



Connections

Newsletter of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod

INDEX

click on a link to go to:

[In our prayers](#)

[Bishop's Weekly Emails Online](#)

ARTICLES

[Bishop's Corner: Synod Assembly: Spiritual Growth](#)

[Lutheran Bishop from Central African Republic Visits TLGC Synod](#)

[Peggy Hahn: Our Commitment to Central African Republic](#)

[Stories of Faith in Action](#)

[Gay Zimmerman, Synod Worship Excellence Team: The Three Days](#)

[Mission Endowment Fund: Scholarships Now Available to TEEM Candidates](#)

[Gulf Coast Men in Mission 2010 Gathering Highlights](#)

[Lutheran Summer Music 2010: A Unique Opportunity for Young Organists](#)

.....

Synod Assembly 2010

Walking the Way: A Synod Assembly for Spiritual Pilgrims

By Mandy Faucett,
Event Coordinator, TX-LA Gulf Coast Synod



Hopefully you've caught the message by now that this year's Synod Assembly will be a new experience for everyone! As we gather around an emphasis on spiritual growth, we will also have a few new

experiences:

- A new **Friday-Sunday Assembly pattern**, which we hope will help congregations bring a voting member group that is more diverse in age
- A **justice immersion learning experience**, where participants will encounter various ways of doing justice back home in their own communities
- An on-site **prayer chapel** with a variety of interactive prayer experiences and prayer chapel staff who will be available to pray with you at specific times during the Assembly

Jesus often retreated to be attentive to prayer and, we surmise, other forms of contemplative ministry in the midst of the healing, teaching, preaching, walking, traveling, and serving that occupied his days. So too, we are striving to infuse the Assembly with a strong



sense of the holy, so that as we accomplish the necessary business of our organization, we may also be stretched in our own spiritual journeys.

Spiritual Pilgrims – Here and Now!

As you read this, six teams are working and preparing to offer you an opportunity to learn skills for re-rooting in our own neighborhoods. For the first time ever at a Synod Assembly, we take an intentional recess from business to make space to practice our spirituality in New Orleans.

This is more than a service project. (By definition, a project can be completed.) Together we will embrace the tension between charity and justice as we confront the systems that keep people stuck in poverty.

Charity: Responding to the needs of hurting people in our world. This is expressed through food pantries, homeless shelters, programs and service, etc.

Justice: Changing the systems to reduce suffering and removing barriers that keep people separated. This is expressed through advocacy, community organizing, cultural immersions and accompaniment, etc.

Both responses are important, yet only justice has the capacity to make lasting changes that reduce the need for charity. Doing justice is as much about learning and taking action that changes systems than it is about a service project or mission trip.

Preparing for your experience

- **Your Preferences:** When you registered for the Assembly, you indicated which experience you wanted to be a part of. If you have changed your mind, you may log back in to your online account and change your preference. Please note that assignments will be made on April 1, so changes cannot be made after that date.

- **Getting ready before you come:** You will be notified in advance of the Assembly to which experience you have been assigned. You will also receive any information you will need to prepare, such as any special equipment or items, and perhaps some background materials to read before you come.

- **Getting to your assigned location:** Transportation is being provided primarily in private cars. You will be given your car assignment on the day of the justice experience. If you are willing to be a driver, please indicate so on your online registration form.

BULLETIN BOARD

LINKS

[Congregations in Transition as of 01/19/10](#)

[Mission Support Information](#)

Synod Web Site:

www.gulfcoastsynod.org

Children, Youth & Family Ministry:

www.soggyshoes.org

Disaster Relief:

www.futurewithhope.org

ELCA Churchwide Web Site: www.elca.org

Global Mission:

www.elca.org/GlobalMission

8.8 MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE STRIKES CHILE

Powerful earthquake strikes overnight. ELCA church partners are helping with the early assessment. See www.elca.org/disaster and www.elca.org/news.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has committed an initial \$40,000, through ELCA International Disaster Response, for this past weekend's powerful earthquake in Chile, according to a report from the ELCA Global Mission Executive Committee.

For information contact:

John Brooks, Director (773) 380-2958 or news@elca.org
<http://www.elca.org/news>

Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/elcanews>

Haiti Earthquake

Our thoughts and prayers are still with the millions in Haiti grieving loved ones and scrambling to find food, aid, shelter and medical treatment following the 7.0 earthquake that rocked the country on Tuesday, January 12. The *largest earthquake in two centuries hits west of Port-au-Prince* .. ELCA partners with relief and government agencies mobilizing to provide aid and assessment. See

Most importantly, ***please show up for your assignment, as people are preparing for you.*** Lunch will be provided at each location based on the number of people who have registered, and materials are being planned for the number of expected participants. Don't miss this opportunity to experience spirituality in a hands-on way while in the city of New Orleans.

Choosing Voting Members 101

How does your congregation choose voting members who will attend the Synod Assembly each year? Maybe one of the scenarios sounds familiar:

- Whoever was unlucky enough to miss the council meeting where voting members were requested got "volunteered" to be a voting member.
- People can't miss work for something like this, so the only people we should ask to be voting members are the retired folks.
- Mr. X really wants his voice heard on an issue he feels strongly about, so let's have him be a voting member.

What if, instead of defaulting to your "normal" method of deciding who goes to the Synod Assembly, you mix it up a bit? What if you made a goal that at least one of your voting members was under the age of 40 (or, gasp, under the age of 30)? What if individuals from the age group that is largely silent in our churches (ages 18-25) were intentionally invited to the table to be a part of building and growing our Church?

You
g
peopl
e
have
a
view
of the
world
that
is
fresh
and
that
is



needed in our Church. Yes, it may mean they need to take a vacation day, and it's true that for some, that is

www.elca.org/disaster

**In memorium:
Benjamin Larson,
1984 – 2010. Learn
more about Ben and his
songs. Read the
memorial sermon of Pastor
Rafael Malpica Padilla,
executive director of
Global Mission. View
Ben's memorial service.**

See

www.elca.org/globalmission

A SHOUT OUT FOR EASTER GREETINGS

You and your congregation are invited to make and send Easter greetings to ELCA missionaries, troops and other service personnel. Learn how at <http://blogs.elca.org/handinhand/post/ot-g-easter-25022010/>

**LUTHERAN WORLD
FEDERATION:** As we pray for the people in Haiti making their way through this crisis, stay connected with others who are following the events. See www.elca.org/lwf

DISCIPLE PROJECT

June 27-July 1, 2010
At Texas Lutheran University



not feasible. But many people have multiple weeks of paid vacation time each year, and chances are they may be happy to use one of those days to be a part of the wider church and to experience the body of Christ in a different way. As a synod staff and Assembly planning team, we have been working hard to make Synod Assembly not just a business meeting (although that is a necessary part of the Assembly), but also a time of learning and growing together as we consider vitally important priorities in our Church. It is essential that our younger generations are also intentionally invited to be part of shaping the future of our Church.

So...if your congregation does not yet know who your voting members will be, please give some prayerful consideration to bringing a variety of people from your congregation with a variety of gifts and a variety of backgrounds. Our Synod Assemblies will be better for it.

Important Assembly Dates

Keep a close eye on your calendar! There are some important dates coming up that you need to be aware of:

March 15:

- Deadline for written scholarship requests
- Deadline to reserve display space at the Ministry Fair
- Deadline for media submissions (partner videos, etc.)

March 31:

- Deadline to reserve hotel rooms at discounted rates
- Deadline to receive a full refund with written cancellation notice

April 12: Online registration closes

April 16-18: Synod Assembly in New Orleans

Save the Dates for 2010 Fall Leadership Summits and 2011 Theological Conference!

Plans are in the works for our **2010 Fall Leadership Summits**. These two-day events are designed to go deeper into the focus on Spiritual Growth that will be introduced at this year's Assembly. Each Fall Leadership Summit will consist of a Friday afternoon session for professional church leaders, addressing issues specific to your leadership roles, and a Saturday session for church

There is nothing quite like it in the church! Imagine people of all ages, from different cultures coming together to learn things they are most passionate about for the purpose of serving our world as a Christian leader!

This week-long learning community includes people who have finished **8th grade through adults**. Participants are part of a large community, as well as committing to one of the following learning tracks, where they gain skills and deepen their biblical and theological understandings in their area of passion.

- [Doing Justice](#)
- [Peer Ministry](#)
- [Naturally Curious](#)
- [Sports & Fitness](#)
- [Camp Hope](#)
- [Creative Expression- Art 1 & 2](#)
- [Creative Expression- Dance](#)
- [Creative Expression- Drama](#)
- [Creative Expression- Music](#)
- [Children's & Family Ministry](#)
- [Preaching as God-Speech](#)

Each year tracks are designed to meet the changing world we live in. Led by teams of trained professionals and emerging leaders who offer their gifts, The Disciple Project is one of the most unique experiences in our church. Together we enjoy incredible Christian music from nationally

professionals and lay leaders where skills will be learned and resources will be shared. It's also a great opportunity for your congregational leaders to network with others.

Locations are still being determined but please save these dates and start letting your lay leaders know too!

Western Sector: August 13-14

Eastern Sector: August 27-28

Houston Sector: September 10-11

The dates and location for the **2011 Tri-Synodical Theological Conference** have been set! We will be meeting **January 24-26, 2011** at the Moody Gardens Hotel and Conference Center, which has once again given us the best rate and meeting package in town. We are delighted to host Marcus Borg, our keynote speaker, as he presents "Back to the Future: How the first century Christian community can teach us to be 21st century Christian leaders".

Synod Assembly: Spiritual Growth



By Bishop Mike Rinehart

This year's synod assembly is going to be unique in every conceivable way.

"Walking the Way: An Assembly for Spiritual Pilgrims," April 16-18, 2010, will be held at The

Sheraton New Orleans Hotel (500 Canal). This assembly is in New Orleans; it's in April; it's Friday-Sunday; we're focusing on spiritual growth; it's going to be a time to serve.

It's in New Orleans. Ten percent of this synod's congregations are in Louisiana. It takes an extra effort for 90% of the synod to head over to New Orleans, but it's worth it, for many reasons. New Orleans is the best town in the U.S. for large gatherings, with the density of hotels and restaurants. It can't be beat. It's a place in our synod that's been hard hit due to Hurricane Katrina. Going there reminds us of what they have to go through every time we have assembly in Houston or Galveston. Our pastors and congregations



respected artists, challenging Bible study, cross-generational conversations and cross-cultural giftedness.

Cost: \$350, but you can take a \$25 discount if you get your forms and payment in by April 19!

Final registration deadline is Monday, May 31, 2010.

For more information, including an 8 page brochure, visit www.soggyshoes.org and click on Disciple Project.

.....
March 20
Connections Deadline

Connections goes out monthly the first of the month. If you have an article for the **April issue**, please submit it by **March 20**. Send articles to Susan Rinehart at

susanrinehart@suddenlink.net

Executive Director
Triumphant Love
Lutheran Church
9508 Great Hills Trail
Austin, TX 78759

Triumphant Love Lutheran Church (ELCA) a dynamic congregation in northwest Austin (tllc.org), is transitioning to the Carver governance model. We seek a full-time Executive Director to work under the general direction of a strategically focused Council,

over there are wired for Southern hospitality. The Saints. Need I say more?

It's in April. Many have asked us to consider different times than the end of May/beginning of June, which conflicts with graduations, finals, etc. We're giving it a try. As it turned out, the Sheraton only had a few dates that worked for us as we tried to work around Easter, Mother's Day and several other dates that would have been problematic. This was one of them. I hope the date works for you, but if not, let us know on the evaluation and we'll adapt.

It's Friday-Sunday, as opposed to Thursday-Saturday. This is something else that has been proposed. In a survey we did last year, people said they were willing to give it a try by a 2:1 margin. So, here we are. The reason is obvious: many folks have trouble getting to an assembly that begins on Thursday because of work. A weekend makes it easier for the majority of folks who have a five-day work week. Not so apparent at first brush is the fact that we end up with very few young adults as a result. Inevitably, retired folks get selected, since they have the freedom to get away mid-week. While we need retired folks because of their wisdom and experience, we also want young people. The church is already older than the general population, and the assembly tends to have fewer young people than our congregations.

The biggest drawback to a Friday-Sunday assembly is the fact that the pastors will be out of the pulpit on that Sunday, April 18 (Easter 3C: Breakfast on the beach with Jesus). We are going to be putting out a guideline for doing a lay-led Service of the Word on that day. I will write a short message from me to you, bishop to congregation, that I invite you to read from the pulpit that Sunday. Sundays like this can strengthen a congregation by giving opportunities for lay leadership. More on that to come.

We're focusing on spiritual growth. This synod has said that after evangelism, their highest priority is growing people spiritually. Once they walk through the doors, how do we help them grow deep? We will engage practices ancient and modern to learn how to become communities of spiritual practice. We grow spiritually through prayer and worship, through service and giving.

and to lead volunteers and non-clergy staff in translating our vision into specific ministries. A complete description of the position is given at the above web site. Interested and qualified individuals should submit a detailed resume in electronic form to DirectorSearch@tllc.org.

.....
Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson Hosting Second Town Hall Forum



You are invited to tune in to Bishop Hanson's second online Town Hall forum on Sunday, March 7, at 4 p.m. CST.

There are so many easy ways to participate:

- Watch the event live from 4-5 p.m. CST at www.elca.org/townhall
- Log in to post questions
- Post comments using Facebook Connect
- Tweet about the event using the hashtags #ELCA and #BishopHanson
- Gather members of your congregation for

We will focus on stuff that really matters.

I ask you to think about two things as you are selecting people to come to this year's Synod Assembly. First, let's have young and old together. Encourage bright young leaders, and wise old sages to come and take part. Second, please choose leaders. The best assemblies involve those who are deeply involved in the congregation's ministry. Send your council president, and other people from your congregation council. Find key ministry leaders. Send people who can return home and actually put some things into motion.

Finally, it's going to be a time to serve. At this assembly we're going to do something we've never done before. We are embedding servant opportunities into the event. We grow spiritually through prayer, so we are going to pray. We grow spiritually through worship, so we are going to worship. We grow spiritually through serving, so we are going to serve. New Orleans needs it too. When the ELCA Youth Gathering was here last summer, 36,000 people served in this city, 12,000 per day. The impact was felt throughout the city. They're still talking about it. Instead of coming here and holing up in a hotel to do business, we are going to pray, worship, then roll up our sleeves and actually practice what we preach. Then we will come back and reflect on our serving, our encounter with those who are suffering, and do our business in light of those realities, rather than the non-reality of a hotel ballroom. Do you see where I'm going with this?

Our schedule will be tight. Some business will have to be expedited. This is an experiment. We might never do this again. Or we might discover a new way of coming together. When living our faith, praxis is at least important as theory. Faith without works is dead. We want to be doers of the Word, not just hearers. We pray to be like the wise man who built his house upon the sand, hearing Jesus' words and putting them into practice.

In the end, my prayer is that this will be a witness as well. The Lusianans will see us comin' and say, "Who dat? Dat's dem Lut'rans. Dey comes to serve!"

.....
Lutheran Bishop from the Central

a viewing party

Please plan to join in this important conversation on March 7 at 4 p.m. CST and invite friends and family to join in too.

.....
Results from Water to Thrive Project



Water to Thrive was the Yearly

Emphasis of the Lutheran Youth Organization in the 2008-2009 gathering year.



Many congregations caught the vision of providing clean, safe drinking water to families in rural Ethiopia, and have continued to raise funds for this important project. This thank you note is just for the amount that came through our office in 2009 -- there were many donations sent to the organization directly.

African Republic Visits TLGC Synod

By Carolyn Jacobs

Our synod was blessed and enlivened, at the end of January, by a visit from the Rev. André Golike, the bishop (known in French as the president) of our companion synod in the Central African Republic, the EELRCA.



President Golike went from the Theological Conference to the New Orleans, Houston, and Brenham areas of the synod. He visited Texas Lutheran University, Bethlehem in New Orleans (**pictured above**), Living Word in Katy, Christ the King in Houston (**pictured below**), Messiah in Cypress, and St. Peter's in Gay Hill. He met with our bishop, with pastors, with congregational groups, with synod council, and with youth groups. Our youth asked excellent questions, and Pastor Golike gave frank responses. He brought greetings from CAR and thanks for our support. He talked about the church and its ministries, showed slides, worshiped, prayed, and ate with our synod members in a variety of settings. Several different families hosted him in their homes. Many thanks to all who participated in this visit and helped to

The breakdown:

- 18 congregations raised funds
- LYO Synod Youth Gatherings, The Disciple Project, REVEAL Youth Worker Training collected offerings
- Gulf Coast WELCA gave money
- Matching funds through Thrivent
- Over \$70,000 was raised for the ministry of Water to Thrive

These donations are forever changing lives! Having clean water nearby means that families are healthier, women have time to care for their households and children have the opportunity to attend school -- breaking the cycle of poverty. Thank you!

.....
The Wisdom of the Ages V:

A one-day conference on religious and spiritual experiences and a science of human behavior

The Wisdom of the Ages conferences are designed to provide an ongoing forum for people knowledgeable in Bowen Theory and others, who are interested in supernatural phenomena. Dr. Bowen thought "toward" a ninth concept of his theory. He wanted to explore, as factually as possible, the function of these experiences.

make it possible.



President Golike talked about how the 67 pastors for some 400 congregations of the EELRCA make monthly circuits, usually on foot, to administer communion, perform baptisms and burials, and how motorcycles would help. We heard about the newly dedicated Gallo Health Center, the Women’s and Youth Programs, the Young Women’s Scholarships, and the Village Education Program. The women and youth are the powerhouses of the Lutheran church in CAR. While Central African men also support the church, they are harder to organize. In the past few years, congregations in our synod have contributed to the Women’s Center, Young Women’s Scholarships, Village Education, and are beginning to support the Gallo Clinic. Rev. Golike asks for our prayers and continued support for our brothers and sisters in CAR.

.....
Our Commitment to the Central African Republic

By Peggy Hahn, Assistant to the Bishop

A. EDUCATION:

1) The Village Education Program: \$8,000 per

Join us on July 23, 2010, as we welcome our distinguished speakers, [Wesley Wildman](#), [Daniel Papero](#), [Priscilla Friesen](#), and [John Haught](#), as they explore the relationship between human functioning and religious and spiritual experiences.

Date: July 23, 2010
Time: 9am - 5pm ([See full schedule](#))

Cost: \$150 (early registration)
\$175 (after June 15)
Registration includes lunch

Location: [Holiday Inn - Gaithersburg](#)
2 Montgomery Village Ave.
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Registration questions?
Contact Donna Troisi at
Info@LivingOptimally.com

[Download Registration Form](#)
(Adobe Reader required)

[Get Adobe Reader](#)

Global Mission Festival

October 24, 2010 - 2010 Global Mission Festival at Living Word Lutheran Church, Katy, TX with special guest speaker **Brian McLaren**. Join us for this exciting afternoon filled with activities for all ages. Worship begins at 2:00 followed by Festival activities from 3:30 – 6:30 including

year

The most effective way of moving from poverty to sustainably is through education. The Lutheran Church in the CAR has developed a Village Education System that provides teachers for children in rural communities who would not have access to education.



2) The Martha and Mary Women's Center: \$4,000 per year

It has been said that if you educate one man, you educate one man, but if you educate a woman you educate the entire family.

world music, a global marketplace with fair trade arts & crafts, ethnic food, games and more! Information packets will be mailed in August. Questions? Contact Living Word at 281-392-2300 or livingwordkaty@livingwordkaty.org.



3) Women's Scholarships: \$600 per year per woman – our goal is 5 women - \$3,000 total

Scholarship funds cover the cost of tuition and books for women to access education. This simple gift (not to a specific person) to the scholarship program will change the life of a young woman who will impact her own family.



B. HEALTH CARE:

The Gallo Clinic \$5,000 per year

With one doctor for every 38,000 people, the needs for local clinics are huge. This new, Lutheran clinic hopes to reduce infant and maternal mortality, teach nutrition and

AIDs education. The financial need is for on-going medical supply needs and, over time, the expansion of facilities.



C. TRANSPORTATION:

Motorcycles \$2,500 each with a goal of 6 this year

President Golike explained that local pastors walk or ride bicycles as they serve their congregation. Motorcycles will increase their capacity to serve and be used to

transport people for health care.



Learn more about THE CAR: Get informed about this beautiful, fragile country. An annual Global Mission Sunday in a congregation can help everyone know their brothers and sisters in the CAR better. The CAR Team is developing resources for congregational use. (Some are already on our synod's website.) Schedule a Sunday in the next year to hold adult learning forums (with an invited speaker from our list) as well as children and youth programs that help us connect with life in one of the poorest countries in the world.

On behalf of our friends in CAR, thank you for your partnership!

Stories of Faith in Action

How do we tell the story to our people of the power of their weekly offerings and all that we are able to accomplish as the church working together? One way is to visit <http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Stories-of-Faith-in-Action.aspx>

Here you can find all sorts of helpful pieces that communicate the wider story of mission support.

Where Your Offering

Your offering supports the mission of the whole ELCA doing God's work in the world.



In your congregation, you support:

- Ministry within the congregation
- Local outreach in the community

YOUR CONGREGATION

shares a portion of your offering—called mission support—with the other two expressions of this church. Mission support is the lifeblood of the work that God does through the ELCA.



YOUR provides support and resources within the ELCA.

THE CHURCH EXP

responds to mission here and around the world.



Some mission support funds may return to your congregation in the form of grants, services, programs and resources.

Thank You!

Together we do God's work in ways that no individual, congregation or synod can do alone.

ITEM001403



Evangelical
God's work

The Three Days

By Gay Zimmerman, AiM
Synod Worship Excellence Team

This is the pinnacle of the church year – one glorious service over three days – Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Vigil of Easter. It is a sensuous and profound drama of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We, the church, make this passage with Christ through death into life.

It is a counter cultural experience. The Vigil of Easter is the oldest celebration in the church year and was the original way the early Christians celebrated the Resurrection. It was reintroduced to us in the middle of the 1970's --a time when a prevailing thought was that ritual was frivolous and symbols were empty. And yet we know that ritual, like music, reaches us on levels that go beyond words. The Three Days are resplendent with movement, music, ritual and symbols, and it is through these that we are transformed and our faith is deepened.

On **Maundy Thursday**, we recall Christ's new commandment (mandatum) that we love one another as Christ loves us. We hear the words of absolution. Feet are washed, reminding us that we are called to be servants. The meal is shared and the altar is stripped, recalling for us the humiliation of our Lord on the cross. The assembly leaves quietly. There is no benediction, because the service is not over, but continues the next day with Good Friday.

Central to **Good Friday** is the reading of The Passion according to John. In the bidding prayer, we pray for the entire world for which Christ died. The cross is honored as a sign of forgiveness, healing and salvation. Again, the assembly quietly leaves the space to return on Saturday for the **Vigil of Easter**.

On this evening, the assembly enters the darkened nave, holding candles lit from the Paschal Candle. We sing "Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome." In the dimly lighted nave, we listen to stories about the mystery of salvation -- stories like the creation, the deliverance at the Red Sea or the deliverance from the fiery furnace. At the Gospel acclamation, the lights of the church go up, bells ring, alleluia's are sung, paraments are placed on the altar,

and flowers are brought into the chancel. We gather at the font for baptism and then to the altar for the meal. We have been brought into the full experience of Christ's life, death and resurrection. Alleluia! Christ is risen! And Christ will come again.

If your congregation's paschal journey does not presently include The Three Days (Triduum) or perhaps only Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, you may want to explore the possibility of adding these for next year. There are wonderful resources published by Augsburg Fortress for use in partnership with the ELW and the ELW Leaders Desk Edition. Just out this year is the *Worship Guidebook For Lent and the Three Days* and the *Music Source Book for Lent and the Three Days*. An older resource, published in 2004, is from the *Worship Matters* series called *The Three Day Feast* by Gail Ramshaw. The best way to understand the full impact of these services, especially the Vigil of Easter, is to experience them.

Here are a few churches located in our synod that celebrate The Three Days: Christ the King Lutheran Church in Houston (www.ctkelc.org) Hosanna Lutheran Church in Houston (www.welcometohosanna.com) Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Houston (www.salemhouston.org) Holy Comforter Lutheran Church in Kingwood (www.godeeperwithchrist.org) St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Brenham (www.stpetersbrenham.org)

If your congregation observes The Three Days, please send us the name of your church and email address so that we can share this information with the rest of the synod.

We invite you all this Paschal Season to 'Come to the Feast!'

Gay Zimmerman, Associate in Ministry
On behalf of the synod's Worship Excellence Team
cantorgay@yahoo.com

**Scholarships Now Available to TEEM
Candidates**

TEEM - Another Path to Ordination

News from the Mission Endowment Fund

By Pastor Steve Quill



Thanks to increasing grants from the Park Place Fund, scholarships are now being made to candidates in the TEEM program through the synod's Candidacy Committee.

TEEM stands for "Theological Education for Emerging Ministries" and it provides a route to ordination for those who do not find the Master of Divinity an option. TEEM candidates are usually a bit older and they are living and serving in a faith community where they are seen as a spiritual leader. It takes about three years to complete the program and then they can then be authorized for ordination.

TEEM is a marvelous option for people who have a sense of call to ministry, but cannot attend a degreed program. The Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest (Austin) is one such program and there are other seminaries that also have TEEM programs. In our synod we currently have five TEEM matches:

Duraimony Dickson (PLTS) - Tamil Congregation (Houston)

Kathleen Johnson (PLTS) - temporarily at Lakeside (League City)

Joshua Ong (PLTS) - Church of the Living God (Houston)

Tammy Sharp (LSPS) - Christus Victor (League City)

Ken Weiss (WTS) - Ebenezer (Brenham)

Your gifts to the **Mission Endowment Fund** help provide scholarship monies for all candidates for ministry from our synod whether they are in the M. Div. program or TEEM.

**Gulf Coast Men in Mission 2010
Annual Gathering Highlights**



Grace Lutheran Church in Conroe served as the host for the 2010 Gulf Coast Synod Men in Mission Annual meeting. About 50 men, from a variety of congregations, participated in the Saturday, February 5th event including Advent, Houston; Christ the King, Kenner, LA; Covenant, Houston; Grace, Conroe; Tree of Life, Conroe; Living Word, Katy; St. Paul's, Columbus; Martin Luther, Swiss Alps; New Life, Pearland, Atascocita, Atascocita; Zion, Houston, and St. John's, Waller.

On Friday evening about a dozen men gathered for pizza and conversation including a viewing of the movie, "Gran Torino," followed by a guided "faith talk" with Pastor Brian Gige, Gulf Coast Synod's Men's Ministry Coordinator.

The theme for the this year's gathering was "Net Casters" and included a keynote presentation by Norm Smith, LMM National President, highlighting the work ongoing with men around the country. "We have a great partnership of synods and congregations," he said. "Our partnerships are also ecumenical and the best years for Lutheran Men in Mission are still to come," Smith added. In addition to sharing stories of men's ministry, Norm also spoke of the ongoing work of the Bible Project (to distribute Bibles to young men 30 and under), the LMM Young Men's Ministry Council and the upcoming weekend retreat for men called, "One Year to Live."

The annual gathering also presented the men of the synod with a model for worship that can be used in all congregations. "Church for Men" is a 30 minute worship experience for men of all ages, but specifically designed for "busy" young men who resist being at worship on Sunday mornings. The service leads off with videos of current music (MTV, YouTube style) and begins with a reading from scripture and a teaching lesson. The offering had a specific purpose and the service followed with Holy Communion and a blessing. Pastors Steve Cauley and Chris Lake led the worship service. \$341 was

raised to purchase Bibles for young men in our synod.

Other presenters included Living Word Lutheran Church's "mission" efforts to our companion synod congregations in Peru, Mr. Dick Moeller of Water2Thrive--a ministry of providing a sustainable water supply to people in Africa, Evan Moilan, executive director for Camp Lutherhill updated the men on the Capital Campaign, and Norm Smith along with Pastor Gigeer helped others in a conversation of jump-starting and maintaining men's ministry in the local congregation.

The gathering ended with a business meeting where Dennis Shaw (Grace, Conroe) was elected synod LMM President and love offerings of \$1000 each were affirmed for Synod LYO, LMM, Synod Missions and TLU. In 2011, the Gulf Coast Synod LMM will host (hopefully at St. Paul, Brenham) the Tri-Synod gathering (February 2011) leading up to the LMM National Gathering scheduled for July in Denver, CO. All Gulf Coast synod congregations are invited to mark those dates and use Facebook's Gulf Coast Men in Mission link,

TX/LA Gulf Coast Men in Mission to remember...God is in our work, worship & play.

Lutheran Summer Music 2010: A Unique Opportunity for Young Organists



(Minneapolis, MN) The 29th annual Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival (LSM) will offer a comprehensive, four-week program for young organists of all faiths grades 8-12. A deep pool of nationally-recognized organists will serve on this summer's faculty, providing exceptional opportunities for

mentorship, student learning and performance exposure. LSM's mission is to transform lives and connect people

through faith and music. Every summer, more than 150 young people from throughout the U.S. come together for this rigorous musical study and performance program in a supportive environment. The 2010 Academy will take place June 20 to July 18 on the campus of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

Catherine Rodland joins LSM for the first time as the Regina Holmen Fryxell and Patricia Schad Leege Chapel Organist. Both a faculty member and a graduate of St. Olaf College (Northfield, MN), Rodland earned her MM and DMA from the Eastman School of Music. In addition to playing for worship services, Rodland will oversee the 2010 organ studio. Organ students receive two private lessons per week and have opportunities to play for various services. During the final Festival Week, organ students are featured in a special recital.

The LSM worship team will be led by Rev. Michael D. Costello, an outstanding organist and an alumnus of LSM. "I knew I loved music before I attended LSM," says Michael, "but it was my years at LSM that really guided me to a career as a church musician." Costello is a noted composer and arranger, organist, and an active member of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM). Returning for his third summer on the LSM faculty as worship assistant is Chad Fothergill, also an alumnus of LSM. Fothergill is cantor and visiting instructor (organ) at Gustavus Adolphus College (St. Peter, MN).

With a commitment to renewing churches through music, LSM offers beginning and intermediate handbell choirs, church music history, and chapel choir among its elective options. Zebulon Highben will return for his sixth summer as the Paul Bouman Chapel Choir Director. Highben is pursuing a DMA in choral conducting at Michigan State University and is a regional director for ALCM.

ABOUT LSM

LSM's outstanding faculty guides gifted high school students from around the country through a month of intensive musical training and performance. Open to students of all faiths, LSM encourages students to use music as a catalyst for an exploration of personal faith and creativity. Students engage in individual instrument lessons; chamber ensembles; musicianship classes;

symphony orchestra, choir and/or band; electives; and a culminating Festival of performances.

Applications are being accepted for the 2010 Academy and generous financial aid is still available (both merit- and need-based). For more information, visit www.lutheransummermusic.org or contact the national offices in Minneapolis at 888.635.6583 or by email at lsm@lutheransummermusic.org.

TX-LA Gulf Coast Synod, ELCA
12941 I-45 North Freeway, #210
Houston, TX 77060-12343
Voice: 281-873-5665
Fax: 281-875-4716
Website: www.gulfcoastsynod.org