

# **Reports of the Bishop Assistants & Staff**



2010 Synod Assembly  
**Report of the Bishop Assistant for Leadership & *DiscipleLife***  
The Rev. Stanley J. Meyer, D.Min.

It is a privilege to serve among you, helping to shape and support the mission and ministry that we share in the NT-NL Synod. I am grateful for our sense of shared ministry, mutual support and collegiality. Never has that been more apparent and welcome than in the times preceding and following the 2009 Churchwide Assembly this year. As we talked, wrestled and reasoned together over difficult issues, I have been thankful for all those who were determined, as I was, that these issues should not be allowed to become divisive. Thanks be to God for the unity we find in Christ, despite the disharmonies we find in human community.

This past year in ministry included several significant changes: (1) saying goodbye to my colleague Pastor Nancy Fisher and hello to a new colleague Pastor Jane Mar, (2) renegotiating ministry duties so that I no longer manage Call Process, (3) reduction in work hours and pay to 85%, (4) assumption of responsibilities for leadership support, *DiscipleLife*, candidacy, web site and communications, (5) completion of a 30-month project for Call Process with the ELCA, and (6) involvement in work to foster Healthy Congregations and Healthy Leaders within the synod.

I am most intrigued by the momentum that is gathering around a new vision for our synodical life, and I pledge to support its work in every way that I can.

Leadership Commission

The functions of the commission have been delegated in various ways. The *DiscipleLife* Goal Teams encourage leadership development for mission (Team A), for youth ministry (Team B), for social outreach (Team C), for theological studies (Team D), for stewardship (Team E), and for professional support (Team F). First Call Theological Education is ably directed by Pastor Norma Cooper. The Parish Lay Ministry Academy has its own Board (of which I now sit as a member). Continuing education is promoted through *Leader News* and our online listing. The Candidacy Committee is blessed to have a new and able chairperson – Steve Zwernemann. And the proposal for the annual *Care and Compensation* document originates in my office. In addition, new resources are becoming available to our leaders as the Healthy Congregations initiative begins to offer education and support. Leadership development for lay and rostered persons is and should be a high priority part of the synod's mission.

Office of Communications

The functions of this team have come to rest largely within my office. We continue to rely heavily on electronic media (four newsletters, one weekly devotional, electronic bulletin board, and broadcast emails) to relay information. Our newly updated web site also has within it new partner-in-ministry highlights (known as *Page One*) that can also be used in congregational publications. Print media is largely confined to our Quarterly Mailing. The possibility of entering the world of social networking is on the horizon. But, as always, our best communications happen within relationships as we welcome and learn from one another.

Finally, I am grateful to Bishop Kanouse, the Synod Council and the members of the NT-NL Synod for every kindness you show and for every word of encouragement and support I experience. We are indeed a community dedicated to *Sowing and Growing Disciples of Jesus*.

**2010 Synod Assembly**  
**Report of the Bishop Assistant for Mobility & Congregational Care**  
**The Rev. Jane A. Mar**

*"Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or are absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel... And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege of not only believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well." Philippians 1:27, 29*

During the sermon at my installation service in October, Bishop Kanouse reminded those present that evening that it is a privilege to be a member of the ELCA and a privilege to serve in the church even in these challenging times. I continue to cherish his words and the privilege of proclaiming Christ through my ministry with you. It is a joy to serve beside you and support your ministry through my call to mobility and congregational care. This has been a time of new learnings and partnerships in ministry. I thank God for the warm welcome and support that I have received from the congregations and pastors of our synod and especially from the synod staff. In particular, Pr. Stan Meyer has graciously mentored my journey, blessing me with his knowledge of call process. In this first year, I have focused on the intricacies of call process and rostering tasks with additional work on developing Healthy Leaders and Healthy Congregations.

#### Call Process

The call process is an ongoing cycle of new beginnings that testifies to the presence of a living, dynamic Creator who continues to create anew in and through our ministries. Pastors leave congregations when God calls them to new beginnings – a new call or venture, or time of sabbatical and study, or perhaps the journey of retirement. Congregations begin new cycles of ministry when they engage in self-study during a pastoral vacancy to reassess their identity and vision for ministry. God leads them when they move forward into new relationships with their next pastor. In my brief time in this position, the vacancy rate has been fairly stable. We average about 20-25 searches at any one time. While many are full time calls, increasingly we are seeking pastors who are willing to serve in part-time calls or using trained lay leaders – SAWLs (Synodically Authorized Worship Leaders) – to provide for worship needs and congregational leadership. Many of our SAWLs are identified lay leaders who have participated in theological study through our Parish Lay Academy.

#### Congregational Care

The congregational care portion of my call has focused on supporting congregations during the transitions that call process brings. This past fall, we used several of our trained intentional interim ministers to provide a day-long training for those who are serving as interim pastors in our synod and those who were interested in learning more about interim ministry. The training used a case study format to reflect on the practice of interim ministry and best care for our congregations in transition. Additionally, support for congregations is currently being developed to encourage healthy leadership practices for rostered and lay leader. A Conflict Skills class has already been offered by Faith, Flower Mound's Mediation and Wellness Team and future offerings are in development.

In conclusion, I am most thankful to Bishop Kanouse, the Synod Council and the congregations of our synod for the faith you have placed in me and the support you have extended. I thank God for our partnership in ministry and look forward to serving with you – it is indeed a privilege!

2010 Synod Assembly  
**Report of the *Director for Evangelical Mission***  
The Rev. Stephen C. Kanouse, M.A.

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+ *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen* +

Well, since my last report to you, things have changed. You know, that happens...change. Sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly...but change happens.

In this past year, we might say the change has happened, relatively speaking, quickly. Beginning more than a year ago, February 1, 2009, I was no longer the Mission Director for the three synods in Texas and Louisiana. On that date, I became the Director Evangelical Mission exclusively for the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In this role I continue to function on behalf of the churchwide expression of the church and am accountable to people in the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission Unit of the church. At the same time I find myself on the staff of the Office of the Bishop of the NT-NL Synod and accountable to Bishop Kanouse as well. To a limit, there is something biblical in this, I think. We're still working on "who is serving whom...."

The scope of my responsibilities have shifted a bit as a result of the new title and relationship with our synod. Some of my responsibilities stayed the same. One of those that stayed the same includes working with congregations, clusters of congregations, and conferences to identify new places for missional work within the context of the synod. A second responsibility that remained the same includes working with congregations that are seeking to renew themselves in any of a number of ways. The most focused way that happens is renewed connection with the Word of God and some strategic planning that develops as a part of the conversation with God, a conversation within the people who are part of a specific mission, and the conversation with the world around that missional context.

However, a third area of responsibility has been added to my work. This third area is the responsibility for Mission Support. That's right, I'm now the new Mike Robinson or John Boldt even though I don't feel very Robinsonesk or Boldtish much of the time.

One new area that has been possible since this transition in my life to being focused on one synod instead of spread across three, including the states of Texas and Louisiana, is that I have been able to refocus my work by relating to the various deaneries in our 12 conferences. I have tried to be intentional about connecting with the deaneries as much as my schedule will allow that. That has been helpful for me, fascinating at the least, and insightful as I've journeyed to various deanery locations. This accessibility on my part to the pastors and lay leaders of our synod has been pointedly for the purpose of listening to stories of how individual ministries are doing missional work and how the conferences have been engaged in that work as well. I am hopeful that this new presence on my part, and your responsiveness to my presence, will encourage more missional thinking all around.

How has this all worked itself out since February 1<sup>st</sup>? This is a bit of what's been happening....

### **New Mission Work within the Synod:**

Our present ministries under development continue to ebb and flow with the currents of the economic and political times. These ministries include:

Spirit of Grace, Haslet, TX, now led by SAWL Dr. Frank Swehosky  
Church of the Resurrection, Roanoke, TX, led by Rev. Douglas Schoelles  
Dallas Oromo Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Richardson, TX, led by SAWL Mr. Tsena Dinssa  
Lutheran Church of the Way, Richardson, TX has decided to disaffiliate with the ELCA  
San Gabriel Lutheran Mission, Alvarado, TX, led by SAWL Mr. Jesus Escamilla  
Sagrada Familia Lutheran Mission, Garland, TX, led by SAWL Mr. David Rosales  
San Pablo Latino Outreach, Farmers Branch, TX came to a close at the end of December.  
Indonesian Christian Lutheran Mission Gethsemane, Plano, TX, began worship in February (nested in Preston Meadow Lutheran Church, Plano), led by Rev. Alexander Lumingkewas  
Oak Cliff Latino Mission (temporary name), Oak Cliff, Dallas, TX, starting this year (nested in Oak Cliff Lutheran Church, Oak Cliff), initially starting with Rev. Pedro Portillo and Rev. Jose' Torres

The ministries that are reflective of the Latino community are due in large part to the energy and enthusiasm that our Latina Coordinator has expended in assisting and supporting these ministries.

### **Renewal of Ministries within the Synod:**

Since the beginning of the year, this part of my work has begun to expand exponentially. I am currently involved with these ministries at various stages of renewal and/or strategic planning:

Advent, Arlington, TX	Resurrection, Plano, TX
Good Shepherd, Marshall, TX	Holy Trinity, Irving, TX
Faith, Fort Worth, TX	Covenant, Temple, TX
Trinity, Fort Worth, TX	Faith, Flower Mound, TX
Beautiful Savior, Amarillo, TX	Grace, Carrollton, TX
Shepherd King, Lubbock, TX	St. Paul, Farmers Branch, TX
Rejoice, Coppell, TX	Hope, Midland, TX
Christ the Servant, Denton, TX	

### **Mission Support within the Synod:**

The work that is being done here is represented in the area of the Stewardship Academy of the synod. This year, the Stewardship Task Force, responding to the requests from across the synod, had decided to offer the Stewardship Academy in two locations. This was a big commitment on the part of several lay people who are passionate about our understanding of stewardship as a faith-raising issue more than a fund-raising issue. Even more so when we consider that the academy is a three weekend event in its entirety.

The two locations for the academies were to be Abilene, TX and Mesquite, TX. It was with great disappointment that we had to cancel the event that was planned for Abilene. This academy was planned for the western part of our synod due to the requests of a number of ministries, pastors and lay people who indicated that coming to the metroplex was too far to travel. A week before the Abilene event, we had three registrations for that location. It is my intention to offer the Stewardship Academy in the western part of the synod next year. The Stewardship Task Force is currently making plans for next year's academy. The location(s) and dates will be announced shortly.

The academy that was planned for the Mesquite location has approximately 26 participants. That is the largest registration for any of the academies to date. The people coming to this academy this year represent about 12 of our congregations.

In addition to the Stewardship Academies that are being offered, Bishop Kanouse and I had planned another series of approaches to ministries in the late winter and spring. We had hoped to be working with our clusters and conferences of congregations in a presentation that would have lasted about 2 to 2 ½ hours. These events would have focused on the theology of stewardship as faith-raising and the specific challenges and benefits of beginning to introduce and live out of a program budget for ministry rather than a line-item budget. Again, due to changes that could not be anticipated in light of other actions of our churchwide body and the demands that have been placed upon the Bishop's calendar, these events were also delayed for a period of time.

### **What does it mean to be a Director for Evangelical Mission?**

...in other words, how have I been spending my time since February 1<sup>st</sup>? One of those things that has been neglected in my past role as Mission Director was that I had limited time available to build relationships with pastors and people in our ministries. Being stretched across three synods did not allow much time for this kind of connecting with people on a regular basis to explore the questions around mission and faith.

One of my observations is that, at the moment, there is no one else on the staff of the synod office, who has this kind of freedom and implied opportunity to do this work. So, since late spring, as I indicated above, I have committed myself to and been trying to be present at as many conference deanery meetings as possible in all the conferences of the synod. Not all conference deaneries meet every month and my calendar often has other commitments that take precedence over the deanery meetings, but I am trying my best. So far, I have been successful in getting to visit all but two of the conferences and a number of them multiple times.

Otherwise, this has been a time of learning new things, developing new relationships, and sharing in new opportunities as I have sought to be part of the Body of Christ that is the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod.

Respectfully submitted,

**REV. STEPHEN C. KANOUSE**  
**DIRECTOR FOR EVANGELICAL MISSION**

2010 Synod Assembly  
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The Rev. Stanley J. Meyer, D.Min.

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**2010 Synod Assembly**  
**Report of the Hispanic/Latino Ministries Coordinator**  
**Ms. Irma Bañales**

This has been another fruitful year for many of our Latino Ministries in our Synod. I personally have experienced the growing, the diversity of worshipping services, and the spirituality they shared among their own communities. I believe scripture is one of God's great gifts to the church. It is also for us as Christians the main point of reference when we judge what is true, right, and just. Latinos, after they become mestizos (a new people of diverse origins), tend to read the Bible through the lens of their collective experience as a story of personal and communal liberation from sin, marginalization, poverty and oppression by a Jesus who takes the side of mestizos and invites them into his fellowship, and worship services. The Latinos feel honored to be part of the Lutheran church; they feel blessed when they are asked to read the lessons and when their children are baptized, welcomed when they celebrate the meal, or are part of a committee, without worrying if they are divorced, unmarried, or living in unity with a partner.

Emanuel, Dallas is going to a transition of a new pastor. Pastor Julio Cruz is from Puerto Rico. He started on November 2009. Emanuel was the first church to start a Latino Ministry 35 years ago. San Miguel, Ft Worth is in conversation to build a new sanctuary. San Miguel started a new ministry in Alvarado, TX 3 years ago, in which Jesus Escamilla, a TEEM student, is the mission developer. Walnut Hill, Dallas called Violeta Erickson as their pastor and she was ordained on October 18. Violeta Erickson is the first Latina woman ordained in our Synod. She graduated from the Parish Lay Academy and then completed the TEEM program at the Lutheran Seminary Program of the Southwest, Austin in 2009. It has also been a great year for Santa Maria de Guadalupe, Irving, TX. They moved to their new building and, at the present time, offer worship services Thursdays- Sundays among many other things. Santa Maria's building dedication will be on May 14, 2010. Two years ago Santa Maria started a Latino satellite at First, Garland. Sagrada Familia/Holy Family is the name of this satellite recognized as a Synodically Authorized Worship Community. David Rosales, a TEEM student, is their Synodically Authorized Worship Leader. After a year of experiencing a new Latino Ministry at St. Paul in Farmers Branch, the congregation prayed and discerned that it was not the right time to continue this ministry. Their last worship service was December 27, 2009. Pastor Pedro Portillo and Pastor Jose Torres after consultation with Oak Cliff Lutheran Church in Dallas will be starting a Latino Ministry at Oak Cliff. They are going to start on April 11 at 4 p.m. with a Carnival following with worship service. Keep them in your prayers!

As far as myself, I'm continuing to support existing congregations, new starts, the Parish Lay Academy, the Hispanic Coalition Council, and participating in ministry reviews locally and national as part of the ELCA Latino Strategy Team. Truly, we are a DiscipleLife Synod working together with our diversity, spiritual gifts, and daily prayer for each other.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Irma Bañales, PLM, *Hispanic/Latino Ministries Coordinator***

2010 Synod Assembly  
**Report of the Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator**  
The Rev. Jamie Segaran Bruning

*"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." 2 Peter 3:18*

Youth and Family Ministry is all about helping our young people grow in the grace, faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ and deepening and strengthening their relationship with God. What a gift it is to work with folks who are about this task. It has been a wonderful year of making more connections and getting to know people. This synod has a gifted group of Youth and Family Ministers, both paid and volunteer, as well as Pastors who teach and share faith from the heart. These Authentic, Available and Affirming (AAA) adults are making a difference in the lives of our young people.

The DiscipleLife Goal Team B, under the leadership of Matt Cleaver, has made it a priority to gather Youth and Family Ministers together within conferences. We are working on naming key leaders for each conference to serve as coordinators. Every ministry setting has something unique to offer. By gathering together, we are hoping that churches can share resources, provide support for one another and minister together.

Last summer we had almost 500 people from our synod (40 congregations) travel to New Orleans, Louisiana for the National Youth Gathering. 37,000 Lutherans claimed New Orleans as Holy Ground and worked to help rebuild a city. They painted, planted, cleaned, listened and learned – they made a human connection. In 2012, we will be returning to New Orleans to continue working, growing and learning.

During this past year my duties have shifted to providing more administrative support for our Lutheran Youth Organization. What a privilege it is to work with such a talented group of Adults and Youth. Our LYO provides leadership for three key events: Youth Convo, Jr. High Gathering, and Sr. High Gathering.

Last year's Youth Convo was a powerful event where our young people learned and served together. They worked closely with Pr. Nancy Fisher in organizing and assembling Health Kits for Lutheran Disaster Response. The focus of Youth Convo is leadership development and service learning. This year they will help load the container headed to Sierra Leone.

Jr. High Gathering and Sr. High Gathering were both fabulous events with inspiring keynote speakers, the sweet sounds of the band "Scattered Seeds", informative workshops and powerful service projects. At Jr. High Gathering we heard from Rev. Sean Ewbanks from Louisiana who shared stories with us about heroes in his life. At Sr. High Gathering Agape (David Scherer) had us dancing and rapping about God's love and grace while reminding us through story that God is actively working in our lives. Both events were a hit. Special thanks to Brenda Rhodes, Roy Rhodes, Aaron Colwick, Katrina Will, Amy Royall, Eric Miller and Amber Miller who serve as adult leaders for our LYO board.

Finally, it is such a blessing to serve with you in *Sowing and Growing Disciples of Jesus*. I want to express my deep appreciation to Bishop Kanouse, the Synod Council and the members of the NT-NL Synod for your support and encouragement. Together we help our young people grow in the grace, faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ and help deepen and strengthen their relationship with God.

# NT-NL Organizations



## Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synodical

### Women of the ELCA - Report to the Synod

*Leslie Dunlap President NTNL-SWO*

Greetings From The Synodical Women's Organization!

We have undergone many changes this year, but rest assured we are up and running. The new officers are: Leslie Dunlap, President; Parma Kersten, Vice-president; Sharleen Berg, Secretary, and Edie Fife, Treasurer. The Board members consist of: Carol Otterstad, Ernestine Heller, Karen Bentsen, Susan Remshardt, and Sandra Gass. Appointees are: Letters to Lydia Editor, Leslie Dunlap; Scholarship Committee, Mary Slice, Marguerite Loftin, and Mary Dixon; 2010 Convention Coordinators, Retha Biscoe, Doris Baker and Mary Warren; and Anti-racism Team, Karen Bentsen and Carol Otterstad.

Besides these jobs, each board member and officers were assigned a conference and a liaison person. And each was assigned an area of Disciplelife according to their interests and is encouraged to participate with those committees.

Leslie Dunlap is working on the website of our own with a link from the NTNL Synod website. You can go to [www.ntnllutheranwomen.org](http://www.ntnllutheranwomen.org) and find us. We are attempting to keep up-to-date information as we receive it, such as calendar, scholarship forms, brochure, calendar, and other useful information.

#### NT-NL SWO 2010 Convention

**"Walk in Love" 2 John 5-6**

**Oct 8 - Oct 10 2010 Location: Marriott DFW Airport South, 4151 Centreport Blvd, Fort Worth, TX 76155**

Registration forms will be available soon, so check back frequently for the registration form and scholarship request. NTNL SWO will be offering 10 \$100 scholarships this year.

**We Challenge you to STEP OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE.**

**BE BOLD ENOUGH to invite a teen daughter, granddaughter, or teen neighbor to join you at Convention.**

**BE BOLD ENOUGH to bring a neighbor to church, a fellowship, and Convention.**

**BE BOLD ENOUGH to put God FIRST.**

I encourage all conferences and congregational units to let us know what you are doing. You can share your ideas and events by contacting Leslie Dunlap 325-977-0726 ([gardeningforchrist@yahoo.com](mailto:gardeningforchrist@yahoo.com)) Another good place to go for ideas is [www.boldcafe.org](http://www.boldcafe.org). You will find new ways to think about being Women of the ELCA. Lest some of you think we will only be communicating via the computer, we will still be sending out materials to those who would prefer information through the postal system. You will need to let us know.

I am looking forward to this time we have together.

In peace, *Leslie Dunlap*, President NTNL SWO Women of the ELCA

# **Lutheran Men in Mission of the Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Synod of the ELCA**

## **2009 Annual Report**

**Presented to  
Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Synod of the ELCA**

### **Purposes**

The purposes of the Lutheran Men in Mission of the Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Synod of the ELCA are primarily religious and shall be:

1. To help men of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to grow in and live out their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To afford men opportunities for spiritual growth and development of an evangelical attitude through prayer and study of the scriptures.
3. To invite men to faith in Christ and participation in the life and witness of the congregation.
4. To enable men of the church to support the mission and ministries of the ELCA through leadership development and an active organization of service and fellowship.

### **Financials**

The beginning balance of the operational account on a calendar year basis beginning January 1, 2009 was \$711.12. The ending balance for December 31, 2009 was \$1,037.28.

The beginning balance of the Investment fund account on a calendar year basis beginning January 1, 2009 was

# NT-NL Affiliated Ministries





## Briarwood Lutheran Ministries

Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it." Romans 12:2

### **It's time to make a difference.**

That has been the core of a growing discussion – a growing movement – throughout the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana (NT-NL) synod. It's time to make a difference. It's time to stop trying to be the church in a world of the past that no longer exists today. It's time to fix our attention on God and be changed from the inside out.



In a series of gatherings held at Briarwood, lay and ordained leaders have gathered under the leadership of Bishop Kanouse to imagine the mission of the NT-NL synod for a new day. The first meeting in December started in a "normal" way – talking about what synod means, relationship between synod and congregations, the difference between the synod and the synod office, etc. Then, during the afternoon session, the Holy Spirit showed up and moved through the people, igniting and calling forth a passion for a new vision: **The Synod as Mission Center.**

As a Mission Center, together we could inspire, educate, equip, and nurture the congregations and leaders to do outstanding and faithful ministry in the 120 present congregations and in new missions.



As a Mission Center, we could gift each other with the God given skills that our Lord has given to each and every congregation and leader – sharing the best of who we are throughout the synod – from west to east and south to north. As a Mission Center, we could together discover new ways to share what we know about a loving Lord – a message that the world desperately needs to hear.

**It's time to make a difference.** It's time to be a center of mission to the people throughout Northern Texas and Northern Louisiana. And Briarwood is excited to be a part of that new center of mission – to be part of a synod that is committed to making a difference in the lives of people.

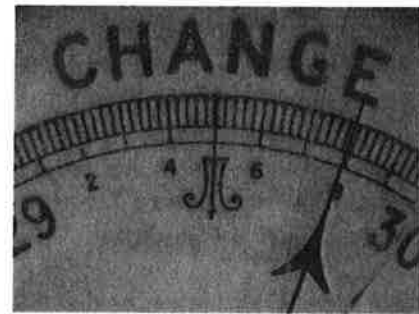
In February, Bishop Kanouse asked the Briarwood Board, "As part of the NT-NL Mission Center, what can Briarwood do better than what congregations can do on their own?" Some of the exciting possibilities the board discussed include:

- transitioning and transforming youth—at camp they have permission to be someone new
- being at the forefront of mission – leading new ways of doing ministry

- equipping laity as well as clergy to do ministry
- serving as a coaching center
- being a mission center, training center, and disciple-growing center that would break down territorial boundaries in the synod

As part of the NT-NL Mission Center, we envision Briarwood being a training ground for day camp leaders, congregational leaders (president, vice-president, and council training), youth to youth (PEER ministry), stewardship, evangelism, Parish Lay Ministry Academy (PLMA), Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM), music and worship leadership, AV training, and ministry specialties (for such groups as Lutheran Youth Organization, Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Men in Mission, Stephen's Ministry, etc.)

Change is coming. We have an aging and declining membership leading to an ever growing increase in congregational closings. We have a change in the relationship of the church to the culture. We've had changes due to economic conditions. Yet we believe that Jesus is Lord in these changing times. We believe that we as the church have a message that needs to be heard in this ever changing world. And we believe that we are called to be part of a change – a change to a mission centered presence in every town and city in Northern Texas and Northern Louisiana.



And we at Briarwood plan on making a difference by being a part of that change and a part of the NT-NL Mission Center.

God has already been doing some amazing things and bringing about some amazing changes at Briarwood. In fact, we continue to expect amazing things (after all, the Lord said to Isaiah "I will again do amazing things with this people, shocking and amazing.") We believe in an *amazing* God who *amazingly* enough loves us beyond measure and does *amazing* things all the time.

Here are some of the some of the *amazing* and exciting things that have been happening and some of the *amazing* and exciting things we are looking forward to in the future.

#### **PROGRAM MINISTRY**

**Summer Camp** – Our theme for the 2009 summer camp season was *Love to Serve*. Children and youth from 2nd grade through high school gathered at Briarwood to explore the many gifts they had to serve. Under the leadership of our Program/Facilities Director Jon Thompson, a dedicated group of counselors led an *amazing* summer camp. This year's program added canoe trips for our older campers and a trip to a high ropes course for some of our high school groups.

Before camp began, I was told by other Executive Directors to expect a 10 percent drop in summer attendance because of the churchwide youth gathering (held every three years – this year in New Orleans). Others were expecting up to a 40 percent drop because of the economy. At Briarwood, the summer camp ministry GREW from 2008 to 2009.



We are planning an even more exciting program for 2010. Our theme for 2010 is "How Great Thou Art." Children and teenagers will explore the many and wonderful ways that our great God comes into our lives. Last year we added a canoe program (with trips down a river to Lake Lewisville). The staff – including our new Program Assistant Erin Farley – is hard at work planning for an even larger summer camp for this year. The canoeing program will be back PLUS we are adding Mountain Biking, Family Camp, and an "At-Camp" Day Camp. More information is available on the Briarwood display and on our web site – [www.briarwoodretreat.org](http://www.briarwoodretreat.org).

**Retreat Ministries** – Briarwood continues to sponsor a variety of retreats and events through the year. These include Advent and Lenten retreats (for 4th graders to middle school), Senior Citizen's Retreat, Confirmation Retreat, Oktoberfest, and other retreats. We continue to revise and grow these retreats. For instance, our Confirmation Retreat was moved to the fall this past year so that it could be the "kick-off event" for congregations' confirmation ministry. We experienced good attendance and excellent feedback from this retreat.

In the future we are looking at the possibility of growing these ministries, including expanding the Advent and Lenten retreats to include older children and sponsoring additional retreats for high schoolers.

**Sunday Brunch** – 2009 saw the beginning of our Sunday Brunch ministry. The first Sunday of each month Briarwood hosts an *amazing* Sunday brunch. This great meal – created by our Head Chef Norm Isa and Assistant Chef Jeramy Kunkel – includes an omelet station, a waffle station, a carving station for meat entrée, sausage and bacon, O'Brien potatoes, biscuits and gravy, desserts, drinks, and more!

This is a ministry we have continued in 2010. We consider this an outreach ministry with the members of our Lutheran congregations, our community congregations, and the people of our local communities. Come join us for an *amazing* meal!

**Retreat Hosting** – 2009 was a good year as more and more groups used Briarwood for their retreats and events. A variety of ELCA congregations hold picnics, congregational gatherings, council retreats, and other events at Briarwood. A much larger group of other denominations – including Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, United Methodists, Church of Christ, independent, and other religious groups use our facilities on a regular basis. We also host a variety of secular groups, including Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, college groups, high school groups, family reunions, wedding receptions, and other secular groups. We also continue to host the outdoor learning program for the Lewisville Independent School District, an important program that brings thousands of 5th graders to Briarwood each year.

Matt Baumhardt, our Operations Director, as well as Jean Oswald, our Ambassador, continue to coordinate the retreat hosting ministry of Briarwood. From the initial booking to hosting to providing for their needs as they are at camp, they – with the rest of the staff – work tirelessly. We continue to receive very positive feedback from the groups that use our camp.

Our hosting ministry continues to grow. We are already "booking" to the end of 2010 and several groups are already booking into 2011. It is the needs of these groups that will probably be the driving

force behind the development of a “Master Plan” for the facilities of Briarwood. These groups have the greatest need for expanded and updated facilities.

## **FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

Right now the facilities at Briarwood are in better shape than they have been in years. That being said, there is still much that needs to be done. Jon Thompson, our Program/Facilities Director, and Brandon Clark, our Maintenance Assistant, do *amazing* work to keep things operating smoothly. Many of our facilities and infrastructure date back to the beginning of Briarwood (about 40 years ago). Yet we continually receive positive comments on how things look and how much things have improved.

From trail maintenance to keeping our fields in good condition, from improvements in the Quail Run rooms to updates in our lodges, from new flood control to a redone Shalom Center entrance, from the front of the camp to Trails’ End, Briarwood is in better condition right now than it has been for many years. And *amazingly* enough, this was done with very limited resources.



This past year’s crown jewel, however, is the construction of the three new cabins in Oak Grove. Because of a generous financial gift from Bethany Lutheran Church in Dallas, we were able to tear down each cabin to its foundation and brick walls and completely rebuild them. Eight feet was added to the back of each cabin to make room for two full handicap accessible bathrooms and

additional storage. Each cabin received new windows and doors, central air and heat, new slanted roofs (replacing the flat roofs), new insulation, and tankless water heaters.

As we look to the future we look to many possibilities (including adding another section to Quail Run and building a chapel). It is also critical that we continue to rebuild and improve our current facilities. And to do that we need to continue to grow our partnership with congregations and individuals.



## **PARTNERSHIP**

God **IS** calling Briarwood to some *amazing* ministry. That ministry will only move forward as we are being blessed in our relationships.

In addition to rebuilding the facilities, we have sought to renew and rebuild the relationships between Briarwood and congregations/individuals. The feedback we have heard back from people is that this relationship has been improving and growing. There is a new “heart” in Briarwood. We truly believe that God has a purpose for Briarwood – and that purpose is to be *a natural setting where people experience God’s love*. And people are noticing that sense of renewal, rebirth, and rebuilding that has become a part of Briarwood.

As we look to the future, we seek to continue to strengthen our relationships with individuals, congregations, and the entire synod in three different ways.

**Prayer** – Prayer is one of the most under-utilized gifts in the church. At each of our staff meetings, we are in prayer for you – for individuals in need or in celebration, for our congregations, and for our synod and our synod staff. We ask that you also be in prayer for us – individually, in your congregation’s Sunday prayers, and throughout the synod. Our prayers for each other will strengthen the one praying and the one being prayed for.

**Presence** – We seek your presence – your physical presence – at Briarwood. Come see the changes taking place. Be part of the summer camping program. Hold your church gathering, council retreat, or church picnic at Briarwood. Be a part of the ministry of Briarwood. We see ourselves as an extension of the ministry of every congregation in the synod. Come join us – come be with us.

**Partnership** – We ask for your partnership. If we are to continue to grow we need to grow our partnerships, including financial giving. If we are to continue to grow, we need financial support from people such as you. You and your congregation are invited to be a regular supporter of Briarwood by becoming a *Supporter, Friend, Sponsor, or Partner* with Briarwood. You and your congregation are invited to participate in our “Adopt a Room” program for Quail Run, adopt and rebuild one of our Trail’s End cabins or one of our lodges, or give any type of gift – large or small. You may be just the right person to help out with one of our needs on our “Wish List.” In whatever way you are called, we seek to have you as a partner in our ministry.



## THANKS



Finally I must state the honor and privilege it is to work with such a dedicated staff. From Norm and Jeramy in the kitchen (who are truly chefs); to Jean our Briarwood Ambassador; to my co-workers Matt and Jon who are doing excellent work as Operations Director and Program/Facilities Director; to Erin our new Program Assistant and to Brandon, our new Maintenance Assistant. This staff constantly and consistently goes beyond any “requirements.” They are dedicated, hard-working individuals who know that this is not just a job, but a call. Please thank them – again – for all they are doing to make Briarwood a special place.

God **IS** doing some *amazing* things at Briarwood as we continue to renew, rebirth, and rebuild. Thank you for being a part of this wonderful and *amazing* journey.

+ Peace +

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Rob Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Rob Moore  
Executive Director  
Briarwood Retreat Center

## Lutheran Campus Ministry at Denton Academic Year 2009-2010

This year has been an exciting year for Lutheran Campus Ministry at Denton. We met lots of new students during the summer orientation sessions. We had a number of fellowship activities at the beginning of the fall semester including dinner out, bowling, frisbee golf, and a cookout staffed by the father of one of our students.

We continued our Monday evening meetings at the Baptist Student Ministry Center at TWU, where our peer ministers led discussions based on the nooma video series. In spring 2010, we had a series of discussions on religion and science led by Sarah Fredricks, assistant professor of philosophy of religion at UNT. On Wednesday evenings we enjoy excellent meals prepared by members of Christ the Servant Lutheran Church (CTS) and worship with Holy Communion. We have worshipped using the music of Taizé and Holden Evening Prayer and heard instrumentalists, with student-led homilies.

During Spring Break 2009, we worked for three days at Briarwood, cleaning and painting. In the fall of 2009 we worked alongside volunteers from CTS and the community at the Empty Bowl project and we had a great time shopping for and packing nineteen (19) shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. In February 2010 we sorted and packed food at the Tarrant Area Food Bank in Fort Worth. During Spring Break 2010, we traveled to the New Orleans area and worked at restoring a nature center damaged by Hurricane Katrina and painted a home in Baton Rouge that was damaged by Hurricane Gustav.

In fall 2009, six students attended the Global Mission Training Event in Katy, Texas, where we learned about cross-cultural ministry and travel as education. We met a young woman who had spent two years in the Young Adults in Global Mission program.

Also in the fall of 2009, one student (Beau Henderson) and two of our graduates (Brandon Parsons and Jenny Hubbard) participated in The Ethics of Eating event sponsored by the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Our service in April 2010 will relate to food.

Our Peer Ministers are Nicole Alexander, a junior at Texas Woman's University where she is majoring in drama, Beau Henderson, a sophomore at the University of North Texas where he majors in music education, and Laura Maultsby, a sophomore at Texas Woman's University where she is majoring in health education.

When students are available, they will travel with me to congregations to tell about campus ministry. Please consider inviting us to your church.

Just before synod assembly, our board is offering our first annual golf tournament on Saturday, April 17, at Timberlinks at Denton. The cost for participating is \$75, with lots of gifts and prizes. Come join the fun! If you can't make it this time, there will be other opportunities: this is our First Annual tournament.

Celene Welch  
Lutheran Campus Pastor

## **How de body? aka... What's Happening in Sierra Leone? Companion Synod Committee**

### **Pr. Kate Warn**

Pr. Kate Warn has finished a full year of missionary service with one year left to go in Sierra Leone (SL). As an integral member of the church leadership in SL, she has gained tremendous insight into the life of our companion synod. She will be at Synod Assembly to share her learning with all of us so that we may better understand our family in SL. Keep an eye on her blog at <http://onmissionsierraleone.wordpress.com/>.

### **Jubilee Centre**

In SL, a completed building equals stability and a long-term commitment. The Jubilee Centre builder has made significant progress in the last year and it is nearing completion. However, the funds needed to complete the project are not coming in and completion of the building is at risk. The builder estimates it will cost \$287,000 to complete. That's 287 people giving \$1,000 each. Can you give a tax deductible donation through the NTNLSynod to complete the project?

### **Container**

A 40-foot container is being packed and shipped to SL at Assembly. It will be half filled with dehydrated food to support the ministry of the clinic. The balance of the container will be filled by Assembly in-gathering. Find the list of accepted items at: [http://www.ntnl.org/index.php/component/docman/doc\\_download/275-slcontainer-2pg](http://www.ntnl.org/index.php/component/docman/doc_download/275-slcontainer-2pg). For big items or items with concerns about duplication, please contact Edward Edgren at [texmared@sbcglobal.net](mailto:texmared@sbcglobal.net). When arriving at Assembly, look for Container Drop-off Signage to help you find the best drop point before bringing your in-gathering inside the Convention Center.

### **Clinic Support**

The clinic ministers to the neighbors of the Calaba Town location through the administration of examinations and medications to patients. Juliana continues to serve as Head Nurse. See the Container List above to see what items she needs to continue working with the patients of the clinic. If you desire to send medications rather than supplies, the best way is to give money designated to the clinic so they can buy the brands they are trained with – from the U.K.

### **Sierra Leone table at Assembly**

The SL Women's Centre, which trains men and women in sewing and textile production so that they have a trade and can earn a living, will have items for sale at the SL table in the book store at Assembly. The youth may also send items for sale to support their growing and thriving ministry. Please stop by the table and see if there's something you want to buy to support these ministries.

### **Water to Thrive**

In partnership with the NTNLSynod, Water to Thrive is providing 10 water wells in SL. They have commitments for 6 of the 10 wells and are seeking further commitments. You can donate through the NTNLSynod. Watch their updates at <http://watertothrive.org/our-progress/completed-projects/sierra-leone>.

### **General Fund**

There is a general fund that the SL Companion Synod Committee uses to distribute funds as needed. Please consider a donation to the General Fund rather than a designation so that the committee has the agility to respond to the needs in the most flexible way possible.

Contact Deb Lemon, Companion Synod Committee Chair at [deblemon@mac.com](mailto:deblemon@mac.com) or via cell phone at 469-358-7695.

**ELCA FUND FOR LEADERS  
ANNUAL SYNODICAL PARTNERSHIP REPORT  
NORTHERN TEXAS-NORTHERN LOUISIANA SYNOD**

In 2009 the ELCA Fund for Leaders provided scholarship support to 172 future pastors and rostered lay leaders. This represents over \$840,000 in tuition support.

As this scholarship was new, no tuition support was distributed from the Indiana-Kentucky Synod Fund for Leaders Scholarship in 2009.

In 2009 the ELCA Fund for Leaders raised over \$2.6 million in gifts. The amount raised for endowments associated with the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod Fund for Leaders Scholarship was \$35,700.03.

As of December 31, 2009 the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod Fund for Leaders Scholarship had an endowed value of \$61,854.62.

For the next academic year (2010-2011) it is projected that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod Fund for Leaders Scholarship will be able to provide **\$4,100** in tuition support to qualified students from the synod.

This fall also marks the tenth anniversary of the first Fund for Leaders seminary scholarship awards. We project that in the 2010-2011 academic year we will be able to distribute \$1 million in tuition support. This will be the first time we distribute \$1 million in a single year. In the past 10 years we have provided \$4.8 million in tuition support, and supported almost 500 future leaders. This includes Pastor Brad Otto, Messiah Lutheran Church, Cypress, TX.

I look forward to our continued partnership to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders who will share the Gospel in a changing world.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Paul Hanson, Director  
ELCA Fund for Leaders

**Report to the  
2010 Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod Assembly  
From the  
Mission Endowment Fund-NTNL Synod**

**“SEEDS THAT CHANGE”**

The Mission Endowment Fund (MEF) continues to use this theme as they focus on what makes people give of their time, talents and resources to the organization. The campaign fund appeal with Kairos ended after much input and the understanding that though the members of the synod-clergy and laity-believe that the five ministries are important it was felt a more visionary plan was needed. After several Summit Meetings of key leaders in the synod, the Synod Council approved Kairos to continue with this goal.

In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the Mission Endowment Fund received \$11,903.33 from congregations, \$13,664.99 from individuals, \$3173.72 from the Esther Brittain Fund and \$ 16,261.66 from investments. In addition, the Board of Directors contributed \$5225. After the sale of St. John, Grand Prairie, the Mission Endowment Fund received \$41,550.

At its February 2009 Board meeting the following ministries were awarded grants: *Christ The Servant, Allen; St. Paul, Farmers Branch; Church of the Resurrection, Roanoke; Dallas Oromo Mission, Richardson; Iglesia Luteran Sagrada Familia/Holy Family, Garland; Our Redeemer, Grand Prairie; First, Shreveport; Trinity, Wichita Falls; Emanuel, Dallas; Walnut Hill, Dallas; San Miguel, Fort Worth; King of Glory, Dallas; Rejoice, Frisco.* The total amount awarded for 2009 grants included \$20,000 from the MEF budget, \$8,000 from the NTNL Synod Outreach Funds for FY 2008-2009 and a \$6,000 First Gift from St. John's, Grand Prairie.

At its February, 2010 Board meeting the following ministries were awarded grants: **Faith, Wichita Falls; The Hispanic Coalition; Sagrada Familia, Garland; First United, Dallas; and First, Shreveport.** Additional grants will be awarded at future meetings.

The MEF Board is grateful for the continued financial support of many congregations and individuals in the synod. In October 2009, the MEF held its third annual “Seeds That Change” Dinner/Fund Raiser at Christ Lutheran, Dallas, with over 100 persons in attendance. The congregation under the leadership of Virginia Worley, a board member, planned the event and provided the help for the meal and the silent auction. The event provided over \$9000 for the fund. A sixth event is planned for Saturday, October 3, 2010 at King of Glory Lutheran Church, Dallas, under the leadership of Carl Skooglund, vice chair of the MEF board.

The Board expressed their thanks to outgoing board members: Glenn Julius and Gary Johnson for their service on the board at the February Board 2010 meeting during a “Ritual of Transition”.

The following persons will serve as the Board of Directors of the Mission Endowment Fund from May 1, 2010 to April 30, 2011:

**Helen Beaujour**, Mount Olive, Dallas; **PLM Karen Bentsen**, Our Savior, Clifton; **Marion Brekken**, Calvary, Richland Hills; **Pastor Jan Castleberry**, Hope, Comanche; **Pastor Diane Eggemeyer**, Trinity, Miles; **Pastor Violeta Erickson**, Walnut Hill, Dallas; **PLM/SAWL Jesus Escamilla**, San Gabriel, Alvarado; **Pastor Paul Fiske**, First, Waco; **George Grobowsky**, Good Shepherd, Marshall; **PLM Kathy Hunt**, Calvary, Richland Hills/Our Redeemer, Grand Prairie; **Jerry Kersten**, New Life in Christ, Dallas; **Timothy McCann**, Advent, Arlington; **PLM Andy Nygaard** (treasurer), Church of the Resurrection, Keller; **Norm Roberts**, Shepherd of Life, Arlington; **Carl Skooglund**, King of Glory, Dallas; **Pastor JoAnne Swehosky**, on leave from call; **Virginia Worley**, Christ, Dallas; **Pastor Scott Zimmerer**, Grace, Carrollton and **Bishop Kevin Kanouse**. **Hattie M. Hammer**, Our Redeemer, Grand Prairie, serves as the part-time Executive Director of the Mission Endowment Fund.

**Glenn Julius**  
**Board Chair**

**Hattie M. Hammer**  
**Executive Director**

**Dated: February 20, 2010**

# NT-NL Related Ministries



LOUISIANA INTERCHURCH CONFERENCE (LIC)

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Executive Director: The Rev. C. Dana Krutz

*To Live the Faith We Hold in Common*

The theme of the Annual Assembly of the L.I.C. held March 1-2, 2010, in Monroe was "*The Church, the Economy, and the Environment – Facing Hard Times*". Synod representatives to the LIC are Bishop Kevin Kanouse who serves as a Board Member & Pastor Dale Farley who attends as a Designate. In addition Mrs. Arlene Lathrop of Messiah, Monroe, LA, serves as a Board Member at Large and Pastor Farley continues to serve as Secretary of the Board and is a member of the Executive Committee. The keynote speaker was **Dr. David Otto**. Dr. Otto is a Professor of Religious Studies, and Arthur & Emily Webb Chair of International Studies, Centenary College of Louisiana. Bishop Thomas L. Brown, Sr., of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church – Fourth Episcopal District was installed as President during the Assembly Worship service. The Week of Prayer observance (*You Are Witnesses of These Things, Luke 24:48*) was celebrated in a number of communities around the state, including as a part of the Centennial Observance of the Catholic Diocese of Alexandria. In addition the task force on ecumenical formation reported its sixth successful conference held as part of their goal to recruit and form the next generation of ecumenical leaders. The task force on Social Justice and Advocacy is partnering with other faith based groups to conduct an educational seminar on Advocacy in the spring of 2010 and a legislative day at the capital.

Largely funded by the member churches, we are grateful for the support of the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod of the ELCA and its commitment to ecumenical relationships. There is a continuing challenge to keep before the churches Christ's vision of unity for us and the impact of that vision on the churches' witness. In a very special way ecumenical formation is the means by which we on your behalf help make and strengthen disciples of Jesus Christ.

The LIC Board met in Baton Rouge in late September with the theme of "*Neither Jew nor Greek...*" (*Galatians 3:28*), *The Church, Race and Inclusion*". We heard from provocative and informative speakers on the needs represented in our society regarding racial interaction and immigration reforms. The Commission on Stewardship of the Environment has held conferences to assist churches to reduce both our carbon footprint and budget expenses by implementing more sustainable construction, renovation and other practices in operation of church facilities. The Commission on Criminal Justice is planning a follow up to the recent juvenile justice conference which assessed the status of juvenile justice reform. This follow-up conference would focus more on the families of youth involved. Mrs. Betty Puckett, our field staff member, in addition to personal assistance to farm families, represents farmers during meetings, mediation, and appeals with USDA and the Farm Service Agency.

The LIC continues to partner with Louisiana Interfaith Disaster Recovery Network (LIDRN) in long term disaster recovery and Louisiana Prison Chapel Foundation in the building of Chapels in the prisons. Founded in February of 1970, the Louisiana Interchurch Conference (LIC), has a membership that includes fifteen member Communion and representation from Church Women United. The member churches strive to proclaim the Gospel message *To Live the Faith we Hold in Common*.



## 2010 Report to the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod Assembly

Dear partners in ministry,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! As the two seminaries that the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod supports, the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) and Wartburg Theological Seminary are grateful for your partnership in the ministry of forming visionary leaders. Thank you for holding us and our students in prayer and for identifying future leaders for the church and encouraging them in their call to professional ministry. We are grateful for your partnership in the candidacy process, for electing dedicated members to serve on our boards, and for the essential financial support that you provided to LSTC and Wartburg Theological Seminary. Wartburg and LSTC offer thanks in advance for your continued pledge of financial support in the coming year.

In November, the boards of LSTC, Wartburg Theological Seminary and Trinity Lutheran Seminary, (the Covenant Cluster of the ELCA) held a ground-breaking meeting where the three seminaries agreed to enter into a new level of partnership to offer our resources to the church.

In 2009, the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago lived out its mission by:

- Celebrating the commencement of 83 graduates in its five degree programs. Thirty eight graduated with the master of divinity degree and most of them are now ordained and serving congregations around the country.
- Inaugurating the Gordon A. Braatz Chair in Worship and installed the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Stewart as the first occupant of that endowed chair.
- Applying for and receiving a \$660,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. for Youth in Mission programs, *Serving Christ in the World and Beyond Belief*.
- Continuing to receive generous support from across the church as we enter the final year of our \$56 million comprehensive campaign, *Equipping the Saints for Ministry*, confident that we will meet the total financial goal by June 30, 2010.
- Beginning a year-long observance of Earth Year at LSTC, renewing and deepening our commitment to care of creation and sharing that with the church through workshops, lectures, conferences, and other resources.
- Continuing to be a leader in the areas of religion and science through the Zygon Center for Religion and Science and in interfaith relations through the work of A Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and Justice.
- Offering dozens of Lifelong Learning opportunities on campus including the Lutheran Heritage Lecture, Tithing and Stewardship workshops, the Scherer Lecture, the Hein-Fry Lecture, the annual Leadership Conference, and sharing faculty expertise at synod conferences and in congregations.

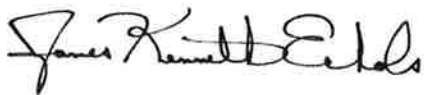
During 2009 Wartburg Theological Seminary lived out its mission by:

- Welcoming 33 first-year students in the Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, International, and TEEM programs, pursuing theological education at Wartburg Theological Seminary.
- Sending 56 valued leaders out into the church and the world at 2009 Commencement.
- Holding over 40 gatherings throughout the country with alumni, renewed and new donors for strengthening our base of support, renewing commitment to scholarship and endowment funding, and seeking financial means to bring needed technology to our students and community. **“Committed to Valued Leaders”** continues as the five year campaign, 2008-2013, to raise \$20 million with individual and congregational partners across the country.
- Adding over 600 new supporters of theological education at Wartburg Seminary and raising over \$3,440,000 for campaign goals in the past 13 months.
- Bestowing honorary degrees to Rev. Dr. Martin Marty, Bishop Mark Narum and Rev. Larry Trachte in May and September 2009.
- Developing and announcing a Distance Education/Residential Program whereby students, who are unable to move to the seminary at this time, are able to complete the first year of a Master of Divinity or Master of Arts degree through online courses and on-campus intensives over a two-year time period. (*Anticipating ATS approval Summer 2010*)
- Beginning a new partnership with Episcopal Seminary, Seabury-Western, allowing students to study at both institutions. The partnership is part of Seabury’s new Anglican Studies program which is designed to offer Anglican studies to Episcopal students in university divinity schools and seminaries of other denominations.
- Continuing research and publication of works important for church and world; recent publications by faculty members Norma Cook Everist, S D Giere, and Craig L. Nesson.

We invite you and members of your congregation to the seminaries to attend daily worship, to participate in a continuing education event, to discern a call to ministry, or to visit with some of the future leaders that you and your synod support through your gifts to the Lutheran School of Theology and Wartburg Theological Seminary. To learn more about the seminaries, their faculty, programs and upcoming events, visit [www.wartburgseminary.edu](http://www.wartburgseminary.edu) and [www.lstc.edu](http://www.lstc.edu).

Your partnership is essential for Wartburg and LSTC to continue their shared mission of providing dynamic theological education for congregations and ministries in your synod, for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to the glory of God.

Yours in Christ,



President James Kenneth Echols  
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago



President Duane H. Larson  
Wartburg Theological Seminary



**LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF THE SOUTH  
A 2010 SNAPSHOT of Spiritual Growth**

**GETTING FIT IN TEXAS**

Foster In Texas (FIT), a new LSSS outreach campaign, launched in 2010. The purpose of FIT is to identify and encourage new families throughout the state to open their homes and hearts by becoming foster parents for LSSS. In 2009, 2,228 foster children were cared for by 608 families in Texas. For information about foster care and becoming a foster parent, call: 877-747-8110; or visit [www.lsss.org](http://www.lsss.org). LSSS foster offices in the NT-NL Synod: Amarillo (1616 S. Kentucky, Suite 340 C); Lubbock (2407 20th Street); Dallas Region (3001 LBJ Freeway, Suite 107); Fort Worth (5608 Malvey Ave., Suite 109); Tyler (1800 Shiloh Rd., Suite 301).

*When people ask you why you do it, what they don't realize is that you just fall in love, and it's the greatest thing that ever happened to you. — Dena Dupuie, LSS foster parent since 2008.*

**NELSON CHILDREN'S CENTER NEWS**

"Child's Choice" is a new pilot program and initiative now underway at the Nelson Children's Center in Denton, TX. The program allows children more input in their placement choices and gives them time to get to know their potential foster families prior to their discharge from the center. Additionally, LSSS will provide more trauma-informed services to children and families once they leave Nelson or other LSSS residential centers. LSSS is now in the process of hiring 14 full-time therapists, one for each foster care office statewide, specifically for trauma therapy. Our goal and hope is that more children will have successful, stable foster placements.

**Announcing the first annual "CARING for KIDS" benefit for the children at Nelson Center:**

Saturday, May 1, 2010  
Delaney Vineyards, Grapevine, TX  
Refreshments 5 p.m. & live auction 6:30 p.m.  
More at [www.lsss.org](http://www.lsss.org), Events.



**LSSS IN LUBBOCK**

**Neighborhood House ... Health for Friends Clinic ... Wedgewood South Assisted Living ...**

These long-time Lubbock ministries had a busy year! During 2009:

- 10,000 people received emergency assistance and services valued at \$450,000 at Neighborhood House (this includes utilities, prescriptions, food vouchers, diapers, hygiene products, children's books, and sack lunches). A record 62 tons of food and hygiene products were distributed in Lubbock County.
- 11,000+ individuals were treated at Health for Friends Clinic.
- Wedgewood South remains the only faith-based, nonprofit senior living residence in Lubbock – and continues to be the premier assisted living opportunity in the area.

We'll celebrate them all at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual "Spring Fling" 2010 benefit.



May 21, 2010  
McPherson Cellars in downtown Lubbock  
5:30 – 8:30p.m. With music and BBQ  
More at [www.lsss.org](http://www.lsss.org), Events.

**IN 2009 ALONE ...**

- More than 45,000 people were served through the many and varied LSSS services.
- 743 older adults were residents of LSSS senior living facilities, ranging from independent living to skilled nursing and memory care.
- 201 Texas children were adopted through our domestic adoption program; 61 through international adoption in 12 countries.



**Mission Investment Fund**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## **Report to the Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana Synod Assembly from the ELCA Mission Investment Fund**

The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA continues to serve this synod by providing vital loans for capital projects to new mission congregations, established congregations and ELCA-related ministries. The fund is able to fund these loans through the sale of investments to ELCA ministries and congregation members.

Nearly **800 MIF loans** totaling more than **\$465 million** are at work today in ELCA ministries throughout the United States, Virgin Islands and the Caribbean.

**In the Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana Synod, 17 congregations and ministries currently have Mission Investment Fund loans totaling \$9.7 million, while many individuals and 66 ministries, including the synod, have investments in the fund totaling \$6.8 million.\***

**MIF serves ELCA ministries.** In addition to the ministry loans and investments that it offers, the fund provides consulting services to ELCA congregations through its church building consultants and staff architects. The consultants help congregations design building programs that support their mission and evaluate the effectiveness of existing facilities or plans for new facilities. Staff architects provide initial schematic design proposals that congregations can take to local architects. The consultants and architects' services are provided at no charge. Area representatives are available to meet with congregations and ELCA-related ministries regarding the fund's loan and investment opportunities.

**Has your congregation invested? Have members of your congregation invested?** Join the thousands of individuals, ELCA congregations, ELCA-related ministries and synods – **including the Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana Synod** – that are earning interest on their investments as they help to build the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Your participation enables the fund to continue this vital ministry. A variety of fixed- and adjustable-rate investment opportunities are available and may be opened with **initial investments of as low as \$5**. Information on investments and ministry loans is available at [www.elca.org/mif](http://www.elca.org/mif) and through the fund's representatives listed below who serve this synod.

Thank you for your support of and participation in the Mission Investment Fund. It is a joy to work in partnership with you for the advancement of God's kingdom.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Carol E. Spencer  
MIF Area Representative  
817.927.3239  
[Carol.Spencer@elca.org](mailto:Carol.Spencer@elca.org)

Hank Wellnitz  
MIF Church Building Consultant  
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\* as of December 31, 2009

Mission Investment Fund | 8765 West Higgins Road | Chicago, Illinois 60631 | web: [elca.org/mif](http://elca.org/mif)  
e-mail: [mif@elca.org](mailto:mif@elca.org) | 877.886.3522 (toll free)

# These are the faces of Mosaic.

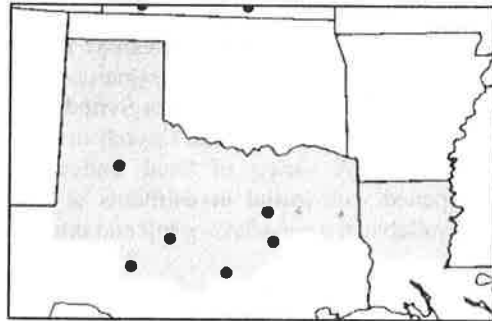


## A life of possibilities for people with intellectual disabilities.

Mosaic provides services to more than 3,500 adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities in 13 states, with partner programs in Great Britain, Romania and Tanzania. We are an affiliated social ministry organization of the ELCA.

In the Northern Texas/Northern Louisiana synod, we provide services in Corsicana, Dallas, and West Texas.

Mosaic provides 'a life of possibilities' for individuals with intellectual disabilities. We help people define their own happiness. We support them and empower the pursuit of their goals. We celebrate their successes, even if that success is as simple as the pursuit itself.



*"Our church roots go deep, to the pastors and faithful Lutherans who founded our ministry. That heritage of faith remains vital to our vision and mission."*

– Linda Timmons, Mosaic President and CEO



A life of possibilities for people  
with intellectual disabilities.