Moments for Mission
Southwestern Washington Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ by empowering congregations and church leaders to grow in worship, education, outreach, stewardship and other ministries.
October 2017

Work it Out Together
by Bishop Richard Jaech

Dear Friends in Christ,

These last weeks and months have been incredibly stressful and anxious times for our nation and the world. Within our nation we have experienced multiple violent hurricanes that ripped apart and flooded islands and cities. Until the cooling rains arrived here in the West, there have been 80 major fires burning throughout the western states, driving people away from their homes. On our nation’s streets, we have witnessed violent attacks by the KKK and neo-Nazis, watched in street protests, and heard the daily verbal clashes and insults among our political leaders. As we look at the world around us, we are shaken by the tragic earthquakes in Mexico, alarmed at the heightened risk of nuclear war with North Korea, and are numb with pain from the continued suffering in Syria, Sudan and Myanmar.

Huge problems and critical decisions lay before us; even greater unknowns loom beyond. I find myself regularly tightened by a sense of anxiety as I ask myself, “What’s going to happen to our country and the world, and what will that mean for my family and those I love?” Maybe you find yourself asking the same question and feeling the same stress.

Because these questions of life and faith are so huge and complex right now, there are no quick and easy answers that solve all the problems and settle all the fears. However, since we are heading into the month of October, the thought came to me, “What wisdom might Martin Luther want to speak to us right now?”

This year we celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. On October 31, 1517, Luther posted his beliefs on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany, and invited debate. Luther was also living in a very anxious time.

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Both the Pope and the Emperor had condemned him. His life was in high risk. All of Europe was threatened by the massive army of the Turkish Ottoman Empire that was camped out only 30 miles east of Europe’s political center, Vienna. The advent of a new Black Plague was hovering on the horizon.

As Luther lived in the middle of these frightening crises, two of Luther’s main insights strike me as very useful for us right now.

**First**, Luther would say, “God’s powerful presence and love is the one thing that can be counted on, so put your trust in God and know that you are ultimately safe in God. This is especially crucial when all the other pillars and supports you ordinarily count on start to shake.”

A voice inside us of says, “If I lose my job, my house, even my secure country, I will have no life any more. My life will be nothing.”

Luther answers, “Yes, these are very frightening moments. However, remember how, at your baptism, God looked you in the eye and said to you, ‘You are my own precious child and always will be. Everything else may come and go, but I will always hold and cherish you as my dear one. Therefore, at the deepest level, you are safe in me. Carry that in your heart, especially when life gets shaky.’”

So the first and central piece of wisdom Luther gives us is to root ourselves in the grace and power of God.

The **second** teaching that Luther gives us is that, having filled and surrounded us with love, God sends us back out into the world to work as God’s people. In Luther’s day, it was ordinarily believed that only the priests, bishops and princes had been given an important “office” by God. These high rulers of church and state were thought to be the ones elected by God to do God’s will.

Luther re-discovered in Scripture that God elects all of us to an important life and “office.” In fact, each one of us has various offices, depending on who we are. We are teachers, ironworkers, bakers, city council members, spouses, parents, neighbors…and out of each of these offices, we work to do God’s will and shape the world God wants for us.

If Luther were living today in this time of democracy, Luther would undoubtedly tell us that the office of “citizen” is also one of the important offices we hold. God gives us the opportunity as citizens to shape and craft a society that expresses God’s vision.

This gets us back to the stressful time we are experiencing right now. Inner trust and faith in God is the essential starting point. As Luther would put it, “A mighty fortress is our God.” This faith gives us hope and strength. But then, God immediately sends us out into the world and **Continued next page**
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says, “You’ve got some big problems to figure out right now. Work it out…together. Your leaders are very important. They will serve through their office of leadership. Yet a nation flourishes only when the citizens study, discuss, vote, negotiate, dialog and work it out together.”

So as we enter this very chaotic month of October, I hear Luther saying this: “Trust and pray, knowing that everything rests in God. Live and act, knowing that God works powerfully through you. The problems of the world are huge. Yet they are nothing compared to the grace, wisdom and strength of God that stirs within you all. That is the future that God holds out to you.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Rick Jaech

Congregations in Transition

Lord, we pray for your wisdom, insight and peace for the congregations and the leaders in our synod who are working through a time of pastoral transition. Amen.

All Process – October 2017

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<td>St. Paul, Vancouver</td>
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Synod Calls

Pastor Jeannine Daggett will serve as Transition Pastor for Naselle Evang Lutheran Church and Evang Lutheran Church of Chinook beginning this month

Pastor Linda Milks is serving as Transition Pastor at Faith Lutheran, Shelton.

Pastor Sigi Helgeson has been called to serve Lutheran Community Services NW as Advancement Officer-Western Washington Church Relations.

Janeen Smith was called as Deacon to serve Bethany, Spanaway, and also appointed by Bishop Jaech and the Synod Council to serve as Synodically Authorized Minister to serve them in Word and Sacrament.

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Synod Council Appointments:

**Darcy Huffman**, who was elected to begin serving as South Sound Conference Rep in 2018, to fill the open position beginning in September. Thank you Sharon Kinder for your fine work on the Synod Council for the past 3 years.

**Rev. Megan Filer** to fill the Lower Columbia Conference Rep that was left vacant when Rev. Melinda Gapen resigned in order to accept a call in Indiana. Thank you Melinda for your faithful service to our Synod and to your congregation of Gloria Dei in Kelso.

The Uniqueness of Being Lutheran

*By Pastor Kim Latterell, Bishop's Associate*

As we get ready to celebrate being reformed as a Christian faith community, just a few odds and ends that make Lutheran Christians a bit unique in Western Christianity.

**Did you know that Lutheran’s don’t believe in the Bible?** Luther called the bible the manager that holds the Christ. So, believing in the bible would be like believing in the manager. We do believe in the God revealed through the bible, in God’s presence in Jesus Christ, in the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. We call the bible the Word of God and yet the best understanding of that phrase centers on the message of grace and reconciliation contained in Scripture, and above all in Jesus Christ the Word of God made flesh.

**Did you know that Lutheran’s are hesitant to sing ‘We are climbing Jacob’s ladder’ and ‘I have decided to follow Jesus?’** There is no ladder in the Jacob story, and Jacob never climbed anything (hard to climb anything when you’re sleeping and dreaming.) The story talks of a staircase from heaven...and only angels/messengers use it, and then to climb down as God’s presence on earth. We believe in a come down to earth God, not a ladder to climb up to heaven. And the power of the gospel is not centered in our decision to follow Jesus...but in God’s decision to lay claim to us. Again, God is the subject of every such ‘decision’ and we are (by grace), the object of such choosing.

**Did you know that Lutheran’s respect Billy Graham but not his altar call theology?** Again, the message of the Gospel is God’s decision to claim us, not the other way around. Since we confess to be in bondage to sin, unable to free ourselves, someone else has to set us free. Jesus and Jesus alone. In fact, according to the way Lutheran Christians express the whole matter of salvation Billy Graham’s approach is ruled out. Luther grants that human beings have limited ‘free-will’ in matters related to daily life, but that we have no free-will in matters related to salvation. If God does not act on our behalf we are lost. Listen to these crystal clear words from the Book of Confession, Solid Declaration, Article 2, Free Will:

> In spiritual and divine matters, the mind, heart, and will of the unregenerate human being can in absolutely no way, on the basis of its own natural powers, understand, believe,
accept, consider, will, begin, accomplish, do, effect or cooperate. Instead, it is completely dead to the good...completely corrupted. This means that in this human nature, after the fall and before rebirth, there is not a spark of spiritual power left or present with which human beings can prepare themselves for the grace of God or accept grace as it is offered. Nor are they capable of acting in their own behalf or of applying this grace to themselves or to prepare themselves for it. Nor do they have the ability, on the basis of their own powers, to help, act, effect or cooperate completely, halfway, or in the slightest, most insignificant way in their own conversion; they cannot bring it about or cooperate in it “of ourselves, as coming from us.

Did you know that Luther wished that we would actually drop the term ‘free-will’ from our theological vocabulary? Listen to Luther speak of it in his “The Bondage of the Will.”

I frankly confess that, for myself, even if it could be, I should not want “free-will” to be given me, nor anything to be left in my own hands to enable me to endeavor after salvation; ...for if I lived and worked to all eternity, my conscience would never reach comfortable certainty as to how much it must do to satisfy God. Whatever work I had done, there would still be a nagging doubt as to whether it pleased God, or whether He required something more. The experience of all who seek righteousness by works proves that...but now that God has taken salvation out of the control of my will and put it under the control of His, and promised to save me, not according to my working or running but according to His own grace and mercy, I have the comfortable certainty that He is faithful and will not lie to me, and that He is also great and powerful, so that no devils or opposition can break Him or pluck me from Him.

Did you know that the whole matter of salvation is out of our hands and in God’s hands only? In Jesus Christ God has done, is doing, and will do everything necessary to save and restore us, all the world and all creation. His word of grace will accomplish all that it seeks to do. And his grace is such a life-changing gift it calls, not for a response, but calls forth a response of faith and trust from us, which we fail to keep each day, but are drawn back into the promises of baptism that call us and lead into daily repentance and renewed trust.

Did you know that our response to all of this that God has done in Christ, is to love God by loving our neighbors? After all, God needs nothing from us, but our neighbors certainly do.
**On the Road with the Bishop**

**September 5**  Attending Pacific Lutheran University’s Convocation Day, the first day of classes. PLU presented to our Synod a solid bronze statue of Martin Luther (now in our entry way) in appreciation for all of the ways in which our Synod supports the educational ministry of PLU.

![Image of Martin Luther statue]

**September 10**  Worshipping at Emanuel Lutheran in Yelm.

![Image of Emanuel Lutheran Church]

**September 17**  Worshipping at St. Mark’s by the Narrows Lutheran in Tacoma, where we welcomed and honored Bishop Fredrick and Janet Shoo, *shown below right*. Bishop Shoo, *shown below left with Bishop Jaech*, is the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, a church body of 6.7 million members. (The ELCA has just under 4 million members.)

![Image of Bishop Fredrick and Janet Shoo]

*On the road continued next page*
September 23  Meeting with members of our Synod Council and then worshipping with Living Stones Lutheran, our congregation made up of inmates at the Washington Correctional Center for Men near Shelton, WA.

September 28 – October 3  Attending our Fall Conference of Bishops meeting in Chicago with the bishops of all 65 synods, *some bishop’s shown below.*
At the table together

By ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Old recipes are precious things. They give instructions about how to prepare a dish, but they are so much more. They are filled with memories. They connect families as they are passed from one generation to the next. They bring events and people from long ago right into the present.

I am looking at a recipe card that has that effect on me. It’s my mother’s recipe for stuffing for turkey. It’s written in her neat hand—a skill I never mastered. It’s a basic recipe, just bread and butter and onions and celery and poultry seasoning. I don’t even have to read it now when I make stuffing, but I like to look at it because it puts me right back into Thanksgivings past.

Thanksgiving in our family was an event. The Eatons have been gathering for Thanksgiving dinner for nearly 70 years. We traded off between our house and my aunt and uncle’s home. When it was our turn we got up early and started cooking.

Out came the recipes and equipment. There were no food processors in those days. We had a cast iron food grinder that clamped on to the edge of the kitchen table. It was kept in its own special box. It only made an appearance once a year and its emergence signaled that Thanksgiving had arrived. Grinding the celery was no problem. Onions were another story. My brothers and I spelled each other at turning the crank until we were overcome by the fumes.

My parents and my aunt and uncle established this tradition shortly after World War II. We have always had three and sometimes four generations present. A lot has gone on in our family and in the world these past decades. Marriages, children, moves, deaths, war, recession, elections, the ‘60s. We are a lively bunch and none of us lacks an opinion or the ability to express it. Conversations were spirited and sometimes heated. My father and my uncle served in the army during World War II. My older brother and older male cousins didn’t support the Vietnam War. We belong to different political parties. We are Lutheran and Catholic and members of the Unification Church and unchurched. We are liberal and conservative.

But no matter what, when my mother or my aunt announced, “Supper’s ready,” we all came to the table together. We were family, we shared our lives, we loved each other.

A lot is going on in our church and in the world right now. We are a changing church, which brings its own tension. We live in a wired world where news is instantaneous and continuous. We don’t agree on everything. We belong to different political parties. We have varied

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ethnicities. We’re liberal and conservative and everything in between. We’re in an “either/or” world. And we are contending with cultural forces that exacerbate division. But by the tender love of God, by this ceaseless pursuit of the Spirit, we are members of the body of Christ. We are family. We share our lives. We love each other.

Here is another simple recipe: flour, water, wine, the body and blood of Jesus. A meal of healing, forgiveness and thanksgiving. No matter what, when our Lord tenderly and urgently invites, “Supper’s ready,” we all come to the table. There in our common brokenness we meet each other in Christ.

A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address: bishop@elca.org This column originally appeared in Living Lutheran’s September issue. Reprinted with permission.

Prepare for the Winter Storm Season in Washington

Important, but not urgent. That's how many people in Houston, Porto Rico, and Mexico felt about disaster preparedness prior to their recent catastrophes. Is your family ready for the predictable Winter Storm Season in Washington? You already have some of the basics – water, juices, flashlights, and canned foods in your pantry which can be eaten without heating. Additionally, your blankets, sleeping bags, gloves, and winter coats would be very useful during power outages. Suggest you plan with your family about where you would meet if you had to evacuate due to a house fire. Post-disaster, family members could be geographically separated; to check-in with an out-of-area phone contact could relieve anxiety. For additional assistance check: https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan. Plan now!
A Gathering of Grace
You are invited!

Festival Worship Commemorating
the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation
Pacific Lutheran University - Lagerquist Hall
Sunday, November 5, 2017        3:00 pm

On November 5th, we have a wonderful opportunity to join our brothers and sisters throughout the Southwestern Washington Synod to celebrate our common Lutheran roots in festival worship commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

There is no cost to attend the worship and fellowship at Lagerquist Hall. A special offering will be taken for the SWWA Synod initiative, Deep Roots, New Life, supporting seminary students and struggling congregations within our Synod.

We will have a procession of clergy, a mass choir, preaching by Bishop Rick Jaech and Eucharist. Our Choir will have over 100 singers. Imagine hundreds of our voices raised in song in a beautiful performance hall accompanied by a pipe organ!

We hope you will join us on this special afternoon of worship and fellowship. There is still time to join the mass choir or procession. Email us secretary@clc-lakewood.org, with Reformation 500 in the subject line.

Sponsored by The Southwestern Washington Synod of the ELCA, Pacific Lutheran University and Christ Lutheran Church in Lakewood
I’m Supporting “Deep Roots, New Life”
Lori Cornell, Pastor, Calvary Lutheran, Federal Way

Deep Roots, New Life is an opportunity for members of our Southwestern Washington Synod to claim a future for Lutherans in Southwestern Washington. The money raised will provide training that revitalizes current congregations, fund new mission congregations, and unburden new pastors from crippling debt. I feel confident that my work to promote the campaign, and my monetary gifts, will be well used.

Two summers ago, when my congregation was updating its long-term plan, we had Listening Posts with members—asking them to reflect on the future of our congregation and the context in which we serve. One of the questions we asked was, If you could show up at our church in the year 2025, what would you hope to see? It was a question meant to invite members to envision our future together. One of the surprise responses that our leadership heard more than once was, “I won’t be alive in 2025.” The response testified to the nature of our aging ELCA congregations, and the challenges we face as we seek to prepare for a church that will look unlike it ever has in the past.

The truth is that many of us in this Synod may not be around in 2025. But if we are, my hope is that we will see how our deep Lutheran roots can sprout and grow into a vital new version of that life-giving tree (the Church of Christ) that has already born fruit for the life of the world.

That is why I serve on the campaign team, and that is why I give freely and gladly to Deep Roots, New Life. That’s also why I invite you to support and share this vision by your participation in the campaign. Learn more: http://deeprootsnewlife.com/ and http://deeprootsnewlife.com/synod-stories/

THANK YOU to congregations who have made special gifts and pledges for Deep Roots, New Life:

- Creator, Bonney Lake (Advent offering)
- Evangelical Church of Chinook (estate gift)
- Mountain View, Edgewood (endowment fund)
- Hope Lutheran, Enumclaw (monthly support)
- Calvary Lutheran, Federal Way (special offering in honor of intern)
- Peace, Puyallup (estate gift)
- St. Mark’s by the Narrows (capital campaign and benevolence)
- Trinity Lutheran Foundation, Vancouver (endowment fund)

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We are grateful for these creative ways of supporting Deep Roots, New Life. If you would like to discuss ideas you have for your congregation, please contact Bishop Jaech, Synod staff, or Pastor Steve Olson (steve@olsonadvancement.com; 253-973-2611). Remember, you can find more information and resources at deeprootsnewlife.com.

Lutheran Disaster Response

A Letter from the ELCA African Descent Desk on the Recent Hurricanes

This has been a devastating season of hurricanes for our neighbors throughout the Caribbean and the U.S. South. Hurricanes Harvey and Irma have already left a path of destruction, and at the time of this writing, Hurricane Maria has made landfall in Puerto Rico. As response efforts begin and continue, Rev. Albert Starr, Jr., director of Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries and program director for African Descent Ministries for the ELCA, offers this update and call for our prayers for all our neighbors affected by the storms, including those on smaller islands often given too little attention in U.S. national news.

Beloved,

Please continue to hold our sisters and brothers throughout the Caribbean in prayer.

As efforts are being made to respond to the devastating impact of hurricane Irma in the Caribbean, plans are being made in anticipation of yet another hurricane, Maria, which made landfall in Puerto Rico September 20, 2017. Residents of the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico were urged to take shelter in the available emergency centers as many private homes have already been damaged and structurally compromised by previous storms and hurricane Irma. The island of Dominica and the U.S. Virgin Islands have already been devastated by Maria, a powerful storm right on the heels of Hurricane Irma.

Communications with the islands of St. Thomas, St. John in particular, have been sporadic at best over the past week. St. Croix and Puerto Rico experienced the least impact of hurricane Irma. We have limited reporting out from the ELCA churchwide offices so as not to inadvertently add to the level of anxiety with unverified or false information.

Our Lutheran Disaster Response team here at our churchwide office in Chicago has been in direct communication with Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands, with offices on the island of St. Croix and with Lutheran Social Services of Puerto Rico. For more information on the efforts of Lutheran Disaster Response, please visit the Lutheran Disaster Response blog or follow Lutheran Disaster Response on Facebook.

The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been on the ground but may withdraw staff and return after Hurricane Maria has passed. Continued next page
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Ms. Junia Stryker, director for Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands has brought on an additional staff person whose work will be dedicated completely to hurricane response in the Virgin Islands. Their staff has not yet been able to make an on-the-ground assessment. Travel between the islands by both sea plane and ferry has been curtailed by continued unfavorable weather. The airport on St. Thomas was restricted to emergency and military air traffic only. St. John does not have a commercial airport.

As of this past week here are some of the effects from Hurricane Irma:

St. Thomas and St. John

- Frederick Church sustained damages and is worshiping in the parish hall building.
- Nazareth Church on St. John island received some damage but is standing. The parsonage was destroyed. St. John is without power and running water. We have heard from Pastor Carlyle Sampson indirectly that he is well but without means of connecting and communicating with all the members across the island. This is true of the ministries and pastors on St. Thomas as well.
- The hospital on St. Thomas has been destroyed. Patients have been evacuated to St. Croix, Puerto Rico and mainland U.S.
- The main power plant on St. Thomas was destroyed. Power outages continue. Cell phone access is sporadic. When possible, texting seems to be the best opportunity for connecting.
- FEMA has set up food and water distribution centers across the island.
- An island-wide 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew is being enforced.

Please continue to hold our neighbors in prayer this season. If you would like to support the efforts of Lutheran Disaster Response, please visit their “Hurricane Relief” giving page to make a gift. 100% of gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response will be mobilized to support response and recovery efforts related to the hurricanes.

Additional Ways to Give: Checks or money orders can be sent to:
Lutheran Disaster Response
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

Write “Hurricane Response” on your check memo line.
90 Riders Raise over $13,000 for Refugee Resettlement

On a warm Saturday August morning, 90 bicycle riders gathered at Silverdale Lutheran Church, in Silverdale as part of the Reform Ride for Refugees 10 mile-“Mini Martin”, 30 mile-“Brave Bavarian”, or 50 mile-“Wittenberg Warrior” rides to raise funds and awareness for refugees and immigrants. The $13,000 will be distributed to two local agencies: Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Center (KIAC), and Lutheran Community Services Northwest Immigration and Refugee Resettlement program (LCSNW).

Representatives from five area churches: Silverdale Lutheran, Poulsbo First Lutheran, Vinland Lutheran in Poulsbo, Bethany Lutheran on Bainbridge Island, and Our Savior’s Lutheran in Bremerton, and KIAC and LCSNW banded together in this 500th anniversary year of the Protestant Reformation to partner with businesses, organizations, and individuals to hold the first annual event. Some of our sponsors included State Farm Insurance, Martha and Mary Health and Rehabilitation Services, Red Apple Market, Central Market, Thrivent Financial, Kitsap Tri-Babes, Silverdale Cyclery and Fuelrz muffins and bakery.

Riders commented that they enjoyed the ride because it was not only challenging and scenic here on the Kitsap peninsula, but it was well organized, ended with a Katie Luther beer garden, and raised money for a worthy cause.

There were over 40 volunteers who participated in the planning, organizing, and carrying out of the race. One volunteer likened this event to giving birth to a twelve pound baby! And believe it or not, we’re hoping to do it all over again next year. Stay tuned for the date!

KIAC’s mission is to help immigrants integrate into the community and to help the community to be a welcoming place. In the last year alone, KIAC has served over 800 people from 34 different countries from clothing needs to legal help.

LCSNW has “a rich history of welcoming, resettling and meeting the critical needs of refugees. We’ve welcomed more than 35,000 refugees over the past 40-plus years in Washington and Oregon…. Just last Monday, our Unaccompanied Refugee Minor program (URM) in Spokane was ready to welcome a 17-year-old male. He is from Afghanistan, where his parents and sister were killed by a landmine.... We’re all God’s children, and we support refugees who are fleeing dangerous and violent conditions.” (LCSNW president, David Duea)

One member of the planning group reflected:
“We began to plan this Reform: Ride for Refugees a year ago before the presidential election, before the travel ban and reduction on refugees being resettled, and before the immigration policy changes that have taken place in the last year. With DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals being rescinded by executive order; it seems now more than ever we need to do this work.”
Where is Travelling Luther?

Each month, we'll have photos (we hope!) of the adventures of the Travelling Luthers that each conference received at the 2017 Synod Assembly. Some conferences are scheduling him to spend a month at each congregation in their conference. Contact your Conference Dean for information about having him visit your congregation. (List of Conference Deans is on the last page)

Travelling Luther from the Tacoma Narrows Conference went to the Pacific Ocean, shown right, with Deacon Ingelaurie Lisher of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church by the Narrows, Tacoma.

Another Travelling Luther was seen in the South Sound Conference at St. John’s Lutheran in Chehalis, helping with the worship bulletin, below left, and overseeing their good work in a meeting, below right.

Pacific Northwest Lutheran congregations made a difference in Namibia

Rev. Ron Tellefson

We have been hearing about the work of our synod’s Namibia Task Force and our sister synods in Namibia, which is in southern Africa. Here’s how our Pacific Northwest Lutheran congregations have made a difference.

In the 80s and 90s several of our local congregations supported the nine Namibian Lutheran Scholars at PLU. Penda Naanda (PLU 1992), Namibian Congregational Scholarship recipient is representing his beloved country in the Annual Meeting of the United Nations this month. Penda demonstrated his gracious, gentle, friendship building capacity when thanking supporting congregations.

Penda is one of two PLU alumni who went into diplomatic service for Namibia. The other is Continued next page
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Kauna Ben Shingenge, now serving in the UN headquarters in Geneva.

You may get a glimpse of Penda in the TV coverage of the UN sessions this week. Thanks for the ways our church works for Peace.

IT volunteer sought

The synod’s Namibia Task Force seeks a volunteer with IT experience who might be interested in helping develop a website for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia, one of the synod’s companion synods. The work includes helping to develop a site for the head office that connects with its congregations. Work would take place stateside and in Namibia for several months, with room and board paid. If interested, contact Rachel Pritchett, Chair of the Synod Namibia Task Force at rachelpritchett@msn.com or 206-498-0920.

ELCA Disability Ministries Wants to Hear about your Disability Ministry

To assist and support synods and congregations in their ministries, a list of leaders and congregations participating and engaging persons with disabilities (such as children with autism, teens contemplating suicide, members of all ages living with trauma and depression, members in recovery, and aging members or others with mobility challenges having ADA access to the altar, fellowship hall, worship area, and bible studies) is being created by Disability Ministries of the ELCA.

Who is doing what ministries related to disabilities in your area? How can we best connect/learn more about them and help you become involved?

Please send them a name (person or ministry) and your contact information, or simply a newsletter article about those doing the amazing work that God entrusts to us. They’ll not only provide a list and opportunities for networking for those doing the work, but share available information and resources with you upon request.

8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631
Our Congregations (news and neat ideas from our synod congregations)

PARTNERSHIPS:

1. From Pastor Coe Hutchison, Grace Lutheran, Port Townsend re: their Koinonia relationship with Emmanuel Apostolic Church

   It has now been more than two years since that horrible night of June 17, 2015 when nine people were killed during Bible Study at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC. That event is now one of many terrorist events of the last two years fed by racism and the lies spread by white supremacy. That event shook me deeply. I had to find a way to respond.

   Our Bishop suggested, among other things, building relationships with the black or minority churches in our area. As the pastor of a church in very white Port Townsend, that was difficult to do. There are no black churches in the area. I thought that might let me off of God's hook, but it didn't seem to work that way. As most of us do when being pushed out of our comfort zone, I hemmed and hawed for six months, until Martin Luther King Jr. Day of 2016. I couldn't put it off any longer. I had been given the name of Bishop Robertson at Emmanuel Apostolic Church, a black majority church in Bremerton, as a good person to talk to. So about 10:00pm that night, I e-mailed the Bishop explaining that God was pushing me to reach out and would he consider meeting with me and talking and praying and seeing where Jesus might lead us. I figured I might hear back in a few days. But ten minutes later, the Bishop texted me back saying he would be honored to meet.

   That was the beginning of our Koinonia relationship with Emmanuel Apostolic Church. We have now had three gatherings, two in Bremerton and one in Port Townsend. We have worshiped together, sung together, shared Holy Communion, broken plenty of bread (including amazing barbecued ribs and chicken and of course pickled herring, liver wurst and hot dish). We have grown to where we now refer to each other as family and we really feel that is true. We are committed to find a way to use this relationship for outreach in our communities and we are confident God will lead us in that direction. But we already know this is Spirit-driven, as we share deep and meaningful Koinonia with our brothers and sisters.

2. From Pastor Michelle de Beauchamp of Saron Lutheran Church, Hoquiam

   Saron Lutheran Church is building a partnership with the Presbyterian church in their community. Saron Lutheran and First Presbyterian of Hoquiam hosted an Oktoberfest on September 30th The celebration was held at Saron Lutheran with all money raised being used for community projects in Grays Harbor. Projects include expanding First Presbyterian’s facility into a larger community garden, purchasing hygiene and school...
items for distribution by local churches and nonprofits, other assistance for families and neighbors in need, and funding Saron’s new monthly after school and free dinner program. Saron will provide after school activities and homework help for students starting at 1:30 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of every month, since the local schools have an early release day each month. A free community dinner will be offered from 5:30 – 6:30 following the after school activities.


Calendar

- **WELCA Conference** October 14, 8am-3:30pm at The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Olympia.
- **Synod-wide Reformation Worship Service**, Sunday, November 5 at 3pm at Lagerquist Hall on PLU campus.
- Synod Educational Gatherings: all locations 10am-3pm
  - Saturday, April 21, 2018 at First Lutheran, Poulsbo
  - Saturday, April 28, 2018 at Christ Lutheran, Lakewood
  - Saturday, May 19, 2018 at St. Andrew Lutheran, Vancouver
- **WELCA Spring Conference-** April 20-22, 2018 at Black Diamond Camp in Auburn
CARE PACKAGE SUGGESTIONS

Here are some helpful guidelines for organizations sending care packages to troops:

1. You must address your package to an actual individual in the unit. Chaplains frequently are willing to receive and distribute these boxes. Many deployed units post the contact information for the Commanding Officer (CO), Executive Officer (XO), Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL), and Chaplain on the unit’s official web page. Start by sending an e-mail to the chaplain asking what the troops would like or need. You can send this via the CO, XO, or SEL if necessary. Experience shows that some boxes arrive full of wonderful things. Delivering these items gives an opportunity for chaplains to face time with their troops. Other boxes have items that, while well intentioned, get thrown out because they are spoiled, invite pests, are impractical, or prohibited. Needs, wants, permissible, and prohibited items vary by location and commander.

2. If your organization sends toiletries, please send them separately from food items. Long mail routes and fluctuations in temperatures can leave even the best wrapped granola bars tasting like soap.

3. Any notes or cards in the boxes should not contain sender’s names, addresses, or emails. These items sometimes wind up in the wrong hands. Don’t put your personal information at risk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEND (based on input from troops at GTMO)</th>
<th>DON’T SEND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starbucks VIAs, 5 hour energy bottles (small shot sized version)</td>
<td>Socks, T-Shirts, etc., unless specifically requested by the unit or chaplain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual crystal light/kool aid packets designed for water bottles</td>
<td>Jars or bottles of food such as jam, jelly, peanut butter, honey, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing Cards, small word search, Sudoku, or crossword puzzle books</td>
<td>Magazines, books, board games, puzzles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laffy taffy, Starburst (both in small quantities)</td>
<td>Hard candy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts (individual packs)</td>
<td>Old candy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pistachios (individual packs)</td>
<td>Seasonal Candy (Halloween, Easter, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almonds (individual packs)</td>
<td>Chocolate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashews (individual packs)</td>
<td>Gum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef jerky (small or individual packs)</td>
<td>Carmels (or anything with Carmel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oreos (individual packs) and “Little Debbie” snacks (cupcakes, oatmeal cookies, HoHo)</td>
<td>Homemade items (they don’t survive the mail)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein bars, power bars, breakfast bars</td>
<td>Canned food (soup, ravioli, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheerios, all kinds (individual boxes)</td>
<td>Notes with personal emails or addresses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy snacks of any kind: individually packaged items made with real fruit or whole grain or similar ingredients.</td>
<td>Notes that are seasonal (Christmas, Easter, Valentines Day, etc) as boxes can be delayed up to 6 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A small note of thanks and “we are thinking of you” or words to that effect with your organization’s name and hometown only.</td>
<td>Notes addressed to “soldier” as many of our personnel are Airmen, Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal hygiene kits: one quart sized ziplock bag with travel size shave cream, wipes, powder, soap, shampoo, hand sanitizer, razors and an extra ziplock.</td>
<td>Any full size personal hygiene item. Please no large bottles of powder, shave cream, Costco packs of razors, full bottles of shampoo, etc.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
"On Sunday, July, a group from Grace Lutheran Church Port Townsend traveled to Washington Corrections Center for Women in Gig Harbor for the privilege and joy of leading worship and music. This was the third time we have had this honor and every time we proclaim that we come away blessed!

It is one of those Godly situations where you think you might be giving a gift, but what you receive is so much greater. We are blessed by the spirit and enthusiasm of the women who attend. They love to sing and they have a tremendous respect for Holy Communion and they crave prayer and Christian fellowship. During our visit we were doubly blessed as one of the women shared three songs that she had written and sang for us. It was a very sacred moment as others joined her in the choruses. God is surely working with Empowering Life, our Lutheran churches and in the Correction Center”. God bless, Pastor Coe Hutchinson

Fircrest Presbyterian and Redeemer Lutheran Churches have shared together the Compassion Weekend since 2013. Our mission is to reach out into our community to serve others through services and to meet individual needs. A special invitation came from the Washington Corrections Center for Women in Gig Harbor to begin a program to collect children’s books for them to take home after visiting with their mother’s. Books for all ages: Infants ~ teens are needed. Our hope and goal is this program will continue to grow, Empowering Life...Beyond Incarceration involves building relationships of trust, which will encourage, equip and empower positive life changing choices for women, men and families! God knows that people who are incarcerated lived in a different ‘prison’ before entering the penal system. God calls us to make Christ known in the World! A Promise of real freedom and forgiveness!

Individuals who believe their faith in God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, are the foundation and “rock” which nurtures the healing of their body, emotions, mind and spirit. Yet, the challenge lies in ‘letting go’ of their past burdens to live a God centered life! Sharing their faith with folks from home community is a gift!

"Let God transform you inwardly by a complete change in your mind, Then you will be able to know the will of