

# NOTES & QUOTES

Volume 22, Issue 9

SEPTEMBER 2009

## FROM THE PASTOR OF THE ELCA BISHOP MARK HANSON

*As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.*

*And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:12-17)*

That passage gives invitation and expectation that those deeply disappointed today will have the expectation and the freedom to continue to admonish and to teach in this Church.

And so, too, those who have experienced reconciliation today are called to humility. You are called to clothe yourselves with love. But we are all called to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, remembering again and again that we are called in the one body.

Earlier, I ended my oral report with these words: "We finally meet one another not in our agreements or our disagreements, but at the foot of the cross, where God is faithful, where Christ is present with us, and where, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are one in Christ."

Let us pray. Oh, God, gracious and holy, mysterious and merciful, we meet this day at the foot of the cross, and there we kneel in gratitude and awe that you have loved us so much that you would give the life of your son so that we might have life in his name. Send your Spirit this night, the Spirit of the risen Christ that has been breathed into us. May it calm us. May your Spirit unite us. May it continue to gather us. In Jesus' name, AMEN.

*(Comments made by Bishop Hanson at the August Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis following the vote authorizing the ordination and rostering of gay and lesbian people in monogamous accountable life-long relationships.)*

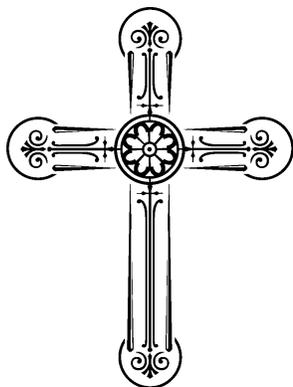


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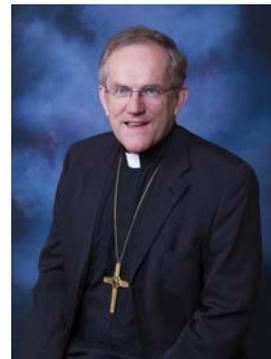
THOMAS A. SKRENES, BISHOP (CONTINUED)



## FROM THE BISHOP

Thomas A. Skrenes

ngls@nglsynod.org

THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY IN  
MINNEAPOLIS

I thank God for the people of this Synod who spent a full week serving us as voting members. Thank you Clay Hilman, Sara Kayser (who replaced Mary Blomquist who could not attend), Pastor Cori Johnson, Rose Larson, Dave Mason, Ray Miller, Pastor Norm Peterson, and Pastor Jennifer Johnson Wrege (who replaced Rose Larson who had to return home for a family emergency). These people love the Church of Jesus Christ, and their commitment to the long sessions and difficult decisions was remarkable. Thanks be to God!

*“THESE  
WERE  
VERY  
HARD  
DAYS...  
INDEED  
IT WAS  
VERY  
PAINFUL”*

It was quite a week as 1,045 voting members of this Church from our sixty-five ELCA Synods gathered in Minneapolis. While we talked about many things, the decisions surrounding sexuality were the real story of the Minneapolis gathering. The sexuality social statement was adopted by exactly the two-thirds vote that was required (676 to 338). The ministry recommendations that "allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same gender relationships" was adopted 619 to 402. The key vote for many was the resolution that allows "people in such publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this Church." It was approved by a vote of 559 to 451. The two other resolutions adopted call upon this Church to "bear one another's burdens...and respect the bound consciences of all (adopted 771-230) and a resolution which calls for the development of guidelines to carry out the mobility process with persons in "publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships" (adopted 667-307).

These were very hard days. It was an extremely tense experience to witness the deep disagreements within this Church on the issues surrounding homosexuality. Indeed it was very painful. Scripture was quoted extensively on all sides. I report to you that I voted against all of these proposals. I believe the theological and biblical case for the change required by the ministry recommendations was not made. A majority of this Assembly felt otherwise. I realize that I could well be wrong. I know also that assemblies in the past have, on occa-

THOMAS A. SKRENES, BISHOP (CONTINUED)

sion, made wrong decisions. We pray, elect leaders and decisions are made. This is how the Church in our time works. We will all need to assess the situation and find ways to come to terms with these decisions over the coming years.

For some of you, these changes are greeted as long-awaited good news. Others of you wonder if there is a place within this ELCA for you if you dissent. Please, everyone, take a breath! We are living in an age of change. I am reminded of the Scriptures where Paul tells us that "we see in a mirror dimly but one day we shall see face to face." At the Assembly, a pastor told me that we might not know the wisdom of this change for a generation or more. It is, after all, God's Church, and we trust the Spirit of the living God!

As Bishop, my responsibility is to point you and our Synod to God's mission, to attempt to hold us together so we may serve Christ and to tell the truth as God allows me to know it. My renewed pledge to you is to be honest, fair and pastoral as we enter the future. My hope is that, as the people of this Church, you will encourage one another, put the best construction on all of these actions and to share with me your thoughts and best judgments. One of our pastors wrote to me and said that in his sermon on the Sunday after the vote he preached, "All of us need to remember that those who voted for the changes and those who voted against the changes agree that Jesus has the words of eternal life."

### OTHER IMPORTANT WORK

At the Churchwide Assembly the voting members:

+Prayed together, enjoyed wonderful music and liturgy and shared the Lord's Supper every day.

+ Approved a full communion agreement with the United Methodist Church. The nearly ten million member communion now becomes a full ministry partner with the ELCA. It is a delight to welcome Methodist parishioners to our communion tables and to welcome Methodist pastors to our pulpits. In our Synod area there are about fifty United Methodist congregations. How can we work together to serve God's people?

+Approved an emphasis in this Church on the eradication of malaria and continued work with HIV-AIDS. The United Nations Foundation is teaming with us and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to provide treated malaria nets to millions in Africa. What an exciting project.

+Adopted resolutions to encourage Immigration Reform, Health Care Reform and peaceful resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

+Elected seventy leaders for positions of responsibility in this Church, including David Blomquist (Our Saviour's, Iron Mountain) to the Vocation and Education Churchwide Board. Our ELCA Vice President,

Carlos Pena, was re-elected.

+Heard an inspiring Bishop Hanson give a report with an ambitious agenda for the next two years.

## TRANSITIONS

+Congratulations to Seminarian Michael Mannisto on his call as pastor of St. James in Rudyard, Michigan. Pastor-elect Mannisto, a son of Grace Lutheran in South Range, will be ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament on Saturday, October 17, 2009. Welcome Pastor-elect Mannisto and his wife, Michele, to the Lord's vineyard.

+Congratulations to Pastor George Candea-Kromm on his call to serve Grace Lutheran in Gwinn, Michigan. Pastor Candea-Kromm comes to us from Kansas. We welcome him and his wife, Shirley, to our Synod.

+God is our great physician! God bless Cindy Cowen, AIM (Calvary, Quinnesec and Our Saviour's, Iron Mountain); Pastor Tom Lindblad (Retired, Menominee); and Pastor Dave Christenson (St. Stephens, Stephenson and Gethsemane, Wallace) who are all recovering at home following recent hospitalizations. God bless them!

Thomas A. Skrenes, Bishop

### NORTHLAND LUTHERAN REIREMENT

#### COMMUNITY, INC.

#### WHAT STATE ARE YOU IN?

You are able to use Northland's services regardless of whether you are a Wisconsin or

Michigan resident.

While Michigan Medical Assistance will not cover a Michigan resident in a facility in Wisconsin, you are still able to use Luther Home. Speak to a social worker at Luther Home for details. In addition, if your stay is a Medicare stay, (usually for rehabilitation) the state of residence makes no difference at all.

Luther Home, sponsored by congregations on both sides of the Menominee River, has served both states for generations.

Northland offers a full continuum of care for seniors, the elderly, and disabled from housing to assisted living to full nursing care and rehabilitation plus at-home services.

### THE ANSWER IS NOT IN THE STARS

Recently, the federal agency that oversees nursing homes published a new 5-star system that is supposedly going to tell consumers about the quality of care in a given home.

The system was rolled out rapidly at the end of the Bush administration and was not well-conceived.

The experts in long-term care, including the Rev. Larry Minnix, CEO of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, have stated that the system is flawed as presently designed. Rev. Minnix was quoted as saying that "the bottom line is that somebody in government....wanted to get this done before they left office..... Meanwhile, good reputations have been needlessly soiled, and our fear is that this could undo the progress we've made in quality improvement over the past several years."

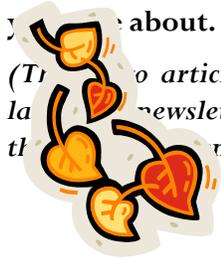
Instead of looking for the answer in the "stars", the place to look is in the nursing home in question. Visit. Smell. Listen. Speak to staff. Visit with those using the facility's services.

Luther Home welcomes your visits. We have

been providing care for 92 years and have served thousands of persons needing long-term care.

Luther Home is church-related and governed by members of the community. Its only reason for existence is to serve. As one of our families recently wrote "...we thank the Luther Home for all the tender care over the past six years." There's the answer to the quality of care. And we want to serve you and those

about.  
 (Two articles were taken from The Northland newsletter published by Northland Lutheran Community, Inc.)



## Thank You

### Seminarian Support

Faith, Sault Ste. Marie  
 Trinity, Ishpeming  
 Our Redeemer, Newberry  
 Holy Trinity, Chassell

### ELCA Disaster Funds

Faith, Sault Ste. Marie

### Lay School for Mission

Trinity, Rapid River  
 Bethany, Amasa

### Lutheran Campus Ministry

Grace, Gwinn  
 Bethany, Amasa  
 Emanuel, Skandia

### Kisarawe Scholarship Fund

Rev. Robert & Deloris Langseth  
 Thomas & Kathleen Barrick

### Kemppainen Scholarship Fund

June Jarvi  
 John & Chyrl Hemmila  
 Sarah Kemppainen  
 Barbara & James Gran  
 Rev. David & Arlene Van Kley  
 Joan Tuoriniemi  
 Rev. Douglas & Susan Pohlman

### World Missionary Support

Trinity, Stambaugh  
 Faith, Rock  
 Calvary, Rapid River  
 Christ Lutheran Parish, Ironwood

### Lutheran World Relief

Calvary, Minocqua  
 Prince of Peace, Marquette  
 Holy Trinity, Chassell  
 Calvary, Rapid River

### Malaria Net Project

St. Paul's, Mass City

### Endowment

Bishop Daleman  
 Dora Jane



### Fund

& Jo Skogman  
 Swanson

## + From the Assistant to the Bishop +

### Pastor Jennifer Johnson Wrege



My hope is built on nothing  
less than Jesus' blood and  
righteousness;  
No merit of my own I claim,  
but wholly lean on Jesus'  
name.

On Christ, the solid rock, I  
stand; all other ground is  
sinking sand,  
all other ground is sinking  
sand.

*My Hope is Built on Nothing Less, Hymn #596,  
ELW*

*Written by Howard Mote, 1797-1874*

It was totally unexpected: a consequence that flowed forth from a sister's love for a very ill brother; a call to prayerfully serve; and a week of worship, plenaries, conversation, prayer, thoughtful discussions, and voting. When Rose Larson, one in our delegation of Voting Members to the Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis the third week of August, received news that her brother had become critically ill, arrangements were made for her to return to Ishpeming. In time, I was processed from visitor to Voting Member and moved from sitting with other Synod staff members in an area assigned to us over to the tables assigned to the Voting Members from the Northern Great Lakes Synod located on the plenary floor.

During the days of the Churchwide Assembly and following, I am finding that I am becoming more and more *captive to hope in Jesus Christ*. I have discovered just recently, and probably rather late in the scope of my theological learnings and understandings, that the apostle Paul is rather BIG on HOPE. If you were to do an online search for the word *hope* – just in the Pauline epistles – you would find an amazing 51 references. Twelve of them are in Romans alone!

I'm thinking that Paul's mission, ministry, and work among the folks in the early church was seldom easy or uncomplicated. All the conflict over issues of food and its distribution to widows, food offered to the altars of idols, sharing food at table – not to mention the whole discussion regarding circumcision, other

issues with other leaders, time spent in jail, being abused and beaten, made life in the early church for Paul and others messy, to say the least. Yet, in the midst of it, Paul writes passionately about our hope that is in Jesus Christ.

As I am read out and work through the 51 references to hope in the epistles, here are some of my hopes:

We continue to pray and talk with one another in a manner that is open, honest, and respectful of the views and beliefs of others.

While the challenges of the votes on the social statement and ministry recommendations at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly are before us, that we also engage in the action of mission and ministry with the energy and passion embedded in the Great Commission.

We make room to celebrate other important actions that were adopted or reported at the Churchwide Assembly such as the HIV and AIDS Strategy, the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, Full Communion with the United Methodist Church, the life-supporting work of the World Hunger Appeal as well as International and Domestic Disaster Relief.

Here's a link to the 51 references to HOPE in the epistles should you wish to have a look yourself:

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/OnlineStudyBible/bible.cgi?section=9&showtools=0&version=nrs&word=hope&st=1&sd=0&new=1>

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

*Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)*

Mission support giving in July was \$53,552 - our lowest July receipts since 1990. Calendar year giving is \$23,959 below 2008, with fiscal year giving \$16,330 under FY2008. Designated gifts are \$9,500 below last year, including \$6,786 less in gifts to the World Hunger Appeal. We are blessed to be a blessing to others.....may we be generous in our giving, knowing that God can accomplish far more than we can imagine. *(Betsy Koski, Bookkeeper)*

As of 7/31	2008	2009	\$ Change	% Change
Pledged Amount	1,032,591	1,005,571	-27,020	-2.6%
Amount Received	523,473	499,514	-23,959	-4.6%
Designated Gifts	106,337	96,839	-9,498	-8.9%



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## ON-LINE DEVOTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2009

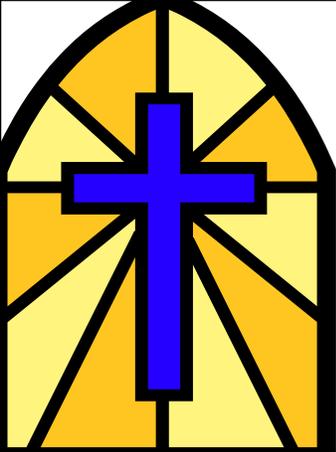
[www.prayfaithfully.org](http://www.prayfaithfully.org)

Aug. 30 - Sept. 5 / Kathy Magnuson, FLLC Board Member

Sept. 6 - 12 / Susan Anderson, Sharon, Bessemer

Sept. 13 - 19 / Tera Kossow, First, Gladstone





**Bishop's Review  
of  
Churchwide Assembly  
September 21, 2009**

**All Congregational Leaders  
are Invited!**

**PLACE:** The Chapel  
Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp  
Crystal Falls, MI

**TIME:** 6:30 p.m. CT Refreshments  
7:00—8:30 p.m. CT Meeting

- Get the latest information about Churchwide Assembly with emphasis on ministry recommendations and the sexuality social statement
- Find out what's happening around the Synod
- Share concerns, prayers and fellowship

Please RSVP by calling (906/228-2300) or emailing (ngls@nglsynod.org) the Synod Office by **September 15th.**

# Are These Events on Your Calendar?

Go to [www.nglsynod.org](http://www.nglsynod.org) for more information!

## September 14, 2009

*Registration Deadline is  
September 1, 2009*  
**Everyone is welcome!**

## 9th Annual Bishop's Golf Scramble

& Fundraiser for Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp

Registration - 8 a.m. CT

Shotgun Start - 9 a.m. CT

Fee - \$60.00



## September 21, 2009

*RSVP to Synod Office by  
September 15th!*  
**Everyone is invited!**



## Bishop's Review of Churchwide Assembly

Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp

6:30 p.m. CT Refreshments

7:00—8:30 p.m. CT Meeting

## September 27 - 29, 2009

*Registration must be postmarked by  
August 14, 2009*  
**For Rostered Leaders, LLM's, & Spouses**

## 2009 Fall Leadership Retreat

at Mission Point Resort,  
Mackinac Island



Presentations by: **Dr. Mark Allen Powell**

## October 12, 2009

at Prince of Peace, Marquette

## October 13, 2009

at Calvary, Minocqua

*Registration Deadline is October 5, 2009*  
**Everyone is encouraged to attend!**

## A Sacred Trust: Keeping the Church a Safe and Sacred Place for All



A Workshop for Sexual Misconduct Prevention  
Presented by Barbara Keller

## November 1 - 3, 2009

*Registration Deadline  
is October 15, 2009*

**Rostered Leaders and LLM's only**

## Seasons of the Pastoral Life

Marygrove Retreat Center - Garden, Michigan

First of four Seasonal Retreats in 2009 - 2010

For more information see [www.thesabbathproject.org](http://www.thesabbathproject.org)



## November 5, 2009

at Messiah, Marquette

## “Stubbing Your Tax Toe”



A Tax Information Workshop for  
Clergy and Church Treasurers

# NGLS Broadcasted Worship Services

## **Bethany, Escanaba**

10:45 a.m. ET on WCHT 600 AM (Live during the Sunday School year and during summer – 9:30 service is recorded and played back at 10:45 a.m. ET)

## **Bethel, Ishpeming**

8:00 a.m. ET on WJPD FM 92.3

## **Faith, Calumet**

10:30 a.m. ET on WCCY 1400 AM (1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday each month)

## **First, Iron River**

10:00 a.m. CT on WIKB 99 FM

## **Messiah, Marquette**

8:45 a.m. ET on Sunny 101 FM

## **Our Saviour's, Iron Mountain**

8:30 a.m. CT on WMIQ 1450 AM

## **Salem, Ironwood**

9:00 a.m. CT on WJMS 590 AM

## **Siloa, Ontonagon**

9:00 a.m. ET on WUPY FM 101

## **Trinity, Ishpeming**

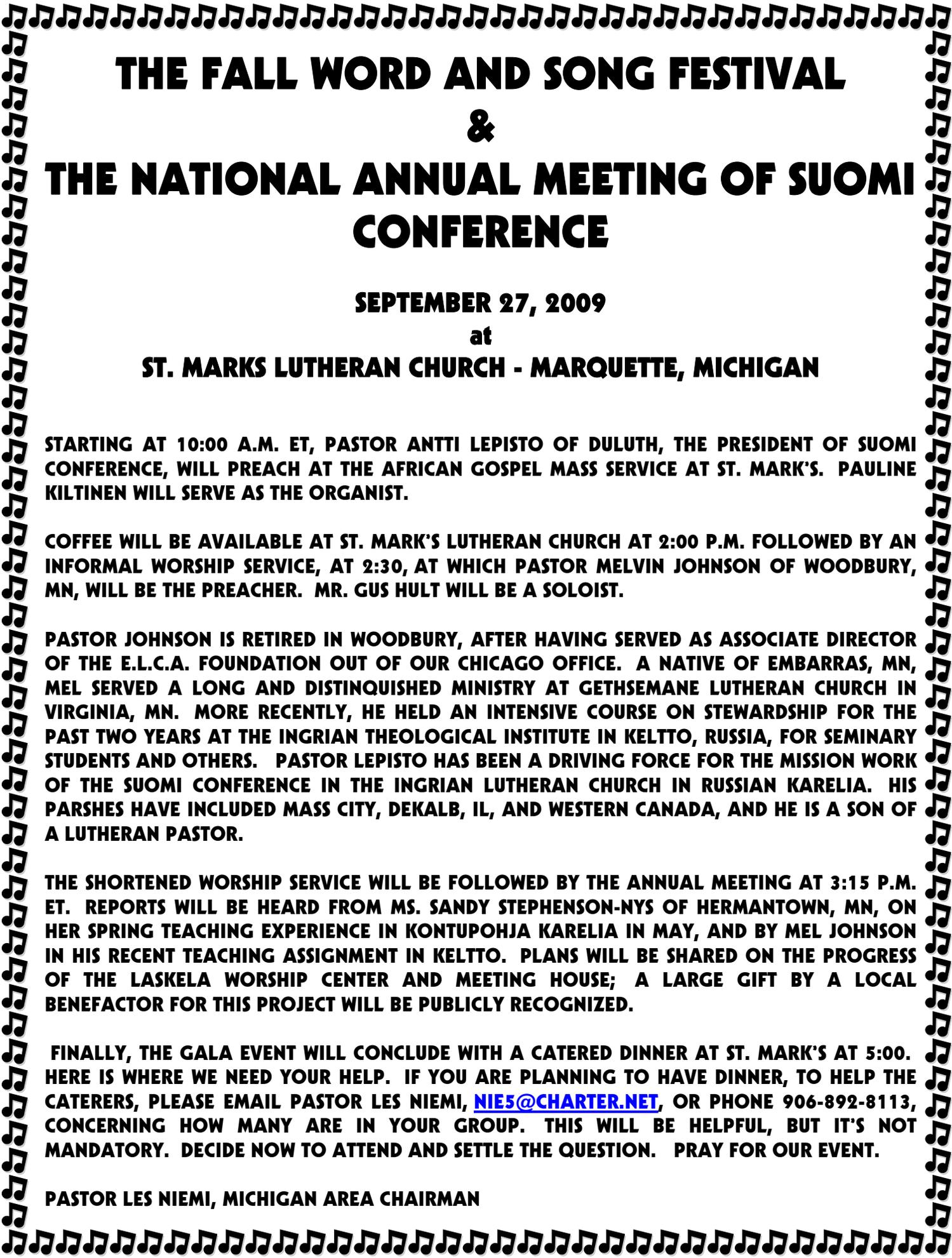
9:30 a.m. ET on FM 103.3 (summer)

10:30 a.m. ET on FM 103.3 (rest of year)

5:00 p.m. ET on FM 103.3 (Christmas Eve)



*If your worship service is broadcasted on the radio and is not listed here, please contact the Synod Office by email at [louise@nqlsynod.org](mailto:louise@nqlsynod.org), or call 906/228-2300 and give us your worship service time and radio station information and we will update our list. Thank you!*



**THE FALL WORD AND SONG FESTIVAL**  
**&**  
**THE NATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING OF SUOMI**  
**CONFERENCE**

**SEPTEMBER 27, 2009**

**at**

**ST. MARKS LUTHERAN CHURCH - MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN**

**STARTING AT 10:00 A.M. ET, PASTOR ANTTI LEPISTO OF DULUTH, THE PRESIDENT OF SUOMI CONFERENCE, WILL PREACH AT THE AFRICAN GOSPEL MASS SERVICE AT ST. MARK'S. PAULINE KILTINEN WILL SERVE AS THE ORGANIST.**

**COFFEE WILL BE AVAILABLE AT ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH AT 2:00 P.M. FOLLOWED BY AN INFORMAL WORSHIP SERVICE, AT 2:30, AT WHICH PASTOR MELVIN JOHNSON OF WOODBURY, MN, WILL BE THE PREACHER. MR. GUS HULT WILL BE A SOLOIST.**

**PASTOR JOHNSON IS RETIRED IN WOODBURY, AFTER HAVING SERVED AS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE E.L.C.A. FOUNDATION OUT OF OUR CHICAGO OFFICE. A NATIVE OF EMBARRAS, MN, MEL SERVED A LONG AND DISTINGUISHED MINISTRY AT GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN VIRGINIA, MN. MORE RECENTLY, HE HELD AN INTENSIVE COURSE ON STEWARDSHIP FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS AT THE INGRIAN THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE IN KELTTO, RUSSIA, FOR SEMINARY STUDENTS AND OTHERS. PASTOR LEPISTO HAS BEEN A DRIVING FORCE FOR THE MISSION WORK OF THE SUOMI CONFERENCE IN THE INGRIAN LUTHERAN CHURCH IN RUSSIAN KARELIA. HIS PARSHES HAVE INCLUDED MASS CITY, DEKALB, IL, AND WESTERN CANADA, AND HE IS A SON OF A LUTHERAN PASTOR.**

**THE SHORTENED WORSHIP SERVICE WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE ANNUAL MEETING AT 3:15 P.M. ET. REPORTS WILL BE HEARD FROM MS. SANDY STEPHENSON-NYS OF HERMANTOWN, MN, ON HER SPRING TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN KONTUPOHJA KARELIA IN MAY, AND BY MEL JOHNSON IN HIS RECENT TEACHING ASSIGNMENT IN KELTTO. PLANS WILL BE SHARED ON THE PROGRESS OF THE LASKELA WORSHIP CENTER AND MEETING HOUSE; A LARGE GIFT BY A LOCAL BENEFACTOR FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE PUBLICLY RECOGNIZED.**

**FINALLY, THE GALA EVENT WILL CONCLUDE WITH A CATERED DINNER AT ST. MARK'S AT 5:00. HERE IS WHERE WE NEED YOUR HELP. IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO HAVE DINNER, TO HELP THE CATERERS, PLEASE EMAIL PASTOR LES NIEMI, [NIES@CHARTER.NET](mailto:NIES@CHARTER.NET), OR PHONE 906-892-8113, CONCERNING HOW MANY ARE IN YOUR GROUP. THIS WILL BE HELPFUL, BUT IT'S NOT MANDATORY. DECIDE NOW TO ATTEND AND SETTLE THE QUESTION. PRAY FOR OUR EVENT.**

**PASTOR LES NIEMI, MICHIGAN AREA CHAIRMAN**



A Year of Prayer...  
A Lifetime of Praying!

prayfaithfully@nglsynod.org  
www.nglsynod.org/prayfaithfully

## Prayer Calendar - September 2009

1	Pray for the <b>members of Faith, Sault Ste Marie and Pastor Barry Levine</b> as they celebrate the <b>46<sup>th</sup> anniversary</b> as a congregation (Elim & St John's). For <b>Pastor Katherine Finegan</b> and the <b>members of Bethany, Republic</b> as they celebrate <b>7 years of ministry together</b> . For <b>Pastor Dave Hueter</b> and the <b>members of Zion, Manistique &amp; Bethany, Isabella</b> as they celebrate <b>13 years of ministry together</b> . Pray also for Bishop Skrenes and all those attending the Bishop's Convocation this day.
2	Pray for the <b>members of Bethany, Covington and Interim Pastor Scott Williams</b> as they celebrate the <b>109<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the congregation</b> this day.
3	Pray for those attending the Evangelical Outreach & Congregational Leaders meeting in Chicago these days.
4	Pray for the <b>members of Ascension, Towson MD (pastor), Christ, Millersville MD (pastor), and Evangelical, Frederick MD (Rev Dave Oravec)</b> .
5	Pray for <b>Pastor Thomas Wickstrom</b> (retired) as he celebrates his <b>38<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination</b> this day.
6	 Pray for <b>Rally Days</b> across our synod this month as children are once again engaged in Christian Education and learning that "Jesus Loves Me."
7	Pray for <b>Pastor Norman Peterson</b> and the <b>members of Immanuel, Rhinelander</b> as they celebrate the <b>118<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the congregation</b> this day. Pray also for <b>Pastor Corinne Johnson</b> as she celebrates her <b>6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination</b> this day.
8	 Pray for our <b>Bishop Thomas Skrenes</b> as he celebrates his <b>birthday</b> this day! We thank God for his ministry with us and for us as we serve Christ together.
9	Pray for <b>Bishop Thomas Skrenes</b> and his <b>colleagues</b> and <b>Synod Officers</b> from Region 5 as they meet these days.
10	Pray for <b>Pastor Nancy Kauppi</b> (All Saints, Wakefield) as she celebrates her <b>14<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination</b> this day.
11	Pray for the <b>Synod Council</b> who meets these days – <i>Bishop Thomas Skrenes, Pastors Doug Johnson, Steve Cowen, Warren Geier, Gerald Anderson, David Christenson, Dave Hueter, Norman Peterson, Peter Vorbes &amp; Jennifer Johnson Wrege, along with Pauline Kiltinen, Dave Mason, Richard LaFave, Karen Kolstad, Susan Anderson, Jack Armstrong, Paul Larmour, Ann Christiansen, Ken Hoffman, Lynn Lehto &amp;, Joan Pataconi.</i>
12	Pray for the <b>members of Living Word, Columbia MD (Rev Andera Weigand), Reformation, Baltimore MD (pastor), and St Benjamin, Westminster MD (Rev Dave Schafer)</b> . Pray also for the <b>Licensed Lay Ministry and Lay School Board</b> members who meet this day.
13	Pray for the <b>members of Calvary, Minocqua</b> and <b>Pastor Maxine Gray</b> as they celebrate the <b>58<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the congregation</b> .

14	Pray for those participating in the <b>Synod Golf Scramble</b> in Norway and for the <b>ministries of Fortune Lake Camp</b> that will benefit from this event.
15	Pray for the <b>spouses of deceased pastors</b> – <i>Louise Faust</i> and <i>Betsy Framstad</i> .
16	Pray for the <b>members of Siloa, Ontonagon and Interim Pastor John West</b> as they continue in the call process during a <b>pastoral vacancy</b> .
17	Pray for <b>Pamela Long LLM</b> and the <b>members of Holy Cross, Baraga</b> as they <b>begin ministry together</b> .
18	Pray for <b>Pastor Dave Hueter</b> (Zion, Manistique & Bethany, Isabella) as he celebrates his <b>21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of ordination</b> this day. Pray also for <b>Pastor Devon Barrix</b> and the <b>members of Faith, Rock</b> as they celebrate <b>4 years of ministry together</b> this day.
19	Pray for those women attending the <b>Women’s Fall Retreat</b> at Fortune Lake Camp these days and the staff who will care for them.
20	Pray for <b>Pastor Doug Johnson</b> , his wife <b>Elaine</b> , and the <b>members of Bethlehem, Florence WI</b> .
21	Pray for our <b>retired pastors and their spouses</b> – <i>Pastor Rudy &amp; Darley Kempainen</i> and <i>Pastor George Kaiser</i> .
22	Pray for the <b>members of St Mark Estonian, Baltimore MD (Rev Heino Nurk), St Paul, Fulton MD (Revs Rod Ronneberg &amp; Cathy Ammlung), and St John, Parkville MD (Rev John Burk)</b> .
23	Pray for <b>Pastor Jim Wendt</b> , his wife <b>Laura</b> & their <b>family</b> , and the <b>members of Our Savior’s, Marinette WI</b> .
24	Pray for those attending the <b>Campus Ministry</b> meeting this day.
25	Pray also for <b>Pastor Paul Mai</b> (Bethany, Escanaba) as he celebrates his <b>15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination</b> .
26	 <p>As we celebrate the <b>5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first <i>prayfaithfully</i> devotion</b> this day and our <b>synod prayer ministry</b>, we pray for all who have written devotions, all who have been pray-ers, all who have been prayed for, and all whose lives are touched by prayer. We thank God for these faithful witnesses.</p>
27	Pray for those clergy and their spouses from our synod and the Southwest Lower Michigan Synod who meet these days for the <b>Fall Professional Leaders Conference</b> .
28	Pray for the <b>members of Temeke Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Rev Elisha Mdumi)</b> and their <b>NGLS companion congregation Gloria Dei, Hancock (Rev Jimalee Jones)</b> .
29	Pray for the <b>members of St Timothy, Timonium MD (Rev Jason Burns), Zion, Middletown MD (pastor), and Holy Trinity, Laurel MD (Revs Tom &amp; Connie Miller)</b> .
30	Pray for <b>Pastor Nicholas Hopman</b> , his wife <b>Mary</b> & their <b>family</b> , and the <b>members of First, Dollar Bay &amp; Grace, South Range</b> .

Taken from *FAITHFULLY YOURS*  
Pastor Virginia Eggert  
Faith Lutheran Church, Ishpeming, Michigan

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Faith:

We can learn a lot from the “number crunchers.” They keep us on track with our personal and church budgets. They let us know what we perhaps already know all too well when our national and our U.P. economies are not in the best of health. Church “number crunchers” tell us that for a congregation to be “viable” – to have a self-sustaining life, worship attendance needs to be in the range of 100 people each weekend. For us that would be 100 people a Sunday. In 1992, the earliest year of records for our little attendance record book in the church office, attendance averaged 104. A viable congregation! That was 1992. By 1999 – ten years ago – our average attendance was 72. Last year, and so far this year, attendance has averaged 68.5 people in worship per Sunday. Does that mean we are no longer a viable congregation?

In our church records, over 400 people claim membership in Faith Lutheran Church. This includes people who have intentionally joined the congregation through instruction or transfer of their membership from another congregation. This also includes every child baptized here – at least until they turn eighteen. But people often do not let us know when they start going to another church or, when they move away, they want to keep their “official” membership here. That’s not a problem, and that’s not unique to us here or to our Synod. It makes the number crunchers a little crazy, though. **And nobody needs to become a member to worship here.** But – 68.5 out of some 400 members means that only 17% of those people who claim membership here are in worship here on any given Sunday. If 17% of the membership comes 17% of the time, how many years can a congregation survive???

Is it a matter of “cleaning out” the church roles? I don’t really think so. That only affects the percentage of members in worship – here. But isn’t being a **viable congregation** about more than just being “alive”? Doesn’t it also have to do with having a mission and following Jesus into the hurting world? Or are the church number crunchers right? With less than 100 in worship, on the average, **it is harder –**

- ✓ To meet our basic expenses – they are independent of how many people are here.
- ✓ To spread out the “duties” of lector, usher, acolyte, communion assistant, offering counters and coffee servers among fewer worshippers.
- ✓ To communicate when people don’t see each other regularly.
- ✓ To “raise a joyful noise unto the Lord” when there are a lot of empty pews.
- ✓ To get volunteers to teach Sunday School, help with Vacation Bible School, chaperone youth activities, serve on committees, gather for Bible study, plow the snow, mow the grass...when the pool of those interested, physically able, and not burned out already is diminishing.

Don’t get me wrong – **everyone** who comes to worship here, **every time they worship here** – are welcomed with open arms – ours and God’s! But I wonder, how do we, as God’s people in this time and place, **how do we measure our viability?** Is it money, is it attendance, is it involvement? If a congregation isn’t viable, if it has no longer the potential for life – then it dies and disappears. What difference would it make to the community if Faith Lutheran Church were no longer here? What difference would it make to you, to your family? If we weren’t here, who would pray for *all the people who hurry past this place, that their hearts be opened to their need for God and God’s great love for them?*