



Montana Synod Assembly

June 4, 2010

Summary I

Dan Lehman, Editor of The Lutheran Magazine
 Margie Fiedler, Mission Investment Fund

Assembly officially opened by Bishop Jessica Crist

Credentials Report:

- Clergy 89
- Lay 146
- Visitors 60

Adoption of Rules of Assembly passed

Introductions:

Synod Council Members:

- Vice-President-Jake Block
- Secretary-Peggy Paugh Leuzinger
- Treasurer-Harold Spilde
- Youth Rep-Victoria Bull
- Bear Paw Cluster-Sue Ost, Havre
- Beartooth Cluster-Kim Wilker, Red Lodge
- Crazy Mountain Cluster-Meredith
- Hamann, Bozeman
- Five Valleys Cluster-Scott Southwick, Hamilton
- Flathead Cluster-Gary Cockrell, Kalispell, FLBC
- Fort Peck Cluster-Christine Holler-Dinsmore, Wolf Point
- Golden Triangle Cluster-Cheryl Muncy, Chester
- Great Divide Cluster-John Mundinger, Helena
- Northeast Cluster-Vacant
- Russell Country Cluster- Tom Gossack, Great Falls
- Shepherd Cluster-Mike Young, Billings
- Southeast Cluster-George Karres, Sidney
- Parliamentarian-Lowell Anderson

Churchwide Representative Beth Lewis, CEO and President of Augsburg Fortress

Keynoter— Rev. Dr. Jessicah Duckworth, Assistant Professor of Christian Formation at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

Other Guests:

Bishop Elaine Stanovsky, UMC
 Evelyn Soto, Associate Executive Director for the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission Unit.
 Rev. Paul Hanson, Director of the Fund for Leaders, the seminary scholarship endowment of the ELCA

Deans:

Bearpaw-Brad Ulgenes, Havre
 Beartooth-Tom Peterman, Billings
 Crazy Mountains-Steve Paugh Leuzinger, Livingston
 Five Valleys-Chris Flohr, Missoula
 Flathead-Wayne Pris, Somers
 Fort Peck-Greg Holler-Dinsmore, Wolf Point
 Golden Triangle-Patty Callaghan, Sunburst
 Great Divide- Doug Vold, Helena
 Northeast-Barb Westhoff, Westby
 Russell Country-Steve Van Gilder, Great Falls
 Shepherd-Tim Tostengard, Billings
 Southeast-George Karres, Sidney

Church Council Rep – Phil Wold

People New to the Synod:

Rev. Larry Quanbeck, from Pacifica Synod to Redeemer Lutheran, Great Falls, Intentional Interim, 6/5/09;
 Rev. Nel Lindorff, UCC, to Savage and Skaar, contract, 6/1/09;
 Rev. Mark Lundquist from the Southwestern Texas Synod to Chaplain at Benefis Health Systems in Great Falls, 8/31/09
 Rev. Leonard Shatkus, from NE Ohio Synod, to Pastor at St. Lukes, Shelby, 9/1/09;
 Rev. Lon Bechtel, retired from Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod to interim at Our Redeemer's, Helena, 10/26/09;
 Rev. Elizabeth Roebke, from PLTS to American Lutheran in Billings as Associate Pastor, 11/4/09;
 Rev. Joel Westby, from Eastern North Dakota Synod to Atonement in Missoula, Interim Pastor;
 Rev. Richard Barry Fritts, from the NE Pennsylvania Synod to Plentywood Parish 3/15/10;
 Rev. Brenda Satrum from SW Washington to Faith, Hamilton, 4/1/10.

Secretary's Report, See page 11 in Synod Yearbook
Adoption of 2009 Minutes

Report of the Nominating Committee

Churchwide Assembly Voting Members:

Clergy

Rev. Dan Haskett
Rev. Aprille Jordan
Rev. William Spencer
Rev. Tim Tostengard
Rev. Amanda Liggett
Rev. Carol Karres

Lay Female:

Sandy Lange
Lidia Perry
Trudi Schmidt
Mait Board
Kathy Slehofer
Tonia Fisher

Lay Male:

Wayne Saverud
Curt Quist
Tom Gossack
Eric Bueling
Lee Christianson
Andrew Smith

Youth/Young Adult:

Amanda Gerber
Amy Walker

Committee on Discipline

Rev. Steve Van Gilder
Rev. Jean Larson

Synod Secretary:

Rev. Peggy Paugh Leuzinger

Lutheran Student Foundation:

John Munding
Rev. Larry Stappler
Rejoice Mudzimiri

Jennifer Asselstine

Rev. Tom Peterman
Lacey Gallagher

Kogodus:

Barbara Davis
Juanita Hogeson
John Trangmoe

Additional Nominations from the Floor:

Audrey Rydbom
Robert Nagy

First Ballot was taken

Report of the Bishop

Bishop Crist reported that the world has changed since we were young. 9-11 changed how we felt safe. We now need passports to lunch in Canada and have concrete barriers surrounding our State capitol. Economically, we have high unemployment, slashed pensions and home foreclosures. As well as the Churchwide vote in August. No longer is the sky the limit. But God is faithful amidst the

change. Change is hard, even Moses didn't want to leave Egypt. We do not have the numbers we use to have. What we do have is the great unchurched of Montana and Wyoming-the casino workers, snowbirds, prisoners, the forgotten and the prominent. We are a people who know that we are loved.

Currently we have a dozen churches who have left the ELCA and half a dozen more deciding if they will leave or not. When a member pulls away it affects us all. Synod offerings are down, yet we operate in hope and our budget for 2011 is based on hope. Synod benevolence is a gift we share with others. Thank you to all congregations who have maintained or increased giving. If your congregation has cut back on giving to the Synod, talk about it.

Communication in the church can also be accomplished through the ELCA Social Statements, such as the one on education, that gives a voice to the issues of the day. Other Social Statements in the works are on generics (2011) and criminal justice (2013). Through these Social Statements change comes about through communication and education.

“God is faithful. Changes can be hard but God is faithful.”



Happy 50th Anniversary to Ernie and Jo Larsen



Church Council

Phil Wold gave his report on his term on the Churchwide Council. There are 33 people on the Churchwide Council and they meet in Chicago twice a year. He said that it has been a humbling experience being on the council. “Thank you for the privilege to serve on Church council”. He is available to talk to either by email, pastorphil@actaccess.net, phone (307) 672-2411.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was given by Harold Spilde. The 2009 and 2010 budget can be found on page 105 in the Synod year book and directory.

Proposed Budget

The proposed budget was introduced by Rev. Gary Cockrell. Of 130 congregations 50 haven't given in the first 4 months but he is confident that they will after they see the vision of the Synod. There is raises proposed for the Synod staff. Montana is at the bottom for what we honor our office of bishop.

Region I

Rev. Shelley Wickstrom Regional Coordinator for Ministry Leadership brought greetings from Region 1. She thanked the Montana Synod for the leadership we share with the other Synods of Region 1.

MIF

Margie Fiedler of the Mission Investment Fund told how the

MIF is feeding the hungry, showers for a homeless center, a new dining hall at FLBC. Every dollar invested is used for mission work. If you invest, thank you and if you don't consider doing so. Margie gave a certificate to John Lund for Campus Ministry and to Prince of Peace, Missoula for their new sewer.

Board of Pensions

Andrea Arey from the ELCA Board of Pensions greeted the assembly. She informed us on how the BoP serves all rostered clergy and laity of the church. The focus of the BoP is on wellness and their motto is "Healthy Leaders enhance Lives".

Campus Ministry

Tim Spring, MSU Bozeman and John Lund, UM, Missoula thanked the assembly for their support of this vital ministry. They said that the way we can contribute to campus ministry is

1. Give names of students
2. Become friends of campus ministry
3. Pledge drive from friends and sponsors.

LSS

Tom Peterman, Lutheran Social Services reminded us that if we want to be a church in mission, then we need to start by picking up our bible, helping our neighbor in need. He told us how LSS changes lives for adoptive parents, birth mothers and the child being adopted.

Elections Results

Clergy:

- Rev. Dan Heskett, Rev. Tim Tostengard, Rev. Carol Karres

Lay Female:

- Sandy Lange, Trudi Schmidt, Tonia Fisher Clark

Lay Male

- Wayne Saverud, Eric Bueling, Lee Christianson

Youth/Young Adult:

- Amy Walker

Committee on Discipline

- Rev. Steve Van Gilder

Synod Secretary:

- Rev. Peggy Paugh Leuzinger

Lutheran Student Foundation

- John Munding, Rev. Larry Stappler, Rejoice Mudzimiri, Jennifer Asselstine, Rev. Tom Peterman, Lacey Gallagher

Kogodus:

- Barbara Davis, Juanita Hogenson, John Trangmoe

Churchwide

Evelyn Soto, Associate Executive Director for the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission Unit brought greetings from Presiding Bishop Paul Hanson.

Evangelical Mission

Dave Peters he is our mission money at work. He used a tree and 1Cor 13:13 to illustrate "missional" focus of the Evangelical Mission,

- Faith
- Hope
- Love

Other areas of involvement include:

- New Starts
- Prison ministry
- Resort communities
- American Indian ministry
- Rapid growth area ministry
- Renewal and Development
- Mission interpretation and support

Dave also told us that 1 in 7 of the people of South Africa are infected with HIV-AIDES. That hundreds of thousands of children are without parents. And how a local congregation ask what can they do to help. They came up with providing a home and support women who have raised their own children and would be willing to raise up to 5 of the children without parents.

Pacific Lutheran University And Concordia College

Greetings were given.

NRIT

Jenny Kunka, Director of the Northern Rockies Institute of Theology reminded us that NRIT has been around since 1978. Their slogan for this year is "30 Years, 50 hours" referring to the number of hours a pastor is asked to attend each year in continuing education. NRIT is here to support pastors and encourages congregations to support their pastor in attending continuing education events. The NRIT web page is www.NRIT.org.

Prison Ministry

Rev. Chris Flohr, Rev. Melanie Martin-Dent and Greg Karlsgodt talked about the ELCA establishing a congregation inside the walls of the Montana State Prison at Deer Lodge. They are at the point of asking congregations and individuals to pledge a 3 to 5 year sponsorship for the prison congregation. Currently there is a Bible study and a monthly worship service given by the Lutherans. The hope is to have a full time pastor.

Growing in God's Field God's Story Going Viral

October 8-9 in Helena Montana. Come and learn how to reach out to the technology savvy.

