

# 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.*

November 2009



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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### Address

## These are the Days of Testing

By Bishop Robert D. Hofstad

**T**hese are days of testing!

As a very young child I can recall praying, as part of the Lord's Prayer, "lead us not into temptation" and assuming this had something to do with eating my vegetables and not just dessert. Now, in the more contemporary translation of the Lord's Prayer, many of us pray: "Save us from the time of trial."

I believe "save us from the time of trial" covers a larger landscape than does "lead us not into temptation." There are many trials that involve *more* than temptation alone. A serious accident or life-threatening injury can *test* the very fabric of our being. All of us have asked at times: Do I have enough faith and strength to hold on?

These are days of testing and trial! We rightly pray to God to save us.

Our nation and world are slowly recovering from the worst economic recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Even if we are not affected personally, we see members of our own family and our neighbors experiencing the hurtful results of lost jobs, wages, homes and livelihood.

At the very same time, in our own church, we are being tested by changing policy and practice. In August at our Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis, decisions were made that are now the source of serious conversation in every one of our congregations. As I travel throughout our Southwestern Washington Synod — from Federal Way to Vancouver, from Grays Harbor to the Cascade Mountains — I have experienced virtually every congregation engaged in serious, and at times strident, conversation and deliberation regarding these decisions. Each and every congregation is asking that most Lutheran of all questions: What does this mean?

During the first week of October I was in Chicago for the Conference of Bishops meeting. Much of our time together was involved in asking this question regarding the Minneapolis decisions: What does this mean?

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*Continues*

**Address:** *Days of testing*

As you might imagine, the range of beliefs and opinions regarding these decisions is nearly as broad within the Conference of Bishops as it is in the wider church. Some believe that the decision to make room for the ordination of qualified men and women in “publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships” is a decision that will both broaden and enrich the mission and ministry of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Others believe this decision to be a serious mistake, while still others of us can recognize the faithful theological and practical arguments on both sides. All of us pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guard and guide us as we live into these decisions. None of us has absolute certainty on this matter.

I can, however, tell you two things with certainty: First, I and my colleagues in the Conference of Bishops are firmly committed to take the language of the Minneapolis decisions very seriously. This is true particularly of the first resolution regarding human sexuality, namely, “bearing the burdens of one another” and respecting the “bound conscience” of all. This means, I believe, that it is inappropriate to refer to those who disagree with these decisions as “dissenters.” They are *not* dissenters; they firmly disagree with the decisions that were made. Likewise, it is not appropriate to refer to those who agree with the decisions as “victors.” They are called to both respect and uphold the right of those disagreeing to be faithful to their interpretation of scripture, their theology and beliefs. We are bound together in Jesus Christ, both by our baptismal calling, and by our membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Second, I can tell you that the Conference of Bishops is paying very close attention to the details of the new policies as they are formulated. To name just one example: What does it mean to expect of those in same-gender relationships that they be “publicly accountable”? To whom are they accountable? For what in particular? And how will this be carefully guarded? Of course, this raises even broader questions: How are those in *heterosexual* relationships being held “publicly accountable”? Will we have the same expectation of *these* relationships as those that are now under scrutiny?

These are days of testing indeed!

Please know that it is in just such times that I take my calling to be your bishop with utmost seriousness. I believe I am called to be faithful to Christ, to his church, and to all of you as members of the body of Christ.

I ask for your prayers in these days, not as a formality, but as the deepest yearning of my heart, as we are bound together in the Southwestern Washington Synod of the ELCA.

*Blessings in Christ,*

*Robert D. Hofstad*

### **Posting**

**Music director: Creator Lutheran Church of Sumner** 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 the church’s Web site at [www.creatorlc.ctsmemberconnect.net](http://www.creatorlc.ctsmemberconnect.net). The church’s address is 16702 South Tapps Drive East, Lake Tapps, WA 98391-9527 and its phone number is (253) 862-7700.

## **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
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
Shalishan, 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

**The Rev. Rachel Wangen-Hoch** was installed as associate pastor of intergenerational ministry at St. Mark of Lacey on Sept. 27.

**The Rev. Sarah Roemer** has accepted a call as interim pastor at All Saints of Auburn. She will be ordained in the Southwestern Texas Synod on Nov. 23.

**The Rev. Robert Olsen** retired Oct. 1. He has been on leave from call for three years and working with Lutheran Community Services Northwest.

The Synod Candidacy Committee approved entrance into the candidacy process for ordination for **Jonette Blakney** and **Chelsea Globe**.

## **News**

### **Hundreds Enjoy Reformation Sunday Hymn Festival**

TACOMA – A single trumpet’s “A Mighty Fortress” opened the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Reformation Sunday Hymn Festival at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Tacoma.

Some 300 persons from near and far were there to listen to choirs, soloists, a brass ensemble and even bagpipers commemorate Martin Luther’s works with inspired, well-loved masterpieces.

After a warm welcome by the Rev. Mark Woldseth, audience members, accompanied by Gloria Dei organist Marlys Griffis and the Evergreen Brass Quintet sang, “Lift High the Cross.”

Waves of joyful singing and playing swept church, its walls reverberating with the sound.

Bagpipers marched through the midst of the audience, and harpist Tealah Hill played in the ecumenical, cross-cultural service.

Sweet strains from choirs were enjoyed by an appreciative audience. The Normanna Male Chorus’s “River in Judea” was a show-stopper, and songs from the Mount Rainier Lutheran High School Choir included a heart-warming rendition of “The Lord Bless You and Keep You.”

Among the soloists were Pastor Woldseth’s daughter, mezzo soprano Hayley Woldseth, and Bert Gulhaugen.

Darlene Parsons of Gloria Dei again provided commentary about the music. She’s filled the role for five years.

The popular event is always held the afternoon of Reformation Sunday at Gloria Dei. Mark you calendar to attend next year.

## **News**

### **Three Congregations Move Toward Sharing Ministries**

*By the Rev. Jan Otto, United Lutheran Church*

TACOMA – The congregations of Hope, Bethlehem and United Lutheran churches have been meeting together since last spring. All three Tacoma-area congregations are in a time of transition, and are using this opportunity to discuss, dream and plan various cooperative ministries.

Over the summer, the three churches were represented at monthly gatherings by 60 to 80 members. Conversations were held about the challenges and hopes of each congregation, and commitments were made to work as a parish.

Now a steering committee has been formed with representatives of the three churches. The pastors working with each congregation are Nina Body, Randy Olson and Jan Otto.

A similar parish model was used in Tacoma more than 12 years ago by Bethel, Mount Zion, Hope and Gethsemane Lutheran churches. It was called the Wapato Parish, because Wapato Lake was the geographic center point. Three of those congregations, after years of cooperative work, decided to form one congregation, United Lutheran. This congregation meets in the former Gethsemane Lutheran Church building, which was remodeled for a new beginning in 1998.

There are no plans for any merging of these congregations. But they will be sharing multiple ministries in children, education, outreach, worship and service.

It is an exciting time for these Tacoma churches as they discern God’s will for the future. Your prayers are requested.

### **Messiah Continues Work Toward Second Site**

Vancouver – Leaders of Messiah Lutheran Church continue to make plans for a second worship site in north Clark County and now are considering three locations.

They include a banquet room at Tri-Mountain Gold Course, or restaurant or office space, according to the Rev. Peter Braafladt of Messiah.

Each has its own unique draw. The golf course has carts to carry elderly worshipers from the parking lot to worship. The restaurant is large, and the office space is relatively new. All the sites are in Ridgefield and two minutes from Interstate 5.

Messiah will have a “soft start” to services next spring and summer, followed by a “hard start” the Sunday after Labor Day, according to Pastor Braafladt.

The congregation recently hired Adam Smouse to be its new mission leader and Lynda Laird to be outreach coordinator. Both were officially commissioned Oct. 10 and 11.

Laird now is organizing focus groups in Ridgefield to help figure out what the community’s expectations are for a new worship option.

“These focus groups will help us determine what expectations people would hope for in a new church in this community, what are the ministries already being done by other churches, and how we might offer something different and complementary to what is already going on within the religious community,” Pastor Braafladt said.

### ***Have a story?***

Submit information for Moments for Mission, the synod’s monthly e-newsletter, by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. Contact the synod office if you would like to receive copies.

## News

### **Women Meet for Annual Convention**

AUBURN – Again this year, the workshops at the annual convention of the Southwestern Washington Synodical Women’s Organization offered a great opportunity for participants to grow their prayer power and learn new skills.

From card-making to quilting to scrap-booking, the convention held Oct. 2 and 3 at Messiah Lutheran Church had it all.

Dee Ann Hoff of Christ Lutheran Church of Lakewood showed her audience how to make “faith” scrapbooks for purposes they’d probably never thought of. To teach faith in children, make an ABC scrapbook with them, finding simple Bible lessons or passages that go with the letter.

“That teaches the child not only faith formation, but letters,” she said.

Create scrapbooks to mark baptisms, confirmations, marriages and deaths, she suggested. At church, consider making one for a pastor’s ordination or retirement, or the retirement of a longtime employee. Also at church, try one that celebrates someone’s ministry.

At another workshop, Ruth Brigden of St. Mark Lutheran Church of Lacey shared memories of a journey she and others from St. Mark took last year to Tanzania to support the Safi Project, which supports that country’s poorest secondary-school students. They gave the students oranges and bananas. The students had never seen such fruits before, and loved them.

“Emotionally, it was very difficult for me to see how little they had,” Brigden said. Clean water is the priority of many villages in Tanzania, she said. More about the Safi project is at [www.safischoolproject.com](http://www.safischoolproject.com).

The women’s convention was made cheery and warm by banners brought by many of the women that were placed throughout Messiah. With proclamations “Behold! Hope for a New Day” and “Here I Am; Send Me,” participants couldn’t help but be energized.

## Upcoming events

### **Global Formation Event Nov. 13 and 14 in Olympia**

The popular Global Formation Event this year will be held Nov. 13 and 14 at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd of Olympia.

The event that brings all people interested or active in global mission together with a rich array of presenters and resources starts at 8 a.m. Friday, runs all day, and continues through the first half of Saturday. Registration is from 8 to 9:30 a.m. Friday. The cost is \$35, and the church is located at 1601 North St. SE, Olympia. For more information, contact Missy Tade at [mtade@goodshepherdolympia.com](mailto:mtade@goodshepherdolympia.com) Following is a general schedule, subject to change:

#### **Friday:**

**8 a.m.:** Registration  
**9:30 a.m.:** General plenary session  
**Noon:** Lunch and mission stories  
**1:30 p.m.:** Congregational team training  
**3:30 p.m.:** Skill-building workshops  
**6 p.m.:** Dinner and mission stories  
**7:30 p.m.:** Evening prayer

#### **Saturday**

**8 a.m.:** Refreshments and mission stories  
**10 a.m.:** Skill-building workshops  
**Noon:** Lunch and mission stories  
**1:30 p.m.:** Wrap-up

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Lutheran Marriage Encounter in November**

Lutheran Marriage Encounter offers a workshop for couples seeking to re-energize their marriages. It takes place Nov. 6 to 8 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Tukwila. The cost is \$45. For more information or to register, visit [www.godlovesmarriage.org](http://www.godlovesmarriage.org) or call (800) 235-1010.

### **Forum: What do Lutherans Do Now?**

Following the recent vote by the ELCA churchwide assembly on sexuality, a forum has been scheduled to discuss the future of the ELCA. Speakers, who will present differing viewpoints, will include the Rev. Ron Hoyum, assistant to Bishop Robert D. Hofstad. The forum takes place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 21 at Christ Lutheran Church of Lakewood. For further information or to register, call (253) 212-2998.

### **Mark Your Calendars for 2010 Preaching Workshop**

The annual Byberg Preaching Workshop, to take place May 3 to 5 in Coeur d' Alene, 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., and specializes in anthropology of the early Christian period.

The workshop, designed to develop the skills of ELCA preachers, will be at Trinity Lutheran Church, 812 North Fifth St., Coeur d' Alene. For more information, visit <http://bybergpreaching.wordpress.com/> or contact the Rev. Terry Kylo at (360) 770-2774 or [tkyllo@verizon.net](mailto:tkyllo@verizon.net).

## **Youth**

### **2010 Extravaganza Registration Opens**

Registration has started for the 2010 Youth Extravaganza, the ELCA's premier youth and family ministry continuing education and networking event.

The multi-faceted event will be in Charlotte, N.C., between Feb. 4 and 8. As many as 600 adults who work with young people are expected to take part in the conference that connects the best and brightest trainers with congregations' youth workers. To learn more, send an e-mail to [info@elcaymnet.org](mailto:info@elcaymnet.org).

### **Summer Music Academy Planning Now Under Way**

The 2010 Lutheran Summer Music Academy will take place June 20 to July 18 at Luther College of Decorah, Iowa. Each summer, the academy offers high school-age vocalists and musicians from all faith backgrounds an opportunity to hone their skills in the rich tradition of Lutheran music. Scholarship help is available. To learn more or to register, contact Admissions Director Susan Olstad at (888) 635-6583 or [solstad@lutheransummermusic.org](mailto:solstad@lutheransummermusic.org). To learn more about Lutheran Summer Music, visit [www.lutheransummermusic.org](http://www.lutheransummermusic.org).

## Our Congregations

*From newsletters across the synod, for keeping up*

**Namibian pastor visits:** The Rev. Dean L. du Toit, a pastor from Namibia, visited four Southwestern Washington Synod congregations including **Gloria Dei of Olympia, St. Mark's by The Narrows of Tacoma, Zion of Camas and Faith of Shelton**. This synod has a companion relationship with one in Namibia, and the visit is being sponsored by the individual congregations, the synod office and others. Bishop Robert D. Hofstad is planning to lead a contingent to Namibia next June.

**Blessing gets some ink:** A Sept. 27 Blessing of the Animals event at **First Lutheran Community Church of Port Orchard** was covered by the local weekly, the Port Orchard Independent. The Rev. Joe Smith, husband of the Rev. Melanie Wallschlaeger of the synod office, was pictured along with retired Rev. George Larson. Also conducting a blessing of the animals was **St. Mark of Lacey** on Oct. 4.

**Turns 30: Agnus Dei of Gig Harbor** celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Oct. 30 with a dinner and evening of music by baritone Charles Robert Stephens. Proceeds from the evening benefited the church's building fund.

**Eating locally:** Produce grown over the summer at the garden at **Christ of Belfair** is being put to good use right at the church, with the kids at the church's child-care center eating fresh, vitamin-filled fruits and vegetables.

**Bazaars Coming: Resurrection of Tacoma** holds its holiday bazaar from 2 to 7 p.m. Nov. 13 and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 14 at the church at 4301 Browns Point Blvd. NE; (253) 927-3301.

**Finally, the kitchen they wanted:** A large, new kitchen at **United Lutheran of Tacoma** was dedicated Oct. 18 following a decade of fundraising by the women of the church that resulted in \$50,000. Members of Vine of Life Samoan Church, which meets at United, joined in the dedication. The kitchen, which is adjacent to a gym, is available for use by others. To make arrangements, call the church office at (253) 475-3175.

**New carpet: All Saints' of Auburn** is set to replace carpet in its narthex, fellowship hall and offices after fundraising is completed.

**Big thanks gotten: Jack Miller**, longtime caretaker of the buildings and grounds at Hope of Tacoma, was honored Sept. 13 with a certificate of appreciation and the message "And don't stop now!"

**Success:** A recent garage sale at **All Saints' of Auburn** netted \$1,400.

**W.H.O.:** This fall will mark the seventh year for the Winter Hospitality Overflow program undertaken by some of the synod's Vancouver-area churches. Under it, families who are homeless are given a roof over their heads and other help during winter months, when other shelters are at capacity. Last year, W.H.O. delivered 8,842 bed-nights. Some 1,550 volunteers and \$40,000 in donations made it happen, according to the **St. Andrew of Vancouver** newsletter.

**Reformation celebration: First of Tacoma's** celebration of Reformation Sunday on Oct. 25 included a churchwide potluck.

**Upgrade planned: Ocean Park Lutheran Church** is planning repairs to its building caused by termites, as well as work on its heating system.

**Southern style:** Women of **Pilgrim of Puyallup** on Oct. 9 had a Southern-style dinner at the make-believe Whistle Stop Café, then watched the Southern-themed moving "Fried Green Tomatoes" before discussing the spiritual aspects of the film.

## People

**Something about the new intern: Matt Keadle**, the new intern for the state's Lutheran Public Policy Office in Seattle, is a Chicago native who did his undergraduate work at Valparaiso University. He did his seminary work at Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago.

"My early pastoral identity was shaped by my experiences in the city, working at a homeless shelter and in culturally and racially diverse urban congregations," he said. Keadle is with the Public Policy Office until next year, and is available for congregational visits. Visit [www.lppowa.org](http://www.lppowa.org).

## Resources

### **Lenten Preaching Series Offered**

Pastors searching for a 2010 Lenten theme are invited to consider "Water for Your Soul: The Baptismal Plunge with Christ," a free five-week series. To learn more, visit the Rev. Glenn Borreson's Web site at [www.waterforyoursoul.com](http://www.waterforyoursoul.com).

## Bulletin board

### **ELCA Mission Investment Fund Offers Gifts for Youth**

Christmas is coming and Margie Fiedler, the synod's representative to the ELCA Mission Investment Fund, suggests a gift for children under age 16 that will grow with time. For an initial investment as little as \$50 in MissionFuture4KIDZ through the Mission Investment Fund, family members can create an account that will save for their child's future. To learn how to set one up in time for Christmas, contact Fiedler at (208) 664-7973 or [margie.fiedler@elca.org](mailto:margie.fiedler@elca.org). More information on this and other investments is at [elca.org/mif](http://elca.org/mif).

## Calendar

**Nov. 6 to 8:** Marriage encounter, *see Page 6*

**Nov. 13 and 14:** ELCA Global Event, Good Shepherd of Olympia, *see Page 5*

**Nov. 14:** Lutheran Community Services Northwest dinner auction, Mount Rainier Lutheran High School, Tacoma, (253) 473-0579

**Nov. 21:** Sexuality forum, Tacoma, *see Page 6*

**January 24 to 25, 2010:** Prayer Retreat, Seabeck Christian Conference Center

**January 26 to 27, 2010:** Bishop's Convocation, Seabeck Christian Conference Center

**Feb. 4 to 8:** Youth Extravaganza, *see Page 6*

**March 13, 2010:** Olympic Cluster Spring Celebration, Southwestern Washington Synodical Women's Organization

**March 20, 2010:** South Sound Cluster Event, Southwestern Wa. Synodical Women's Organization, Faith of Shelton

**March 27, 2010:** Narrows Cluster Event, Southwestern Washington Synodical Women's Organization, Peace of Tacoma

**April 23 to 25, 2010:** Spring Retreat, Southwestern Wa. Synodical Women's Organization, Black Lake Bible Camp

**May 3 to 5:** Preaching workshop, Idaho, *see Page 6*

**May 14 to 15:** Southwestern Washington Synod Assembly, Hilton Hotel, Vancouver, Wash.

**June 20 to July 18:** Summer Music Academy, Iowa, *see Page 6*

**June 25 to 27, 2010:** Region 1 Gathering, Southwestern Washington Synodical Women's Organization, Kalispell, Mont.

**Aug. 21, 2010:** Southwestern Washington Synodical Women's Organization, Bible Study Event, Silverdale

**Oct. 8 to 9, 2010:** Convention, Southwestern Washington Synodical Women's Organization, Trinity of Longview

**July 12 to 17, 2011:** Triennial Convention and Gathering, Women of the ELCA, Spokane

*End of newsletter*