

# NOTES & QUOTES

Volume 22, Issue 8

AUGUST 2009

## THE FUTURE OF....

### YOUTH MINISTRY AND PASTORAL MINISTRY IN THIS SYNOD

**Bishop Thomas A. Skrenes**

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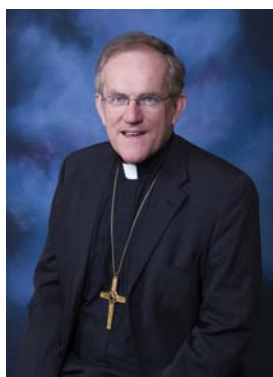
Earlier this year, the Northern Great Lakes Synod Council appointed two task forces to reflect on, and plan for, the future of specific ministries in this Synod. As a part of our strategic planning for the future, these task forces will meet this year and will bring reports to the Synod Council in January 2010.

The **Youth Ministry Task Force** consists of several Council members along with the Synod Youth Ministries Support Team. As we gather we will ask ourselves:

- ◆ What should be priorities for Synod youth and family ministry in this Synod?
- ◆ What parts of Synod youth ministry have been successful in the past few years?
- ◆ What parts of Synod youth ministry have not been successful?
- ◆ How does the changing demographics of Sunday School, confirmation ministry, and our congregations in general influence our Synod youth ministry?
- ◆ What more could we accomplish if we had more staff time by a youth and family coordinator to work in our Synod?
- ◆ How would youth ministry happen in our Synod if we had no dedicated staff time to this work?
- ◆ Could Finlandia University, Fortune Lake Bible Camp and Lutheran Campus Ministry be a bigger part of our youth and family work?
- ◆ Where is God leading us as a Synod in this area?

The **Synod Task Force on Ministry** includes several Synod Council members and the Leadership Support Committee of our Synod. We will meet this summer and fall and struggle with these questions:

- ◆ How can the Synod encourage the continuing education and professional development of our pastoral leaders?
- ◆ How do we foster a sense of community and collegiality in our ministers?
- ◆ What would best assist new pastoral leaders in their responsibilities?



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**THOMAS A. SKRENES, BISHOP (CONTINUED)**

- ◆ What has worked well? What has not?
- ◆ How effective has been our Synod's work with "Project Hope" and the "Sabbath Project"?
- ◆ What budget considerations need to be made over the next years as our Synod plans ahead?
- ◆ Where is God leading us as a Synod in this area?

Please think about these areas. I welcome your thoughts and comments on both youth and family ministry and clergy leadership ministries in our Synod. Let me know about your hopes and dreams. Email me at [tskrenes@nglsynod.org](mailto:tskrenes@nglsynod.org)

Out of all of this may come - renewal. I have used "The Four Pillars" for several years now to define the four major emphases of our work together as a Synod. These pillars help me to articulate a vision for the calling and responsibilities of the Northern Great Lakes Synod:

**+Sharing the Faith****+Renewing Congregations****+Supporting this Ministry****+Strengthening our Leaders**

We Thank God

## IN AUGUST - THE ELCA CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY



**CHURCHWIDE  
ASSEMBLY**

**AUGUST 17-23**

**IN**

**MINNEAPOLIS**

Minneapolis is the site of the eleventh Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We gather there August 17-23<sup>rd</sup>. All sixty-five Synods of this Church have elected voting members to pray and worship together, to listen to reports and to act on the issues. At this Churchwide Assembly, proposals will be brought to adopt a Social Statement on Sexuality, amend the ministry standards of this Church to allow partnered gay and lesbian persons to serve as clergy and to adopt a full communion agreement with the United Methodist Church. Other issues will also be addressed, budgets will be adopted and God's presence and wisdom will be sought.

From our Synod these persons will be attending as your voting members:

Mary Blomquist (Zion, Metropolitan); Clay Hilman (Gloria Dei, Hancock); Pastor Corinne Johnson (First, Iron Mountain); Rosemary Larson (Trinity, Ishpeming); David Mason (Trinity, Stonington); Ray Miller (Immanuel, Escanaba); Pastor Norman Peterson (Immanuel, Rhineland); and myself. Others in attendance from our Synod in an official capacity will be Pastor Jennifer Johnson Wrege (Assistant to the Bishop) and Pastor David Jensen (ELCA Church Council).

**THOMAS A. SKRENES, BISHOP (CONTINUED)**

Please pray for all of us in this Church that the 1000+ voting members may do all things to the glory of Jesus Christ.

**FIFTY DAYS OF PRAYER  
THE NORTHERN GREAT LAKE SYNOD IN PRAYER  
PREPARING FOR THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

Let us pray for wisdom in discernment! For the 50 days leading up to August 17, this Church is invited to pray for wisdom in discernment for the ELCA and voting members of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Prayers, scripture readings and hymns will be posted below.

**Read the Presiding Bishop's call to prayer.**

For seven weeks leading up to the Assembly, this Church will be invited into prayer for the ELCA, for the voting members who will gather in Minneapolis and for wisdom in discernment. The guide available on the Churchwide website includes suggestions for:

**Daily prayer.**

**Weekly prayer** with scripture readings taken from the daily lectionary of the Assembly with reflection questions, a prayer and a reflection hymn.

**Sunday prayers** with a petition for the Prayers of Intercession for Sundays in August.

These prayer resources are available for use by individuals, small groups or as a congregation-wide initiative.

I invite you to join in 50 days of renewed and focused prayer around the Scriptures that will be used at the Assembly, when your co-workers in the Gospel are daily gathered, centered in worship.

For complete information **go to the website: [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)**

**BOARD OF PENSIONS - SAVES YOUR CONGREGATION MONEY!!**

If five more rostered persons from this Synod take the Health Assessment - savings will result! We are talking real money. At the end of July - we are within just a few persons of reducing the medical insurance costs to our congregations. Board of pension plan members - go to [www.boardofpensions.org](http://www.boardofpensions.org)

**A BOOK STUDY  
YOU ARE INVITED!**

Judy Mattson, Licensed Lay Minister and candidate for ordination, and I will lead a one session book study in September. We are reading together **“The Continuing Conversion of the Church by Darrell L. Guder (Eerdmans, \$16.50).** Interested persons will gather on Monday, September 21 from 10:30 - Noon at the Synod Office. All you need is to bring your copy of the book - please read it before the session! Let Judy know you are coming [judym@up.net](mailto:judym@up.net)

## TRANSITIONS

+Congratulations to **Pastor Christian Muellerleile (Christ Parish, Ironwood)** on his Call to serve the people of Zion Lutheran Church in Litchfield, southwestern Minnesota. We shall miss Pastor Christian and his family!

+Congratulations to the people of **Holy Cross in Baraga** upon the appointment of **Pam Long** as its Licensed Lay Minister. Pam is a member of Grace in South Range, and a graduate of our Lay School for Mission. She begins her work August 1.

+**Pastor Bonny Kinnunen (First, Iron River)** has just returned from India. She reports a meeting with Rev. John Lunn, an ELCA missionary there in a palliative care hospital.

+**Pastor Peter Andersen (Christ the King, Escanaba)** has retired. He and his wife, Marilyn, have moved to the Marquette area after 38 years of ordained ministry. God bless them and give them decades of healthy retirement.

+**Pastor Dan Piel** has retired. He has been on disability since he resigned from serving St. James in Marinette. He has also been the Pastor at First in Ewen and Our Saviour in Paynesville in our Synod. God bless Pastor Piel and Judy in these years!

+**Concordia in Palmer and Our Saviour in Suomi Location** are in process of merger into one congregation. Their merged constitution is in the final approval process, and they will be received as a new congregation of the Synod at the Synod Assembly 2010.

+**Faith Lutheran in White Pine** is ending its ministry this fall. The congregation has voted to close as a congregation. Bishop Skrenes and Pastor Jennie Johnson Wrege are working with the congregation as it prepares to give thanks to God for its 53 years of Gospel ministry.

+Death comes to us all. We have received word that **Pastor Robert Manthei** died in Pennsylvania on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Pastor Manthei served Zion in Skanee and Holy Cross in Baraga before serving a Pennsylvania parish. He

was 68 years old. We also mourn with **Pastor Chryst Levesque Hendrick (Retired)** on the death of her sister, Dee Trottier, on June 20<sup>th</sup> in Kalamazoo, Michigan. "In life in death, O Lord, abide with me!"

+God bless **Pastor Nicholas Hopman and Mary Hopman (Grace, South Range and First, Dollar Bay)** as they celebrate the birth of a daughter. **Solveig Anna** was born on July 9. Congratulations and God's blessings to the Hopman family and to the proud grandparents **Pastor Peter Gundersen and Pastor Jimalee Jones**.

+Thomas A. Skrenes, Bishop

*Excerpt from a letter written by Pastor  
Virginia Eggert, Faith Lutheran Church,  
Ishpeming*

Thank you for your help, your prayers and your generous response to the victims and evacuees of the Black River Falls fire (Ishpeming) on May 20. The fire was devastating. Over 7,000 acres burned, 500 people were evacuated, 33 structures destroyed, and 12 families "lost everything". Our church was the first evacuation site and, later, as people were evacuated again to Westwood High School, we were the "command center" for fire, police, rescue workers, the Salvation Army Disaster Response mobile unit, and a refueling stop for the fire trucks. Everyone has a memory, everyone has a story of that first night. Families trying to locate each other met at the church. Once the evacuation was in full swing, the LA freeways had nothing over the traffic crawling along 581 heading away from the fire. Pickup trucks with dogs in the back and cats in the cabs. Vans. Sedans. An earth mover. And, after the family cars came the parade of convertibles and restored historic cars. Some people left only moments ahead of the flames. Our church was used for the next five days as a refuge for police and fire fighters needing clean, indoor restrooms and a green spot to rest their weary eyes. One sheriff's deputy told me that 90% of the fire fighters were still out there on the job – four days later!



**ELCA Disaster Funds**

Grace, South Range  
Bethany, Amasa

**World Missionary Support**

Trinity, Stambaugh  
Calvary, Rapid River  
Bethany, Republic  
Pioneer Lake, Conover  
Trinity, Rhineland  
Bethel, Ishpeming  
Mission United, Pelkie  
St. James, Rudyard  
Faith, Rock

**Lay School for Mission**

Trinity, Stonington

**Kemppainen Scholarship Fund**

Judy & Dave Hallgren

**Lutheran World Relief**

Prince of Peace, Marquette  
Calvary, Rapid River  
Holy Trinity, Chassell  
Grace, Gwinn  
Zion, Marinette

**Lutheran Campus Ministry**

Calvary, Rapid River  
Emanuel, Skandia  
Bethany, Amasa  
Grace, Gwinn

**Seminarian Support**

Calvary, Minocqua  
Holy Trinity, Chassell  
WELCA, All Saints, Wakefield

**Malaria Net Project**

St. Paul's, Mass City

**Kisarawe**

Rev. Rudolph & Darley Kemppainen

**Answer the Call**

Robert & Jean Sovey  
Dave & Dawn Veldhuizen

**Mission Outreach**

Larry Pagel

**Endowment Fund**

Larry Pagel



+ From the Assistant to the Bishop +  
**Pastor Jennifer Johnson Wrege**

*For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim  
 Jesus Christ as Lord  
 and ourselves as your slaves  
 for Jesus' sake. For it is  
 the  
 God who said, "Let light  
 shine out of darkness," who  
 has shone in our  
 hearts to give the light of  
 the knowledge of the glory  
 of God  
 in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this  
 treasure in clay jars,  
 so that it may be made clear that this extraor-  
 dinary power  
 belongs to God and does not come from us."  
 2 Corinthians 4*



Last February it seemed like a good idea, but the Sunday afternoon of June 28<sup>th</sup> as I rolled into Fortune Lake Camp where I would serve as the camp pastor for a week, I was aware that I was going to be forced to take a step or two outside of my comfort zone. It was *Victory Camp* week which means that Fortune Lake Camp was filled with special needs adults.

Now, one might think that having raised two special needs kids into their adulthood would have sufficiently stretched that corner of my comfort zone to easily include a week at something like *Victory Camp*. Not true! I'll be honest - I was anxious - how would it be to be in relationship with a diversity of special needs adults? I was uncomfortable - what kinds of behaviors might I witness or be expected to manage? I was fearful - what if they asked me a question I couldn't answer? I was uneasy - what if I appeared foolish?

Well, many of the *Victory Campers* did ask me two common questions:

- ◆ *Where are you a pastor? Where is your church?* Answer: I don't serve in a church. I am a pastor in the Synod Office.
- ◆ *What do you do?* Answer: (Hem and haw! Stutter and sputter! Change the subject!)

What in the world do I do??? I'll bet there are others who are wondering too! The week I was at camp, I wanted to have a GOOD answer the next time a *Victory Camper* asked me this question. I settled on this response: "I tell others about Jesus and help others tell others about Jesus." And, then I would always add: "You can too!" To a camper, when they asked me this question and I responded with this invitation, they would say, "Sure, I can talk about Jesus."

The *Victory Campers* were great teachers that week. They were not perfect. There was much that was challenging. But, they were wonderful teachers instructing me and all the staff to discover the joy of the moment, to laugh with a big heart, to sing with a big voice, to share the gifts you've been given and embrace the gifts God pours out.

What in the world (or, what in the mission field all around you) are you doing to tell others about Jesus and help others tell others about Jesus?

Blessings!



## Pastoral Vacancies and Interim Pastors

Bethany, Covington - Pastor Scott Williams

Immanuel, Escanaba - Pastor Jonathan Schmidt

Grace, Gwinn - Pastor Steve Gauger

First, Ewen; Our Saviour's, Paynesville; Trinity, Trout Creek - Pastor Gerald Anderson

Bethany, Perkins - Pastor Peter Andersen

Concordia, Palmer & Our Saviour's, Negaunee - Pastor Virginia Eggert

Holy Trinity, Chassell - Pastors Jimalee Jones & Peter Gundersen

St. James, Rudyard - Pastor Barry Levine

Zion, St. Ignace & Trinity, Brevort - Pastor George Kaiser

Emanuel, Skandia - Pastor James Duehring

Prince of Peace, Eagle River - Pastor Bill Hayes

Eden, Munising - Pastor Eleanor Russey

Siloa, Ontonagon & Faith, White Pine - Pastor John West

First, Grand Marais - Pastor David Hueter

Christ the King, Escanaba - Pastor Len Gilley

*“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:8, NRSV)*

God has provided abundantly as we finish the first half of 2009 with mission support gifts totaling \$9,710 above those received by this time last year. Thank you to all our congregations who have given so generously. As summer winds down, may we continue to trust that God will provide for all we need as we work together to share the love of Christ with our neighbors.

*Betsy Koski, Bookkeeper*

As of 6/30	2008	2009	\$ Change	% Change
Pledged Amount	1,032,591	1,005,571	-27,020	-2.6%
Amount Received	436,252	445,962	+9,710	+2.2%
Designated Gifts	94,644	91,292	-3,352	-3.5%



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**WE'RE ON THE WEB**

[WWW.NPLSYNOD.ORG](http://WWW.NPLSYNOD.ORG)

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**ON-LINE DEVOTIONS FOR AUGUST 2009**

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

**August 2-8 / Pastor Paul Mai, FLLC Board Member**  
**August 9-15 / Ruth Warmanen - FLLC Board Member**  
**August 16-22 / Tony Grayvold - FLLC Board Member**  
**August 23-29 / Ruth Snyder - FLLC Member**  
**Aug. 30-Sept. 5 / Kathy Magnuson - FLLC Board Member**