



## ***Gospel Seeds...September 2011***

### **A Monthly Update from the Western North Dakota Synod Office**

#### **Freed in Christ to Serve...**

The words above were the gathering theme for the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, August 15-19. For ELCA Lutherans, those words from Galatians 5 are more than just a phrase, they are lived. Freedom in Christ to serve is lived out by:

- \*A commitment to raise \$15 million dollars to fight malaria, a disease which kills a child every 45 seconds in the world. That money will be shared with Companion Synods, so they can fight this disease on their own territory.
- \*We heard of how our church, even in the face of conflict since the 2009 assembly, is in the process of starting new congregations. Plans are in place to enhance that work.
- \*A Genetics Social Statement was passed with much debate. One of the loudest voices I heard was from scientists, who were voting members of the assembly, speaking very thankfully about the statement. It was their belief that the statement challenges them to be faithful stewards in their ever changing world.
- \*Heard of how financial realities forced the churchwide organization to be restructured with the goal of being more nimble, ready to help congregations proclaim the gospel in a changing world, while at the same time working toward justice.
- \*Passed recommendations for the future of this church, including a move to invite each congregation to enter into a process of renewal, intentionally listening to God, the community and the congregation.

#### **Great Job!!!**

Congrats to Beth Anderson, Synod Ministry Coordinator, for winning 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the ELCA Living Lutheran Video Competition during churchwide assembly. Beth's video, "Washed, Wrapped, Wading" spoke of the Christ-centered action people across this synod have taken during this year of high water across the synod.

The video was one of many ways we were able to lift up the need for volunteer and financial assistance to rebuild after this year's flooding.

#### **We do not walk alone...**

Communion ware used during the churchwide assembly was presented to the synod as a sign of the larger church's commitment to walking with us in the months ahead. As a sign of our interdependence, Bishop Mark Hanson visited the Minot & Burlington churches on August 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> worshipping and touring the damage of the area.

Partnership will be necessary. A rough estimate is that over \$3 million dollars of damage was done to the 4 churches of Minot and Burlington. There is no insurance to help with the recovery work.

#### **We need active and involved people, willing to serve...**

Thanks to the 16 voting members who attended this year's churchwide assembly. The days are long, there is a pile material to read and lots of issues to ponder, but all did a great job!

If you would like to be a voting member to the next churchwide assembly let your conference dean know. Selections for those positions will take place this fall during conference gatherings.

#### **Fall Conference Dates...**

We are pleased to announce that Rev. Twila Shock will be our guest at all four of our conference meetings this fall. Rev. Shock is Director of Support for Global Missions of the ELCA. She is a native of Ashley, ND. At this event you will learn more about stewardship and how our inter-connectedness helps makes ministry in Christ's name possible. All are invited to attend. It is our hope that all congregational leaders will be present including council president, vice president, secretary and treasurer as well as officers of the Women's group.

October 15 – Badlands Conference – Badland's Ministries

Registration 9:30 Meeting 10:00 to Noon.

October 16 – Heart River, Easter Missouri & Lonetree conference meeting at Trinity Lutheran, Bismarck

Registration 2:30 Meeting 3:00 to 5:00

Nov. 12 – Upper Missouri Conf. Upper Missouri Ministries

Registration 9:30 Meeting 10:00 to Noon

Nov. 13 – Turtle Mountain & Western Prairie at Zion Lutheran, Minot

Registration 2:30 Meeting 3:00 to 5:00

God Bless... Mark Narum, serving as Bishop



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.