



Gospel Seeds...August 2011

A Monthly Update from the Western North Dakota Synod Office

Water, water, everywhere...

Water gives life. That is a fact which we know well on the prairie. Waters of baptism give us life with God, marking us as God's own. Yet, we have wrestled with water, cursed at water, cried rivers of tears and stood knee deep in its frustration this year.

We are now beginning to get a better picture of the severe damage water caused to Augustana, Christ and First Lutheran of Minot along with Peace Lutheran of Burlington. Estimates for repair will be well over a million dollars. There is no insurance to help cover these costs. Meanwhile a large percentage of each congregation's members have also received damage to their homes. The grief is deep along the Souris River as it winds its way out of Canada and back up again, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake.

The grief is also deep along the Missouri River from Williston all the way to the South Dakota border. Then there is the ground water flooding that countless people across our synod are facing, including several congregations who have been forced to gut their basements.

There is no question that 2011 is a year many people will never forget. We will be stained by it like the high water mark that receding flood waters leave.

Could we be marked in a new way...

My hope is that 2011 will also be remembered as the year that the people of this synod rose up, as the body of Christ to provide a torrent of help for those affected by the devastating waters. Needed are hands for cleaning out damaged homes and churches. Needed are people who will pray for and with those who are devastated. Needed are those who will dig into their pocket books to provide financial resources for rebuilding. Needed are those who will sit and listen to the stories of those devastated.

Prayer Cards Available...

We have printed a large quantity of flood prayer cards. Call the Synod Office if you would like to share some with people in your congregations and community.

"Flood of Love"

This is the name of our campaign to raise funds to help our flooded congregations rebuild. A committee, led by Synod Vice President Sherie Heine, is at work. A designated fund has been set up in the synod office to help with congregational rebuild. Here are a few of the events being worked on:

-Flood of Love Sunday: A DVD is being produced to help congregations see first-hand the devastating effect of the flooding. All congregations will be encouraged to take a special offering to help with re-build. There is no way our congregations will be able to rebuild on their own.

-Bible Camp Gala & Cook-Out: The Western North Dakota Camps will wrap up the summer with a night of music and food at Bread of Life Lutheran in Minot. A free will offering will be taken.

-Companion Synod: The Northeast Ohio Synod is our domestic synod partner. Congregations there are holding us in prayer and taking special offerings to help congregations affected.

Thanks Thrivent!

Thrivent is playing a large role in the recovery efforts. They have given a \$25,000 gift to help get the *Flood of Love* fund up and going. Thrivent has also given \$15,000 to Lutheran Disaster Response toward the purchase of two trailers and tools. Previously they had given a \$5,000 grant to Lutheran Disaster Response to help cover the costs of training events.

Thrivent has also made the Souris River Flood a national matching opportunity. Thrivent Chapters that hold an event prior to September 1 will be given \$1 from Thrivent for every 2\$ that are raised.

Follow the Churchwide Assembly...

One final note, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly begins August 15th in Orlando. You may follow the events through live streaming video. For more information go to www.elca.org

God Bless... Mark Narum, serving as Bishop



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