

seeds for the parish

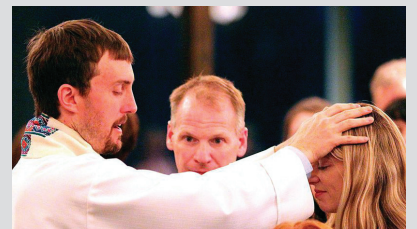
Summer 2013

Resource Paper for Leaders of ELCA Congregations

www.ELCA.org



Making worship local. Check out these ways to support your community in worship. [Page 2](#)



Cate-chume-what? Clint Schnekloth shares his congregation's catechumenate experience. [Page 3](#)

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday

On Sept. 8, the ELCA will celebrate “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday — an opportunity for service work and making a positive difference, using our hands to do God’s work of restoring and reconciling communities in Jesus Christ’s name throughout the world.

Imagine 4 million people from nearly 10,000 congregations out in their communities serving meals, cleaning up neighborhoods, visiting with the homebound, collecting supplies for those experiencing homelessness, poverty or conflict — all in their bright yellow “God’s work. Our hands.” T-shirts!

You work every day to love your neighbors and make your community a better place. Now let’s do it together.

A church that rolls up its sleeves

ELCA members and congregations have always been active participants in

God’s work in the world. We already serve our communities and neighbors, and we’ve done so for 25 years. So why a special dedicated day of service?

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is a great opportunity to join together in our 25th anniversary year to give witness that in Christ we are free to serve our neighbor,” says ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson. “This is who we are — a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work.”

Something special happens when we come together. Think of the ELCA Youth Gatherings where 30,000 young people blanket the cities they visit to fix up homes, read to children, hand out school supplies or advocate for and educate others about the issues that impact our lives. Only now instead of just one place, we will impact communities across the country.

“On Sept. 8, we encourage you to join

with other partners — social ministry organizations, campus ministries and ecumenical partners — to serve your neighbor as you already do throughout the year,” Hanson continues. “Doing God’s work through our hands is a marvelous expression of gratitude for God’s grace in Christ.”

Ready to get started?

To make the most of “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday in your congregation, get started with your planning early!

Visit www.ELCA.org/25 to download flyers and bulletin inserts to let your congregation know about the event and to recruit volunteers to help you get organized.

Under the “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday tab, you’ll also find a downloadable toolkit that will walk you through planning your dedicated day of service from start to finish. The toolkit includes ideas for service projects, discussion ques-

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Marshmallows, bug spray, and Jesus — how to plan a faith-based summer camp outing! [Page 4](#)



Is yours a hospitable congregation? ELCA members with disabilities share their advice. [Page 5](#)



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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Making worship local



When voting members share in Holy Communion this summer at the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Pittsburgh, they may want to stop and take a careful look at the serving dishes holding their wine and bread.

The chalices, patens (bread plates), flacons (wine vessels) and anointing bowls are all being handmade at the Pittsburgh Glass Center — a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching, creating and promoting glass art.

Many people associate Pittsburgh with its once bustling steel industry, but glass used to be a big part of the city's economy, too.

“Pittsburgh is known for steel, but it was also one of the major glass-producing cities,” says Susan Callahan, the studio coordinator for the Pittsburgh Glass Center. “There used to be glass factories up and down the rivers.” The Pittsburgh Glass Center, she says, aims to “bring that culture back to Pittsburgh.”

The glass center was developed “to promote glass-making arts,” Susan continues. “Essentially we’re an organization that is really open to the public for classes and to rent studio time to anyone interested in making glass art. It’s an extraordinary place.”

The ELCA intentionally commissioned the glassware from the Pittsburgh Glass

Center for just this reason. It’s an opportunity to invest in the community in which they will worship this summer. By utilizing local talent and resources, participants of the Churchwide Assembly can make a positive impact on the city they are visiting.

“It’s a good example for how congregations can become connected to their local community in a very simple way,” says Peter Perella, ELCA director for worship formation and liturgical resources. “We wanted to highlight that we are in a local context and to make connections to that.”

Contextual worship

Making connections to the community is something ELCA congregations do in their local contexts in a variety of ways — through volunteer work, outreach, evangelism or community gatherings. These community connections, Peter says, can also be incorporated into worship.

“It’s the sense of knowing the people in the congregation’s community,” Peter shares. “It helps the congregation have a sense that they’re connected. They’re not like a silo. They’re connected to the local community and hopefully that will foster greater involvement in serving the community.”

There are countless ways congregations can tap into their communities, support their local economies and welcome their

neighbors to participate. For instance, many congregations make their own bread for communion — which is a great use of local talent.

Or perhaps there’s a local bakery where one might buy the bread, thereby supporting local artisans and helping sustain local business.

Here are some other ideas you might try to keep your worship experience local:

- Think about where your communion wine comes from. Are there local wineries from which you could purchase the wine? Some hobbyists also make wine at home. Perhaps there are members in your congregation who would enjoy making the communion wine and using the opportunity to invite others into fellowship.
- Does your congregation keep flowers on the altar or chancel in your sanctuary? Where do those flowers come from? Perhaps there’s a local florist you could support in your purchases. Or maybe there’s a gardener in your congregation who could provide the flowers. Consider even planting a garden outside your congregation to grow your own flowers when the seasons permit.
- Music is another great way to involve your community in the life of your congregation. Invite local musicians or vocalists to perform at services or special events.

Regardless of how you do it, using local resources is a simple way to add a personal, local connection to worship. “You don’t have to think very hard about it. It can be a very easy thing to make connections with,” says Peter. “If it’s a connection outside of the congregation rather than ordering something from a factory in the middle of nowhere, there’s a human connection there, and when it’s local then the interconnectedness is more real.”

seeds for the **parish**

ELCA.org/seeds

LivingLutheran.com/seeds

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tions to help you think deeply about what this day will mean for your context, checklists to keep your planning on schedule and ways to celebrate your work as a congregation.

Last, but certainly not least, you’ll also find the link to order your congregation’s own, customizable “God’s work.

Our hands.” Sunday T-shirts from Old Lutheran. T-shirts cost \$6.50 each and feature the “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday logo on the front with a space to have the name of your congregation printed on the back.

For 25 years we have been a church that does God’s work in the world — re-

storing and reconciling communities. On Sept. 8, let’s join together to roll up our sleeves and get to work!

Cate-chume-what?

By Clint Schnekloth

Our congregation hosted its first-ever catechuminate, or preparation for adult baptism, this year. God is up to some amazing things through it. About 40 adults were received into our congregation at



meal hospitality, Bible study, and worship. The crucial difference is how it is designed.

4. It is designed for new people: Everything is structured to make space for the new in your midst to have a

place and for your congregation to attend to them. Keep your attention focused, like a laser, watching for opportunities to invite new people into the catechumenal process. You'll be surprised how often opportunities come up once watching for them is perpetually top in your attention.

5. Matching sponsors with catechumens takes a lot of one-on-one conversations: At the beginning of the year, I had no idea I would need to tap into our current congregational members and match 40 sponsors with 40 catechumens. This has required many phone conversations, chats at the coffee shop, invitations by letter and Facebook. Some people say no. Others are thrilled to say yes. Somehow, it works.

6. The catechumenate really is an ancient process. It is worth digging deeper and learning its history: My own story engaging the catechumenate is decades in the making. I first read about it in Philip Maxwell Johnson's "The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Development" (Liturgical Press). It helped me to know its history, although the complexity of its shape and influence in the early church also intimidated me a bit.

7. If you are the leader, this is your highest priority: All ministry, every day, is an opportunity to connect people to the catechumenate, opening space for faith formation bringing new Christians to baptism and beyond. As Martha Grace Reese discovered in her important study of vital and evangelical North American congregations, one important measure of the vitality of Christian ministry is the number of adult baptisms in a community (www.gracenet.info/documents/Wenger%20Reese%20Survey%20Report.pdf).

Clint Schnekloth is lead pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Fayetteville, Ark.

For more information about planning a catechumenate course in your context visit:

- www.catechumenate.org
- <http://blogs.augsburgfortress.org/2012/06/04/cat-eh-what/>

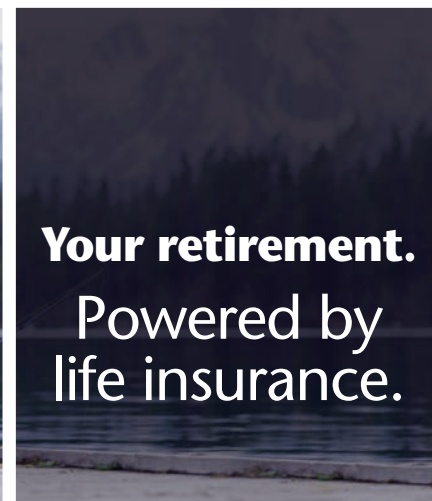
the Easter Vigil. Of them, three were adult baptisms. In a congregation of more than 600 members, this is a sizeable addition.

Because the catechuminate is the kind of process that, once incorporated, affects the overall culture of the congregation, I offer here a simple series of points I hope intrigue readers and inspire further inquiry into establishing a catechuminate in your context.

1. Get a mentor: Our congregation started seriously entertaining the idea of launching a catechuminate last year. I called up Pastor Paul Hoffman of Phinney Ridge Lutheran, Seattle, Wash., and started asking a lot of questions. That conversation turned into an ongoing dialogue and prayer partnership. Phinney Ridge prays regularly for our congregation as we implement the catechuminate. Paul chimes in on our Facebook planning group page, sends me emails of support and fields my many questions. I literally could not imagine launching a process like the catechuminate without a mentor.

2. Pilot the program with a lead team: It's really hard to lead a new community of people through a process you yourself haven't experienced. This past summer eight of us, along with our lead team for the catechuminate, spent a night each week together gathered around a meal and Bible study. By the time we formally launched the inquiry stage of the catechuminate in the fall, we knew what we were inviting others into, at least enough to be dangerous.

3. There's not a curriculum other than life and liturgy: For some reason when I first learned about the catechuminate, for years I wanted there to be a "cut and paste" curriculum to simply drop into place and use. But the catechuminate doesn't work this way. It's very open, with lots of space for the participants to bring their questions and concerns. It is authentically about inquiry. And it is not technologically fancy. All it is, ultimately, is the creative interplay of many things you are probably already doing in your congregation, including



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Family camping and worship

By Paul Amlin

There are few memories more emblazoned in my mind than the family camping trips my family took when I was a child. My wife and I shared that joy of camping with our son as he was growing up and sure enough, more wonderful memories.

This summer and fall you could take camping memories to a new level by integrating weekend campouts with worship and faith formation with little effort and lots of laughs. Here are some ideas:

- Consider inviting folks from your congregation and surrounding community (all ages) to go camping together. Check with the camping experts in your congregation or consider visiting one of the ELCA's amazing outdoor ministry sites to have access to everything from a place to pitch a tent to cabins with running water.
- Make check-in and -out times flexible, but offer some intentional times to be community, such as story time at the campfire.

- Instead of sharing scary ghost stories, how about sharing stories of faith?

Invite children and adults to share the story of their baptism day (especially neat for parents to share with their

children!), or talk about some stories from the Bible. You'd be amazed how much more "sticks" when all the senses are engaged! Enjoy s'mores, campfire, nature sounds and the warmth shared in community.

- Another great option for an outdoor setting — in the books and materials presented by the folks who created *Praying in Color* — are some wonderful ways of engaging nature in prayer. Among them is to invite folks to walk about the



campsite or on some trails gathering small items that catch their eye. Once

everyone is back together, provide some cardstock and glue and invite them to use these gathered items to design a cross. Invite the artists to share their work at church

for a couple of weekends before taking their crosses home. At home, they can be encouraged to hang them prominently for display, reminding them of their time together, as well as serving as a reminder to pray each day.

- Consider offering a worship service by the campfire or in a picnic shelter. Ask campers to invite their neighboring campers to join in and invite members of the congregation and friends who can't make it for the whole campout to

join you for the service. Don't be afraid to take advantage of your surroundings! If there's a nearby stream or lake you could offer a Thanksgiving for Baptism. Your offering could be the artwork you created after your nature walk. Sharing the Peace could be a walk around the campground sharing greetings of peace with other campers. Think creatively about how you can engage the space.

- Finally, be sure to capture the special moments that you experience. Ask some of the participants to take photos and video. Write down the memorable moments from your campout (you'd be amazed how far these things go in encouraging others to join you the next year). Camping is a way to share time as a community that takes you outside the walls of the church building and is guaranteed to bring memories that will last a lifetime.

And if you do a campout this summer or fall, I'd love to see a photo and read the story of your event! Send an email to Paul. Amlin@elca.org along with your thoughts.

Young Adult Ministry 101

By Rozella White

Let's start with some questions:

1. **How do you define young adult ministry?** Is it a ministry to a particular age group or a ministry to those in a particular life stage? Is it a ministry that is tangential to the larger congregation? Is it a ministry that is led by a staff person or group of volunteers? Is it even an area that receives attention in your context?
2. **What is the purpose of young adult ministry?** Is it to connect young adults with each other? Is it to form faith, strengthen identity, or grow leaders? Is it to provide an outlet for those between youth and older adulthood? Is it to make sure that the traditions and history of a church community are passed down?

These questions are not designed to overwhelm you; rather the hope is that they spark some inquiry into how and why your congregation engages young adults.

The ELCA defines young adults as post-high school individuals between the ages of 18 and 30. Anyone who has encountered people in this category knows that this broad age range encompasses a variety of life experiences, expectations and ideas about what it means to be a part of the church. The reality of life among young adults and the changing landscape of spirituality and religiosity in the United States all affect the way that congregations can be in relationship with this amorphous group.

Defining young adult ministry has to be specific to your context and has to be done in collaboration with actual young adults. Even if young adults aren't present in your congregation, they are surely present in your community. College campuses, coffee shops, local bars and restaurants, the grocery store or farmers market are all places and spaces where young adults can be found.

This is your assignment, should you choose to accept it: Make a plan of

reaching out to young adults in your congregation and community throughout the summer.

Step 1: Find a young adult.

Step 2: Introduce yourself and ask if they'd be willing to have a conversation with you. Your hope is to learn more about them — what they value, what they think, what they want from life.

Step 3: Engage in a conversation, remembering to listen to what they say. Look for points of connection, for similar interests.

Step 4: Thank them for their willingness to share.

Step 5: Ask them if they would recommend another young adult that you could talk to.



The purpose of this reaching out is not to get young adults to come to church or serve on boards or lead a project. The purpose of this reaching out is to build relationships. Plain and simple. Are you up for the challenge?

Rozella White serves as the program director for Young Adult Ministry for the ELCA. The purpose of this role is to support, connect and encourage young adults and those who work with them as they claim their identity, grow in faith and uncover their vocation. For more information, contact her at rozella.white@elca.org.

A hospitable church

Desiree Peterson is legally blind, but if there is one thing that she wants to make clear about people with disabilities, she says it's this: "We can serve in our church and also in our communities."

Desiree is a member of Joy of Discovery Lutheran Church, an ELCA congregation in Raleigh, N.C. She is also a member of her congregation council, a member of the ELCA North Carolina Synod Council, and the North Carolina Governor's Council for people with developmental disabilities.

"I really feel that God has called me and blessed me to serve," Desiree says. "My calling is to serve and listen, to be there, to be God's servant."

Serving in different capacities

In 2010, the ELCA Church Council adopted a social statement titled "People Living with Disabilities" that maintains that "as a church committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is called to welcome all people in all its congregations and ministries into full participation as baptized members of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:14-26)."

For Desiree, "full participation" is a phrase to live by. She says she is proud to see this statement lived out at Joy of Discovery and throughout the ELCA. Her congregation, for instance, provides its bulletin in large print for those who are partially sighted or visually impaired. She also loves that she can receive *Gather*, the magazine published by Women of the ELCA, on CD and hear other ELCA publications like *The Lutheran* via software on her computer that reads website content aloud.

What's more important, though, is that Desiree is proud to see how easy it is for her to serve her church, and this is something she hopes all congregations think about.

"We can serve in different capacities," Desiree says of people with disabilities. "I sing in a little ensemble. I sing the Kyrie every Sunday." In addition, she says visually impaired people can do many of the same tasks sighted people can. Those with braille Bibles "can read scripture," she says. "They can acolyte or teach Sunday school class."

Asking the right questions

The idea that those with disabilities shouldn't be treated any differently than those without has been especially important to Tybois Uphold. Tybois has Asperger's syndrome, a disorder similar to autism that causes him to sometimes, as he puts it, "act weird."

"Sometimes I'll get into talking about something, and I'll ramble, or I'll get really

excited about something or make a weird joke that to me makes sense but no one else thinks is funny."

When Tybois was looking for a congregation in Winchester, Va., he says he often felt like people were looking at him funny or treating him differently because of his disability. But when Tybois met Pastor James Utt at Grace Lutheran Church, he says things were different. "He really took the time out of his insanely busy schedule to just sit there and listen to what I had to say."

James says it's no accident that Tybois felt so welcome. Grace has made an intentional effort to be a hospitable congregation. "We want to invite people to be a part of our community, and when they come, we welcome them," James says. "It's making more intentional our care for all people."

Tybois says James listened to him talk about his disability. "That's what made me feel like maybe this is a good place to go to church."

Creating accessible opportunities

In Galatians 3:28, Paul writes, "there is no longer Jew nor Greek, ... slave nor free, ... male nor female; all of you are one in Christ Jesus." It's this idea of inclusion that ELCA Disabilities Ministries is built around — that ministries should be "with" people and not ministries "for" or "to" people.

Are there people in your congregation who would benefit from more intentional hospitality? Sit down and talk with them about what their needs, desires and abilities are.

"A one-on-one [conversation] helps the person and makes them feel more included," Tybois shares. One-on-one conversations also help build understanding and can be beneficial for everyone involved.

ELCA Disability Ministries also provides a number of resources to help create accessible ministries for those with a variety of disabilities including visual and hearing impairment, mental illness and brain disorders, and other physical impairments.

For ideas on creating a more accessible worship space, educating your congregation, and resources and special events for those who live with disabilities, check out the ELCA Disability Ministries website at www.ELCA.org/disabilities.

To read the ELCA social statement on people living with disabilities visit www.ELCA.org/socialissues.

Q & A

We asked some ELCA pastors and members their thoughts on creating a hospitable environment for those with disabilities. Here's what they had to say:

Shortly after I arrived in this parish, a member who is in a wheelchair pointed out to me that while our chancel was built to be accessible, the point of accessibility was blocked by the piano, microphones and other items. His comment led us to rearrange that area, including moving the choir, so that accessibility might be maintained. This member could now move easily to the chancel area. Sometimes even with the best of intentions, we lose our way. Sometimes, without thinking, we erect barriers and send unintended messages. I am grateful to this member for gently pointing out what most of us able-bodied people had failed to see.

—David E. Nelson, pastor, St. John Lutheran Church, Annandale, Minn.

Talk with people and find out what they need! Whether it is hearing devices, American Sign Language interpreters, a ramp, whatever, please ask and not assume what will or will not work in a space for people with special needs. Also, when you talk to people with disabilities of any kind, remember that we are people first. Not incapable, not "weak," etc. If you seek to engage us in the community, we will engage in it, especially if opportunities are provided for community building. Also, please, please indicate in bulletins how you serve communion to people who may not be able to move up to the front.

—Lisa Heffernan, student, Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa

More and more people cannot eat gluten. I am severely celiac and have been for 15 years. Offering gluten-free wafers is incredibly easy to do, and putting it in the bulletin not only helps those who are gluten free, but also shows people who know gluten-free people that it is a welcoming congregation.

—Sarah Lee-Faulkner, assistant to the bishop, ELCA Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

We welcome service animals and try to advertise that fact as much as possible.

—Jennifer Obermueller, pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Huntington, W. Va.

We do a service in April for Autism Awareness month that lifts up people who have autism in prayer, special music, a reflection by a person impacted by autism, sermon that reflects upon its impact, a photo board of loved ones affected by it and more.

—Keith Spencer, pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Pembroke Pines, Fla.

'Prayer Book for the Armed Services'

The first of its kind since World War II, the "Evangelical Lutheran Worship Prayer Book for the Armed Services" was developed with the contributions



and review of chaplains and other service members. This durable pocket-sized companion from Augsburg Fortress is ideal for those in the military, family and friends of those in active service, veterans, as well as pastors and congregations of those who serve.

Features include:

- Morning and evening prayer for individual use
- Prayers for many service-related contexts, including preparation for missions, confronting crises, grieving fallen companions, life circumstances during deployment and more
- Corporate worship services with resources from "Evangelical Lutheran Worship" and the ELCA's full-communication partner churches
- Affirmation of baptism for returning veterans
- Prayers for congregations whose pastors serve as chaplains or whose members are deployed
- Twenty-six psalms for a variety of circumstances
- The words to 65 hymns and songs, including an expanded section of national songs

Shipping is also easy. If you have the APO/FPO address, Augsburg Fortress can send the order from their warehouse to wherever a service person may be stationed. Find out more at www.augsburgfortress.org or by calling 800-328-4648.

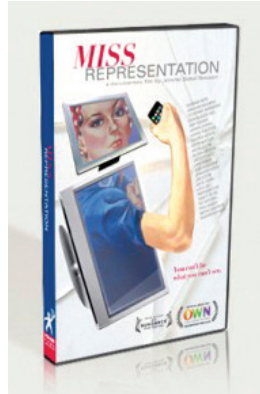
'Miss Representation' study guide

In 2011, the documentary film "Miss Representation" featured at the Sundance Film Festival stirred conversation about the media's depiction of women and women in leadership, with special attention to its impact on young women and men as they grow up.

Now the ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice is making available a study guide on the documentary in hopes of furthering this discussion among people of faith.

The study guide divides the film into three sessions for viewing and discussion in a variety of small group venues. The study includes a leader's guide and provides questions to help explore the film's content from the perspective of the Christian faith and includes prayers and Scripture passages.

The study is just one of several resources that the task force plans to create in the next several years. A social statement process on women and justice was approved at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, and the task force began meeting in 2012. Their work will culminate in a proposed social statement to be considered at the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Both the study and more information on the task force can be found at www.ELCA.org/womenandjustice.



'Echo the Story'

"Echo the Story," a new curriculum for youth, is an imaginative way for young people to engage with the Bible using storytelling, observation and dialogue. Broken into 12 sessions, "Echo the Story" offers a variety of guided activities to help make Scripture relevant including videos, writing, drawing and discussion. The curriculum is designed to help teens discover both meaning and identity in the biblical narrative. A leader guide, DVD and student sketch journal are all available for purchase at www.augsburgfortress.com.

Spiritual Formation Program

Grace Institute's Spiritual Formation Program VII will begin Aug. 2-4, 2013, at Shalom Retreat Center in Dubuque, Iowa. This in-depth program has a Lutheran center but also introduces attendees to a variety of Christian spiritual practices. Rostered leaders and laity meet quarterly for two years. Each session has presentations, worship, small groups and one or two new forms of meditation. The program fosters personal spiritual growth and leadership in spirituality.

The eight session themes are grace-centered spirituality, attending to the Word, symbols and sacraments, worship, contemplative prayer, discernment, spirituality and service in the world, and spirituality and evangelism. Presenters include Marty Haugen, Susan Briehl, Fr. Ignatius Valentine (Orthodox priest), Mary Preus, Tom Witt, Ginger Anderson-Larson, Craig Nesson, Amy Larson, and Brad Hanson. Cost: \$2,300 payable over three calendar years.

For information go to www.luther.edu/graceinstitute or contact Lori Ostlie ostlie@luther.edu, 563-387-1271.

'One Body, Many Members'

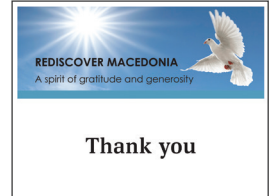
The ELCA is a church that is freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor, but how do we accompany our neighbor when they seem so different from us?

"One Body, Many Members: A Journey for Christians across Race, Culture and Class" is an online, interactive tool for congregations to explore just this question. You won't be immersed in a book, and you won't have pages to turn in sequential order. As in our life journeys, we start where we are – often not in the same place as someone else heading toward the same destination.

Use this tool to get to know the story of your own congregation first and then hear the stories of those who live and work around you. The interactive website includes a Bible study, activities and discussion questions to equip congregations to reach out and fully welcome individuals whose races, cultures and classes are different than their own. Visit www.ELCA.org/onebody for more information.

The Practice of Thanking

"Rediscover Macedonia," an ELCA initiative aimed at growing congregational giving, outlines six steps to encourage participation, actions or a specific gift. Now there's a new resource to help congregations with the first step: "Thank." A printable thank you card is now available as a way to invite individuals and congregations to engage the practice of thanking. This card is a way to steward your relationship with someone for whom you are thankful. To download the card visit www.ELCA.org/macedonia. Or for more information contact Neil Bullock at 800-638-3522, ext. 2884.



'Pastoral Care' e-book

The complete text for "Evangelical Lutheran Worship Pastoral Care" is now available as an e-book for your digital reader. Convenient and searchable, this resource from Augsburg Fortress contains prayers, readings and rites for use by rostered leaders and lay people in a variety of caregiving situations. Digital files are also available for any reader.

This is the first in a series of "Evangelical Lutheran Worship" resources to be made available for digital readers. Watch for "Occasional Services" e-book in the near future. Find out more at www.augsburgfortress.org.

'Pictures from the Beginning'

"Pictures from the Beginning" is a three-session catechism supplement that helps students explore questions about God and faith related to human origins, creation and the human brain. Each session includes a leader's guide, activity ideas and discussion questions. The Rev. Dr. George Murphy, a retired pastor, physicist and author who writes on matters of religion and science, served as the primary drafter of this catechism supplement. The study can be downloaded at www.ELCA.org/faithandscience.

ELCA Malaria Campaign resources for kids!

This summer while the kids in your congregation, your vacation Bible school class or Fourth of July picnic are busy swatting those pesky mosquitoes, turn those pests into a learning experience. The ELCA Malaria Campaign has a number of resources to help kids understand the impact malaria has on people around the world. Download crafts, activities, bulletin inserts and some brand-new coloring pages to help teach kids about the important work ELCA members are doing as part of the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

Don't underestimate children's ability to respond. When 10-year-old Ava Aigner first heard about the ELCA Malaria Campaign during vacation Bible school at Richland Lutheran Church in Walcott, N.D., she was so inspired she raised \$1,004 for the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

Your gifts to the ELCA Malaria Campaign are impacting lives. Download and watch the new two-minute video about the work being done on the ground in the Central African Republic at www.ELCA.org/malaria/video.

To download the resources, visit www.ELCA.org/malaria. And to read Ava's story, visit www.livinglutheran.com/stories/making-a-difference.

Malaria is preventable and treatable. The ELCA Malaria Campaign wants to help.
Together we are providing mosquito nets, medication, healthcare, education and more to help stop deaths from this disease — for good.



ELCA Malaria Campaign
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

2013 Summer Music Clinics

Augsburg Fortress Publishers will hold free summer music clinics in July and August across the United States. The featured clinicians will be Zebulon Highben, director of choral activities and assistant professor of music at Muskingum University in New Concord, Ohio, and Jeffrey Brillhart, director of music and fine arts at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, Bryn Mawr, Pa., and lecturer in organ improvisation at Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

These exciting events have been developed for the continuing education of today's church musician. Held in a variety of locations, these clinics provide opportunities for church musicians to network, learn and be inspired.

Each clinic features a variety of choral, organ and piano reading sessions to help

plan for the coming season, as well as developmental sessions on choral, keyboard and handbell topics. The expert clinicians offer valuable insights and ideas to help participants explore ways to revitalize and refresh worship in their local settings.

Space is limited for these free events. Attendees will receive a 15 percent discount on all featured Augsburg Fortress music ordered or purchased during the event. Please visit www.augsburgfortress.org/musicclinics for more details and to register.

Minneapolis	July 15-16
Columbia, S.C.	July 19-20
Columbus, Ohio	August 5-6
Philadelphia	August 8-9
Special Reading Session	
Chicago	July 31

The Practice Discipleship Initiative

Those who attended the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans will remember "Practice Discipleship Day," the day of the Gathering on which young people spent time engaging in seven faith practices: prayer, worship, invitation, study, service, encouragement and giving.

The idea behind Practice Discipleship Day was that the faith practices would prepare young people to not only engage in their faith but also to be able to articulate it to others.

Now, thanks to the ELCA Youth Ministry Network, youth leaders can use those same tools developed for the Gathering to engage young people in their home congregations through the Practice Discipleship Initiative — an ongoing effort to foster faithful, thoughtful and intentional leaders

in congregations who follow Jesus in their daily lives.

At www.practicediscipleship.org, youth leaders can access a number of resources to help lead the faith formation of the young people in their congregation including Bible studies, a number of curricula, liturgies and prayer guides.

Leaders can also find a listing of local trainings in their synods, connect with synod Practice Discipleship coaches or view webinars hosted by experts.

For more information, visit www.practicediscipleship.org.



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The "Yes" of Jesus compels us and empowers us to be open and accessible within any community, to make God meaningful within any context. Look for new ways to embrace your community in this issue of Seeds for the Parish.



*God is at work in unexpected places.
And so are our loans.*

CAMP AGAPE, HICKORY, PENNSYLVANIA

When Camp Agape needed a building loan, it turned to the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA. Thanks to an MIF loan, Agape campers now spend their mornings receiving tutoring in the camp's newly built classroom space and afternoons learning Bible stories and splashing in the camp pool. All of which just goes to show: God's work needs no vacation.

Looking for a building loan with flexible terms and competitive rates? To learn more about borrowing with MIF or refinancing a loan from another lender, call us at 877.886.3522 or go to mif.elca.org/loanoptions.



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