



Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana Mission Area
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Rev. Dr. Kevin S. Kanouse
Bishop
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3 January 2011

Dear Pastors and Congregation Presidents:

+ *Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!* +

2011 is the year for *DiscipleLife Alive!* across the NT-NL Mission Territory! Our vision for missional outreach will begin to come to reality through individual and congregational responses in 2011! We will be unveiling the vision for the NT-NL *DiscipleLife* Center for Mission at Briarwood and we will enter into the *DiscipleLife Alive!* response, which will provide for Leadership Formation for *DiscipleLife*. I'm glad to be in partnership with you in this exciting venture.

Thank you for your leadership among the people of the NT-NL. This has been a difficult year in many ways with the economy taking its toll on congregational giving and conversations about the decisions of the Churchwide Assembly actions. We have been faithful, as a ministerium of pastoral leaders, clergy and lay, in the proclamation of the Gospel and lifting up themes of *DiscipleLife*. Thank you for your dedication to the many challenges and joys of ministry.

Early in 2011 several tasks lie before us. **First** is the completion of the **Parochial Report** for your congregation. This is a requirement of your congregational constitution and the compiled report of all statistics tells a great story about what is happening among the congregations of our synod and ELCA and helps inspire ministries of the church. The information gained from all of the reports is important for laying out the work of this church. This year, Pr. Mel Hammer will again follow up with all pastors and congregations who do not file reports and he is available to help you with this important task of ministry. As I have indicated, I will not sign any rostered leader's Mobility Forms for entrance into call process until the most recent required Parochial Report has been filed. The online link to do your parochial report can be found by [clicking here](#) – or go to www.ntnl.org (click on “Downloads,” “Congregations,” “Annual Congregation Report”). You will need your congregational Password, provided by the ELCA in a separate mailing, to access your Report.

The **second** task early this year is to file a **Pastor's Report** for your ministry. The constitution similarly requires this of all rostered leaders. These reports are due by Jan. 31 and I



Sowing and Growing Disciples of Jesus



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will respond to those whose report seems to indicate a response will be helpful. Please take 15 minutes or so to file this report so that I can keep up with how things are going in your life and ministry. You can access it by [clicking here](#) – or go to www.ntnl.org (click on “Downloads,” “Rostered Leaders,” “Annual Report to the Bishop”).

The **third** request we make is to send back the enclosed **Mission Support Form** (found online by [clicking here](#)) as soon as your congregational meeting is concluded. Some budgets were approved last fall, others this January or February. Please take a minute or two to let us know the support that we can expect from your congregation for the work of the wider church, keeping in mind that we ask all congregations to tithe their support to the wider church as you, I hope and pray, challenge your own members to tithe to the work of your congregation.

Last, as you look ahead to 2011, be sure to reserve the following dates for synodical activities:

- **2011 Tri-synod Theological Conference** in Galveston, January 24-26. Registrations are due now. Rostered leaders are expected to attend this event annually. [Click here](#).
- **NT-NL Mission Assembly** in Hurst, April 29, 30, and May 1. [Click here](#).
- **2011 Bishop’s Convocation** at Briarwood, October 17-19. Again, rostered leaders are expected to attend, so mark your calendar now so that you have the dates available.
- **2011 Clergy Spouses Retreat** is at Briarwood on February 25-27. We hope your congregation will support the attendance and cover the registration for this important time for your spouse, together with other rostered leaders’ spouses.

Almost all of our contacts are through email these days. We are glad to include rostered leaders and lay leaders on our email lists, so forward any lay email addresses you would like to add, especially new presidents and Council members. One may also join the electronic mailing via the website. Go to www.ntnl.org and look to the left side of the homepage. Also add “mail.vresp.com” to your “Safe Senders” list so that you can be sure to receive all emails about NT-NL life and mission.

Once again, thank you for your hard work on behalf of our Lord’s ministry in the life of this synod. May God bless you with good health for you and your family as together we seek to increase our *DiscipleLife*. *Sowing and Growing Disciples of Jesus!*

Sincerely in Christ’s Love,

+ *Kevin S. Kanouse*

+ Kevin S. Kanouse,
Bishop



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