you make the gift on or before December 31 in 2008 or 2009
- + if you transfer funds directly from an IRA

It is important to note that a distribution from a traditional or Roth IRA to benefit the ministry of the ELCA must be an outright gift distributed directly from the IRA trustee or administrator.

Act Now for Benefit:

You must complete this year's transfer prior to December 31. Contact our ELCA Lutheran Planned Giving Regional Gift Planner Joyce "JP" Palmer to take advantage of this giving opportunity. You may request a sample letter to send to your IRA trustee/administrator **AND** a notification letter for the receiving ministry organization(s) from Lutheran Planned Giving. Everyone's circumstances are different, so you may want to discuss and, as always, Lutheran Planned Giving will be pleased to assist you without cost or obligation.

* Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008

Lutheran Planned Giving Joyce "JP" Palmer

Director/ELCA Regional Gift Planner

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PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER — CENTRAL STATES SYNOD

Please include these congregations in your Sunday prayer petitions. The full list may be downloaded at www.css-elca.org/prayerlist2009.html

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
<p>January 4 – 2nd Sunday after Christmas Trinity, Kirkwood, MO; Martin Luther, Lee's Summit, MO; Hosanna!, Liberty, MO; Messiah Lindsborg, KS</p> <p>January 11 – Baptism of Our Lord Living Lord, Lake St. Louis, MO; Olsburg-Walsburg Parish, Leonardville & Olsburg, KS; Denmark, Lincoln, KS; St. Paul, Lohman, MO</p> <p>January 18 – 2nd Sunday after Epiphany Good Shepherd, Lawrence, KS; Bethany, Lindsborg, KS; Gloria Dei, Lucas, KS; First, Manhattan, KS</p> <p>January 25 – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany Trinity, Lawrence, KS; Freemount, Lindsborg, KS; Good Shepherd, Manchester, MO; Peace, Manhattan, KS</p>	<p>February 1 – 4th Sunday after the Epiphany Evangelical, Mankato, KS; New Gottland, McPherson, KS; Elim, Marquette, KS; St. Paul, Nevada, MO</p> <p>February 8 – 5th Sunday after the Epiphany Trinity, McPherson, KS; Our Savior, Mulvane, KS; Peace, Washington, MO; Blue Ridge Trinity, Raytown, MO</p> <p>February 15 – 6th Sunday after the Epiphany Gloria Dei, Kansas City, MO; Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Prairie Village, KS; Salem, Lenexa, KS; Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Florissant, MO</p> <p>February 22 – Transfiguration of Our Lord Prairie Faith Parish – St. John, Ellis, KS; Our Redeemer, Ness City, KS; Bethlehem, WaKeeney, KS; Emanuel, WaKeeney, KS; Immanuel, WaKeeney, KS; Zion, WaKeeney, KS</p>	<p>March 1 – 1st Sunday in Lent Lutheran Church of the Living Christ, Florissant, MO; Coat of Many Colors, Garden City, KS; Resurrección, Garden City, KS; Trinity, Great Bend, KS</p> <p>March 8 – 2nd Sunday in Lent St. Paul, Galatia, KS; St. Paul, Glasco, KS; Zion, Hanover, KS; Good Shepherd, Hazelwood, MO</p> <p>March 15 – 3rd Sunday in Lent St. Mark, Great Bend, KS; Emmanuel, Goodland, KS; St. Paul, Herrington, KS; Peace, Hollister, MO</p> <p>March 22 – 4th Sunday in Lent Resurrection, Haysville, KS; Emanuel, Hutchinson, KS; Zion, Hutchinson, KS; Family of Christ, Imperial, MO</p> <p>March 29 – 5th Sunday in Lent Abiding Savior, Independence, MO; Our Savior, Jefferson City, MO; Prince of Peace, Kansas City, KS; St. John, Kensington, KS</p>	<p>April 5 – Sunday of the Passion/ Palm Sunday Peace, Joplin, MO; St. James, Kansas City, MO; Our Savior, Topeka, KS; St. Mark, Emporia, KS</p> <p>April 12 – The Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Sunday Children's Memorial, Kansas City, MO; Ruskin Heights, Kansas City, MO; St. John, Bird City, KS; Our Savior, Brewster, KS</p> <p>April 19 – 2nd Sunday of Easter St. Mark, Kansas City, MO; Shepherd of the Hills, St. Ann, MO; All Saints, Blue Springs, MO; Scherer Memorial, Chapman, KS</p> <p>April 26 – 3rd Sunday of Easter St. Matthew, Butler, MO; Our Savior, Camdenton, MO; Cross of Glory, Derby, KS; Christ, Eureka, KS</p>	<p>May 3 – 4th Sunday of Easter St. Mark, Cape Girardeau, MO; Trinity, Chesterfield, MO; Chinese Ministry, Chesterfield, MO; Hebron, Burdick, KS</p> <p>May 10 – 5th Sunday of Easter St. Mark, Clayton, MO; St. Paul, Cole Camp, MO; Brauersville Immanuel, Cole Camp, MO; Pymont Trinity, Stover, MO; United, Cole Camp, MO</p> <p>May 17 – 6th Sunday of Easter Prairie Valley Parish – First, Clay Center, KS; Zion, Clyde, KS; St. Paul, Linn, KS; St. Paul, Palmer, KS</p> <p>May 24 – 7th Sunday of Easter First, Dorrance, KS; Everest-Robinson Parish – Zion, Everest, KS; Upper Wolf, Robinson, KS; Zion, Ferguson, MO</p> <p>May 31 – The Day of Pentecost St. Andrew, Columbia, MO; Holy Cross, Creve Coeur, MO; Redeemer, Desoto, MO; Community, Eagle Rock, MO</p>	<p>June 7 – Holy Trinity Sunday All voting members and participants attending the Synod Assembly in Lindsborg, KS</p> <p>June 14 – 2nd Sunday after Pentecost Reformation, Wichita, KS; Prairie Winds Parish – Trinity, Abilene, KS and Faith, Junction City, KS; Trinity, Ava, MO</p> <p>June 21 – 3rd Sunday after Pentecost Seeds of Faith Parish – Peace, Albert, KS; Garfield, Garfield, KS; Emmanuel, Hoisington, KS; First, La Crosse, KS; Hope, Rush Center, KS</p> <p>June 28 – 4th Sunday after Pentecost Trinity, Hays, KS; Immanuel, Kansas City, MO; Zion, Phillipsburg, KS; Faith, Oberlin, KS</p>

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<p>July 5 – 5th Sunday after Pentecost Christ the King, Dodge City, KS; Assaria, Assaria, KS; Unity, Bel-Nor, MO; Lord of Love, Belton, MO</p>	<p>August 2 – 9th Sunday after Pentecost Concordia, Concordia, KS; Falun-Salemsborg Parish, Falun, Falun, KS and Salemsborg, Smolan, KS; Peace, New Cambria, KS</p>	<p>September 6 – 14th Sunday after Pentecost Atonement, Overland Park, KS; St. John, Salina, KS; Christ & Trinity, Sedalia, MO; Our Savior, Salem, MO</p>	<p>October 4 – 18th Sunday after Pentecost First, Shawnee Mission, KS; Messiah, Springfield, MO; St. Thomas-Holy Spirit, St. Louis, MO; Resurrection, St. Louis, MO</p>	<p>November 1 – 22nd Sunday after Pentecost/ All Saints Sunday Prince of Peace, Springfield, MO; Gethsemane, St. Louis, MO; Zion, Hollenberg, KS</p>	<p>December 6 – 2nd Sunday in Advent Christ, Wichita, KS; Excelsior, Wilson, KS; Bethesda, Winona, KS</p>
<p>July 12 – 6th Sunday after Pentecost Trinity, Topeka, KS; Salem, Axtell, KS; Greenleaf-Waterville Parish, Trinity, Greenleaf, KS and St. Mark, Waterville, KS</p>	<p>August 9 – 10th Sunday after Pentecost Abiding Peace, North Kansas City, MO; Grace, Osage City, KS; St. John, Pocahontas, MO; St Andrew, Poplar Bluff, MO</p>	<p>September 13 – 15th Sunday after Pentecost Holy Cross, Overland Park, KS; St. Paul, Peabody, KS; Redeemer, Salina, KS; Friends Home, Savonburg, KS</p>	<p>October 11 – 19th Sunday after Pentecost Westwood, Shawnee Mission, KS; Salem, St. Francis, KS; Immanuel, St. Louis, MO; Holy Trinity, St. Louis, MO</p>	<p>November 8 – 23rd Sunday after Pentecost Christ, Stover, MO; St. Paul, Valley Falls, KS; Good Shepherd, Washington, MO; St. Paul, Wichita, KS</p>	<p>December 13 – 3rd Sunday in Advent Good Shepherd, Wichita, KS; Christ the King, St. Peters, MO; Immanuel, Wilson, KS</p>
<p>July 19 – 7th Sunday after Pentecost St. John, Athol, KS; St. Martin, Kansas City, KS; Zion, Hollenberg, KS; New Hope, Onaga, KS</p>	<p>August 16 – 11th Sunday after Pentecost Joy Community, O'Fallon, MO; Advent, Olathe, KS; Trinity, Otis, KS; Hope, Rolla, MO</p>	<p>September 20 – 16th Sunday after Pentecost Faith, Prairie Village, KS; Immanuel, Salina, KS; Peace, Salisbury, KS; Hope, St. Charles, MO</p>	<p>October 18 – 20th Sunday after Pentecost/ St. Luke, Evangelist First, St. Joseph, MO; St. Philip, St. Louis, MO; Emmanuel, Stuttgart, KS; St. Paul, Tescott, KS</p>	<p>November 15 – 24th Sunday after Pentecost St. John, Wellington, KS; St. Paul, West Plains, MO; St. John, Westboro, MO</p>	<p>December 20 – 4th Sunday in Advent Bethany, Webster Groves, MO; Kent Memorial, Sunrise Beach, MO; First, Topeka, KS</p>
<p>July 26 – 8th Sunday after Pentecost Bendena- Lancaster Parish, St John, Bendena, KS and St. John, Lancaster, KS; St. Mark, Atchinson, KS; Zion, Beloit, KS</p>	<p>August 23 – 12th Sunday after Pentecost Laotian Ministry, Olathe, KS; Overland Park, Overland Park, KS; First, Rock Port, MO; St. John, Russell, MO</p>	<p>September 27 – 17th Sunday after Pentecost Sedgewickville Parish, Sargent's Chapel and Sedgewickville, Sedgewickville, MO; Bethany-Sharon Parish, Sharon, Sharon Springs, KS and Bethany, Weskan, KS</p>	<p>October 25 – 21st Sunday after Pentecost/ Reformation Sunday Kaw Prairie, Shawnee Mission, KS; Bethel (University City), St. Louis, MO; Peace, Sullivan, MO</p>	<p>November 22 – 25th Sunday after Pentecost Christ, Webster Groves, MO; Marion Hill, White City, KS; Gloria Dei, Wichita, KS</p>	<p>December 27 – St. John, the Apostle and Evangelist For all the ministries of Central States Synod, ELCA</p>
	<p>August 30 – 13th Sunday after Pentecost St. Mark, Olathe, KS; St. John, Pittsburg, KS; United Emmanuel, (Milberger) Russell, KS</p>			<p>November 29 – 1st Sunday in Advent Lord of Life, Wichita, KS; St. Paul, Willow Springs, MO; Andover, Windom, KS</p>	

ELCA COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

By Pr. Susan Langhauser, council member, and pastor at Advent Lutheran, Olathe, Kan.

Dear Friends:

Many of you are aware that I have been serving on the Church Council of the ELCA for a year now. Recently, in Chicago, we dealt with the following topics and issues, and I thought you might be interested in some of what our church is doing these days:

(1) Recommended rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, affirming that the acceptance of a social statement (The Social Statement on Human Sexuality will be presented in 2009) requires a 2/3 majority vote. In addition, we also affirmed that recommendations from a task force need only a simple majority vote.

(2) Bishop Hanson called for "evangelical, missional and imaginative" leadership by letting go of any resistance to claiming "evangelical" as part of who ELCA Lutherans are; and he called for a deepening of faith practices in light of recent reported drops in average weekly worship attendance.

(3) Secretary David Swartling said the financial giving total from ELCA congregations reflected a slight increase with total receipts up 2.5 percent or \$68 million. He also reported a decline in average worship attendance of 211,043 or 13.4 percent over the past six years.

(4) Voted to allow newly ordained clergy to serve their first calls as mission developers starting new ministries. The church may authorize lay people to serve in ministries of Word and Sacrament where ordained clergy are not available; and such people serving in long-term ministries will enter the candidacy process for ordination.

(5) Recommended the 2009 Assembly call for development of a social statement on "justice for women in church and society" for presentation to the 2015 Assembly.

(6) Recommended to the 2009 Assembly that it accept an implementing resolution as the basis for a full communion relationship with the United Methodist Church.

(7) Greeted the Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, former bishop of the South Dakota Synod, who has been named ELCA coordinator for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI). The council previously authorized participation in a Lutheran malaria initiative through a grant by a major donor to the United Nations.

(8) Carlos Peña, the current ELCA vice president, told the council he is willing to serve another six-year term.

(9) We called on the U.S. Department of Defense to ensure that the Eucharist be available to military personnel each week with a presiding chaplain who is recognized by the ELCA and/or Episcopal Church. The department currently considers non-Catholic Christian chaplains "Protestant," a category that includes clergy who are unfamiliar with the eucharistic liturgy.

(10) Received an update on the work of Lutheran Disaster Response. The LDR director said 2008 marks one of the "worst years" for natural disasters in the United States, with a record number of tornadoes and the "most property damage" from hurricanes sustained since 2005.

(11) Received the initial report of the Communal Discernment task force to explore ways for the ELCA "to engage emotional and divisive issues, seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and make difficult decisions as a church body in ways that will increase mutual trust, build respect for each other as the body of Christ, and deepen spiritual discernment."

(12) Approved an initial spending authorization for fiscal year 2009 of \$82,447,200. For World Hunger, we revised the spending authorization for fiscal year 2008 of \$2.7 million more than the \$20 million proposed. Christina Jackson-Skelton, ELCA treasurer, said world hunger income through September is \$2.6 million above what was anticipated this year. The council also approved an initial spending authorization of \$20.6 million for the World Hunger Program for fiscal year 2009.

All in all, our church is doing a wonderful job of living out "God's Work. Our Hands." You can be proud to be in a member congregation of the ELCA. Please keep all of our leaders in your prayers during this holiday season and into 2009.

Together in Christ,
Pastor Susan

To find out more about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, visit www.elca.org

CHURCH/NON-PROFIT SUBSCRIPTION FORM

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Subscription amount: **\$65.00 (made payable to Church Resource Center)** for a 2009 Resource Center subscription. The subscription will be renewable in January, 2010.

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EDUCATOR NAME / EMAIL _____

(These email addresses will receive communications about education resources and programs.)

Please send this completed form and your \$65 check to:

Church Resource Center
3210 Michigan Ave., Suite 305
Kansas City, MO 64109

Please note: The Resource Center is **not** moving. Please contact Malinda or Cynthia if you have any questions about resources at the center 816-923-5486 or email resource@heartlandpby.org. To check the on-line catalog: churchresourcecenter.org

Thanks for your support. We look forward to serving you this year!