

# Moments for Mission

## Newsletter of the Southwestern Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*The mission of the Southwestern Washington Synod is to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ by empowering congregations and church leaders to grow in worship, education, outreach, stewardship and other ministries.*

January 2010



Please share this monthly e-newsletter with congregations and others. If you would like to subscribe, send a request to the synod office or [rachelpritchett@msn.com](mailto:rachelpritchett@msn.com).

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*“He answered them, ‘He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none, and he who has food, let him do likewise.’ ”*

*– Luke 3:11*

## Edgewood Church, Center, Food Bank Conduct Giant Service Effort

EDGEWOOD – The greater Mountain View Lutheran Church community reached out in a big way with food, clothing and toys to people in need on Saturday, Dec. 19.

Some 973 persons – many of them the working poor, families and Hispanics – came to the church campus from Tacoma, Puyallup, Bonney Lake, Buckley and Milton to receive much-needed help to make it through the holiday season. Those who came were the people “on the margins” in Pierce County, according to the Rev. John Vaswig of the church.

Long lines formed everywhere during the five-hour event, some outside in the rain. They were full of people who simply wanted a toy for a child, a hot turkey meal or food for later, or clothing to keep warm during these coldest months.

Some visitors were reluctant to leave one line for toys to get something to eat, in case they missed an opportunity to delight a child.

The event was a collaboration between the congregation, the Mountain View Community Center and the Edgewood Community Food Bank. Volunteers, many of them organized by Community Center Coordinator Jessie Holden, put in 700 volunteer hours to meet the pressing demand.

“It was remarkable,” said Pastor Vaswig, who recalled the verse from Luke 3:11 in which Jesus instructs persons with two coats to give one to the poor.

The numbers illustrates the enormity of the event. Some 18,014 items of clothing were given away, along with 500 toys. About 225 hot turkey meals with all the trimmings were prepared.

The Mountain View Lutheran Church community and its partners have conducted similar outreach events in the past, but with the Community Center coming online in 2008, the event has grown tremendously. Organizers look forward to a repeat next Christmas.

## Upcoming Bishop’s Convocation

**Information on the upcoming  
Bishop’s Prayer Retreat,  
Convocation is on Page 2.**

## **Congregations in Transition**

### Mobility

<b>In Call Process</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Pastoral Care</b>
All Saints, Auburn	P	TR	Sarah Roemer
Elim, Port Orchard	P	TR	Steven Ray
Faith, Shelton	AP	I	Steve Olson
First, Port Orchard	P	TR	Joe Smith
Grace, Port Townsend	P	I	Beth Orling
Hope, Tacoma	P	TR	Randy Olson
Our Saviour's, Cathlamet	P	NV	Pulpit Supply
Peninsula, Gig Harbor	AP	NV	Paul Schroeder
Salishan, Tacoma	P	TR	Pulpit Supply
Spanaway	P	I	Dennis Hartsook
St. Paul, Castle Rock	P	I	Linda Nou
United, Tacoma	P	TR	Jan Otto

**Mobility position key:** P – Pastor; AP – Associate Pastor; AIM – Associate in Ministry; DM – Diaconal Minister

**Mobility status key:** NV – New Vacancy; TR – Transition; I – Interviewing; C – Calling

### Transitions

**The Rev. Steven Ray** has accepted a call as interim pastor at Elim of Port Orchard. His work began Dec. 1. Pastor Ray has also started a new organization serving in China called China Connect. He no longer is with China Service Ventures.

## **Synod Event**

### **Bishop's Convocation and Prayer Retreat Later this Month**

Time still remains to sign up for the Bishop's Convocation and Prayer Retreat from Jan. 24 through 27 in Seabeck. Diane Jacobson, professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, is among the presenters, and will preach and teach on difficult Old Testament texts.

This year, an additional session has been added after lunch on the final day to allow for more time with Jacobson. The worship offering will be earmarked for Messiah Lutheran Church of Vancouver's second site.

The prayer retreat and convocation offers time for prayer, worship and collegial fellowship, all taking place on Hood Canal in the historic Seabeck Christian Conference Center.

The Prayer Retreat takes place Jan. 24 to 26. The Convocation will be Jan. 26 and 27. Persons have the flexibility to register for one or both events. For more information or to access the registration link, visit the synod Web site at [www.lutherans.org](http://www.lutherans.org) or call (253) 535-8300.

### ***Synod Office Compiling Newsletter E-mail List***

Due to a computer failure, a portion of the e-mail distribution list for Moments for Mission, the synod's monthly newsletter, was lost. While the synod office still has the e-mails for rostered persons and for its congregations, it must rebuild its list of e-mails for lay people. To make sure you continue to receive your newsletter, please send your address to the synod office at [swwsynod@plu.edu](mailto:swwsynod@plu.edu).

## **News**

### **Tacoma-Area Congregations Reach Out in Sorrow, Hope for Fallen Police Officers**

LAKEWOOD – In the midst of a community laid low by overwhelming grief at the slayings of four Lakewood police officers, two congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reached out Dec. 6 with community services of lament and hope.

Law-enforcement officers, neighbors and church members gathered at Christ Lutheran Church of Lakewood on a cold and frigid night, where people solemnly light four tall candles on the altar, one each for officers Mark Renninger, Tina Griswold, Ronald Owens and Greg Richards. Surrounding each candle in the crowded, but hushed sanctuary were small candles, each representing a child or spouse left behind.

Many in the pews wept for the officers, gunned down the morning of Nov. 29 as they sat in a nearby coffee shop. The assailant later was killed by police.

The Rev. Ralf Kalms prayed that God would become the father to the children left behind by the officers, nine in all. The Rev. Kristi Kreamer asked for peace that surpasses understanding, and that the children would find “flickers of hope” in their grief. She thanked God for the officers’ willingness to serve.

A lone man sitting clear at the back of the darkened sanctuary sang, “Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child.”

Pastor Kalms said that the final word for Lakewood, a community in the shadow of the giant Fort Lewis Army base, would come not be the horrific shooting, but from above.

“The last word belongs to God, and that is a good word,” he said.

At Trinity Lutheran Church in nearby Parkland, the Rev. Timothy Stewart prayed for the families, friends and first responders to the bloody scene as tearful and disbelieving mourners bowed their heads.

Four bells let out their anguished toll as strains of “America, the Beautiful” were played.

Bishop Robert D. Hofstad of the Southwestern Washington Synod said later, “As a member of the greater Tacoma community, I grieve the violent death of these four police officers, and I pray in particular for their families and friends. I pray for comfort, healing, and the guiding hand of God in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

### **Faith Advocacy Day is Feb. 16 in Olympia**

Advocates of peace and justice will convene in Olympia on Feb. 16 for the annual Faith Advocacy Day, sponsored by the Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington State; the Washington Association of Churches and the Church Council of Greater Seattle. The event goes from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and begins with worship at The United Churches of Olympia, 1100 11<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE.

Lunch follows at the Capitol, and participants then visit with legislators in the afternoon, voicing their concerns.

In addition, the Lutheran Public Policy Office has a new bulletin insert available on decisions that will have to be made on the upcoming state budget.

To receive more information on Faith Advocacy Day or to receive the bulletin insert, contact the Rev. Paul Benz, director of the Public Policy Office, at (206) 464-4133 or [pbenz@lcsnw.org](mailto:pbenz@lcsnw.org).

**News****Bishop Returns from Holy Land**

Bishop Robert D. Hofstad has returned from a visit to Israel and the West Bank, part of an ELCA Conference of Bishop's initiative to support churchwide strategy for engagement in the region.

"Having just returned from this eye-opening journey, I find myself beginning to realize that this was, in fact, a true pilgrimage of faith – both personal faith, and the embracing faith of the whole Christian church," Bishop Hofstad said. He was among nine synod bishops to meet with local Lutheran congregations and also with groups of Jews and Muslims. The group spent time at local religious sites. A larger contingent of bishops went earlier in 2009.

**Larson Conducts Moment of Blessing**

The Rev. George Larson, retired Southwestern Washington Synod pastor, participated in a moment of blessing Dec. 9 near Bremerton at the burned-down mobile home where resident Paymela Faye Long was found dead Oct. 31. The ceremony for the 58-year-old woman provided a time for her grieving family and friends to share sadness and memories. The moment of blessing was conducted by the Kitsap Interfaith Network. During remarks, Pastor Larson prayed at the blessing "that in our anger we find forgiveness, that in our sorrow we may find hope, that in death we may find new life." No one has yet been arrested in the homicide. Larson and an article on the moment of blessing was featured in a Page 1 piece in the Kitsap Sun.

**Upcoming Events, Education and Service Opportunities****Hebrew Alphabet Explored in Lay School of Theology**

"The Hebrew Alphabet: From Aleph to Tav" is the title of a set of classes taking place in January during Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Tacoma's Lay School of Theology. Taught by Donald P. Ryan, an Egyptologist and faculty fellow at Pacific Lutheran University, the classes will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. Jan. 7, 11, 14, and 28 in Room 200 at the church. Participants will have an opportunity to deepen their understanding of scripture by learning about the stories and traditions connected to the Hebrew alphabet. The cost is \$15; no reservations are necessary. The church is at 1315 N. Stevens St., Tacoma. For more information, call the church at (253) 752-3571.

**Project Cope Training Slated for February**

The Rev. Eric Wangen-Hoch of Living Stones Prison Ministry will help conduct a training session for persons interested in helping men coming out of prison successfully adjust to the outside world. Called Project Cope, the training will be from 9 a.m. to noon Feb. 6 at Peace Lutheran Church, 2106 Cushman Ave. No registration is necessary and there is no cost. Some participants will go on to serve on teams to assist the men. For more information, contact Pastor Wangen-Hoch at [pastoreric@hotmail.com](mailto:pastoreric@hotmail.com).

## **Upcoming Events, Education and Service Opportunities**

### **Flathead Bible Camp Offers New Certification**

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp in Northwest Monday has partnered with Vibrant Faith Ministries and Wartburg Theological Seminary to offer a new youth and family ministry certificate, the only one of its kind in the nation. Instruction is set to begin in March, and includes on-line instruction and time at the Flathead camp. The cost is \$2,500. For more information, contact Brooke Ells at Flathead at (406) 844-3201 or Brooke@flbc.net. More information on the instruction is at [www.vibrantfaith.org](http://www.vibrantfaith.org).

### **Plan Now for Region 1 Pastors' Conference**

The 2010 Region 1 ELCA Pastors' Conference will take place April 12 to 14 in Victoria, B.C. The theme is "Jesus, Ebenezer and Luther: Surviving the Changes," and featured speakers include the Rev. Dr. Raphael Warnock of Ebenezer Baptist Church of Atlanta, Ga., which is the former church of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King; as well as David Lose, chair of biblical preaching at Luther Seminary. Karl Olsen of The Brothers Four will provide music.

The event will be at the Grand Pacific Hotel, [www.hotelgrandpacific.com](http://www.hotelgrandpacific.com). For information on cost or to make reservations, contact Linda Hull at (509) 526-5251 or [linehull@gmail.com](mailto:linehull@gmail.com). More information on the conference is at [www.region1pastors.com](http://www.region1pastors.com).

### **Byberg Preaching Workshop Comes in May**

The annual Byberg Preaching Workshop, to take place May 3 to 5 in Coeur d' Allen, Idaho, will feature Richard Rohrbaugh discussing ancient and modern interpretations of the New Testament. Rohrbaugh is a professor of Christian studies at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Ore. The workshop, designed to develop the skills of ELCA preachers, will be at Trinity Lutheran Church, 812 North Fifth St. For more information, contact the Rev. Terry Kyllö at (360) 770-2774 or [tkyllo@verizon.net](mailto:tkyllo@verizon.net).

### **Lutheran Summer Music Academy to Take Place Next Summer**

The Lutheran Summer Music Academy has announced that its month-long music training opportunity will take place from June 20 to July 18 at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. The academy offers high-school students of music an opportunity to expand those through in a caring, Christian community. For more information, contact Susan Olstad, director of admissions, at (888) 635-6583. To learn more about the academy, visit [www.lutheransummermusic.org](http://www.lutheransummermusic.org).

### **Udbyes Give Invitation to Join Norway Tour**

Andreas Udbye, the treasurer for the Southwestern Washington Synod, and wife Kari are leading a tour of Norway on July 11 to 23. The couple invites anyone interested in seeing some of the most beautiful country in the world to join them. The tour begins in Oslo, continues through Stavanger and Bergen and includes a visit to the fjord county. The cost is \$3,550 per person. For a brochure and registration information, call Andreas Udbye at (253) 564-2822 or the Rev. Neal Snider at (253) 583-8293, who is assisting with arrangements.

## Upcoming Events, Education and Service Opportunities

### **Living Stones Seeks Stephen Ministers**

The Living Stones Prison Congregation is looking for Stephen ministers willing to come to prison once a month and meet with a man regarding a specific crisis or crucial event taking place in his life. Any churches with Stephen ministers interested in helping to provide ongoing spiritual care with individual men at the Washington Corrections Center at Shelton, can contact the Rev. Eric Wangen-Hoch at (360) 401-0371 or [pastoreric@hotmail.com](mailto:pastoreric@hotmail.com).

### **ELCA Offers Stories of Faith in Action**

“Stories of Faith in Action” is the name of a magazine containing 18 stories about how the mission and ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are changing lives around the world. It can be ordered free by calling (800) 328-4648 and requesting Item No. 001403. Related video stories and other resources are at [www.elca.org/stories](http://www.elca.org/stories).

## Our Congregations

*From congregations' newsletters across the synod, for keeping up*

**Together for Advent:** Tacoma's **Hope** and **United** and **Bethlehem** congregations, under a new collaboration called the Tacoma Lutheran HUB, gathered together for soup suppers and Holden Vespers last month, with Pastors Randy Olson, Jan Otto and Nina Body each presiding on different weeks.

**Extra at Christmas:** **Trinity of Parkland's** active community-feeding program included a Christmas Day meal for members and neighbors.

**Receives award:** Mark Thomas, member of **Christ of Lakewood**, has received the Daisy Award, a national distinction recognizing excellence in nursing. Thomas was nominated by patients in his care at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Tacoma.

**Supporting the troops:** Members of **Emmanuel of Tacoma** have begun sending food and useful items to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and have dubbed the new project “Boxes for the Troops.”

**Along for the trek:** Veteran hiker and retired pastor Mary Davison will present an afternoon on preparing for and taking mountain hikes at 1 p.m. Jan. 11 at **Family of Grace of Auburn**. Fantastic photos are promised as she shares her experiences on the Appalachian and Pacific Crest trails, and as she demonstrates how to pack and map out hikes.

**Kenya-bound:** Youth from **Creator of Bonney Lake** are looking forward to next July, when they will spend two weeks visiting an orphanage in Nairobi, Kenya. Planning is under way now.

**Web site revamped:** **St. Andrew of Vancouver's** Web site has been revamped and re-introduced back into cyberspace. For a look, visit <http://www.salcvan.org>.

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### *Have a story for Moments for Mission?*

Send information or story ideas for Moments for Mission, the synod's monthly e-newsletter, to the synod office or Editor Rachel Pritchett at [rachelpritchett@msn.com](mailto:rachelpritchett@msn.com).

## **Posting**

**Music director: Creator Lutheran Church of Bonney Lake** seeks a part-time music director to help lead the congregation and choir in worship. The position is anticipated to take about 15 hours a week. A complete job description is at [www.creatorlc.ctsmemberconnect.net](http://www.creatorlc.ctsmemberconnect.net). The church's mailing address is 16702 South Tapps Drive East, Lake Tapps, WA 98391-9527 and its phone number is (253) 862-7700.

## **Letters**

### **A Note of Thanks from Prison Ministry**

This past Dec. 19, the Bell Choir from Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Tacoma came to the Washington Corrections Center and did three lesson-and-carol services, including two for men from prison units who never get to come to the Living Stones Prison Congregation. That same evening, Peninsula Lutheran Church of Gig Harbor came and led a Blue Christmas Service, a service of healing for men who find themselves in grief during the Christmas season. On behalf of the Living Stones, special thanks to all the participants from both churches who helped to make a brighter season for our brothers in Christ behind bars.

*- The Rev. Eric Wangen-Hoch, Living Stones Prison Congregation*

## **Calendar**

**Jan. 6:** Synod Candidacy Committee meeting, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., synod office  
**Jan. 6:** Synod assembly registration opens; see [www.lutheranssw.org](http://www.lutheranssw.org)  
**Jan. 7:** Lay School of Theology begins, Emmanuel of Tacoma, see *Page 4*  
**Jan. 17:** Week of prayer for Christian unity  
**Jan. 20:** Bishop's Eucharist, Peninsula and Olympic Conferences, 11 a.m., Port Madison Lutheran Church, Bainbridge Island  
**Jan. 21:** Bishop's Eucharist, Mount Rainier Conference, 11 a.m., Christ the King Lutheran Church of Sumner  
**Jan. 24 to 25:** Prayer Retreat, Seabeck Christian Conference Center, see *Page 2*  
**Jan. 26 to 27:** Bishop's Convocation, Seabeck Christian Conference Center, see *Page 2*  
**Feb. 6:** Project Cope training to help men exiting prison, Tacoma, see *Page 4*  
**Feb. 7:** PLU Sunday, more information at (253) 535-7423 or [crel@plu.edu](mailto:crel@plu.edu)  
**Feb. 16:** Faith Advocacy Day, Olympia, [lpoooffice@lcsnw.org](mailto:lpoooffice@lcsnw.org), see *Page 3*  
**Feb. 23:** Bishop's Eucharist, Evergreen Conference, 10 a.m., Light of Grace of Federal Way  
**Feb. 25:** Bishop's Eucharist, Coastal Conference, more details coming  
**March 13:** Olympic Cluster Spring Celebration, Southwestern Washington Synod Women of the ELCA, First of Port Orchard  
**March 20:** South Sound Cluster Event, Southwestern Washington Women of the ELCA, Faith of Shelton  
**March 27:** Narrows Cluster Event, Southwestern Washington Women of the ELCA, Peace of Tacoma  
**April 12 to 14:** Region 1 pastors' conference, see *Page 5*  
**April 23 to 25:** Spring Retreat, Southwestern Washington Women of the ELCA, Black Lake Bible Camp  
**May 3 to 5:** Byberg preaching workshop, Idaho, see *Page 5*  
**May 14 to 15:** Southwestern Washington Synod Assembly, Hilton Hotel, Vancouver  
**June 20 to July 18:** Summer Music Academy, Iowa, see *Page 5*  
**June 25 to 27:** Region 1 Gathering, Southwestern Women of the ELCA, Kalispell, Mont.  
**Aug. 21:** Southwestern Washington Women of the ELCA, Bible Study Event, Silverdale  
**Oct. 8 to 9:** Convention, Southwestern Washington Women of the ELCA, Trinity of Longview

*End of newsletter*