

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION



Stepping Out in Faith

The Rev. Diane Eggemeyer, a cradle Lutheran from Baltimore, considers herself a bit of a fish out of water in hot, dry Texas.

But it's the place God has called her to be.

Pastor Eggemeyer serves at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Miles, Texas, in the heart of ranching country.

Her road to ordination was unexpected, to say the least. Pastor Eggemeyer traveled the world as a military spouse then, newly divorced, worked in sales for years. While teaching Sunday school she felt the need for "more Bible." That quest eventually led to her certification as an Associate in Ministry.

Then one day Kevin Kanouse, bishop of the ELCA Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, asked Pastor Eggemeyer to fill in for three congregations without a pastor, including Trinity.

It was a short-term arrangement, he told her.

But Pastor Eggemeyer quickly realized that she was only a quick fix for a long-term problem. While she was doing her best, her members needed her to do more.

She couldn't baptize. She couldn't marry or consecrate the sacrament. In a tiny rural town like Miles, calling a pastor was difficult, if not impossible.

Struck by her members' desire for a full experience of congregational life, Pastor Eggemeyer received her call to ministry.

But she couldn't leave Trinity to attend seminary full time. So Kanouse nominated her as a candidate for Theological Education for Emerging Ministries, an alternate preparation process designed for leaders whose gifts have been named by their communities.

Pastor Eggemeyer says, "We're very careful not to turn this into how we make pastors. For most congregations, the regular seminary route is the way to go. But for my little rural church, this was the only option. I was here. And I was eager to get going."

She thanks her beloved members for their wholehearted support. And of the path she's traveled to Miles, Texas, the pastor says, "I stepped out in faith, and God just dragged me along.... I feel so blessed."

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