

2011 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Spring Session MAY 6-7	To See Ourselves As Others Do
Fall Session SEPT. 24	

2011 Metro D.C. Synod Assembly

Spring Session • May 6-7 • National Conference Center • Leesburg, Virginia

SPRING SESSION SUMMARY

Communion at the center

An inspirational Festive Eucharist was a centerpiece of the Spring Session. We zigzagged across the conference center on a "Road to Emmaus" journey, stopping to read scripture, take silence and pray at several "Stations of the Resurrection." Small groups of travelers convened in a transformed worship space, facing one another along a long, central communion table. At the "Iona Table," we communed meeting a fellow worshipper and serving each other bread and wine. The offering collected was given to support disaster response in Japan and to support ELCA HIV and AIDS ministries.

Listen to Bishop Graham's sermon from this worship experience online under the "Listen In" tab at metrodcelca.org.



Ecumenical community

Our synod assemblies are wonderful opportunities to affirm ecumenical collegiality in our area. Among our guests were:

The Rev. David Bennett of the Moravian Church, Northern Province; The Rev. John W. Crossin, Washington Theological Consortium; Fr. Avelino Gonzales, Director of the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington; The Rt. Rev. David C. Jones, Bishop Suffragan, Episcopal Diocese of Virginia; The Rev. David Maack, Southeastern District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS), 3rd Vice President; The Rev. Jonathan Barton, Virginia Council of Churches

We were even able to welcome and be enriched by the guest of a guest, Bishop Isaiah Chambala, Anglican Church of Tanzania, Diocese of

Kiteto, who was visiting and the Synod Assembly with the Rt. Rev. Jones.

Treasurer trends

"For the year 2010, we as a synod financially treaded water," said John Handley, synod treasurer. "We managed our expenses to live within what we were given." From his vantage point, he noticed other trends, too. "One of the things I note is in addition to congregational benevolence, the generosity of congregations in the synod has continued" including disaster response giving for recovery in Haiti, Japan, Chile and general relief. "One of the most popular recipients is ELCA World Hunger Appeal." Another trend is increased percentage giving from congregations instead of static budget amounts.

Looking ahead to next year, "We have proposed a budget for 2012 that anticipates an economic rebound flowing through



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Grants may
help. "Let's be
risk-taking
here,"
encouraged the
Rev. Phil
Hirsch,
Assistant to the
Bishop and
Director for
Evangelical
Mission, when
introducing the
opportunity.
"What comes
out of this are
lessons learned
and
experiences. We
will find out
what does and
what doesn't
work." Learn
more under the
"For
Congregations"
tab on the
synod site.*

congregations to the synod," Handley said.

We have MSP!

That is, a Mission Spending Plan. Workshop discussion fleshed out some points, but very little discussion was raised during the Plenary Session before the 2012 MSP was adopted by the Synod Assembly. The plan stewards \$2,005,000.

Newly elected synod leaders

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member (Clergy) - The Rev. Anne Dwiggins

Committee on Discipline (Clergy, 2 elected) - The Rev. Mark Edwards and the Rev. Katherine Murray

Committee on Discipline (Lay, 2 elected) - Lee Shields and Robin Taylor

Officer, Secretary - The Rev. John Bradford

Officer, Treasurer - John Handley

Synod Council, D.C. Conference (lay) - Amanda Wahlig

Synod Council, Fairfax Conference (clergy) - The Rev. Gerard Johnson

Synod Council, Maryland Conference (clergy) - The Rev. Emmanuel Grantson

Synod Council, Maryland Conference (lay) - Gretta

Williams

Synod Council, Montgomery Conference (clergy) - The Rev. Christine Stephan

Synod Council, Potomac Conference (clergy) - The Rev. Charles Oberkehr

Synod Council, Virginia Conference (clergy) - The Rev. Terry Hannon

Synod Council, Virginia Conference (lay) - Shirley Gibbs

Synod Council, Youth Representative - Rachel C.

Synod Council, At-large (clergy) - Unfilled

Synod Council, At-large (lay) - William Johnson

Magazine editor shares news

A sneak peek at the prototype of a potential new publication from *The Lutheran* magazine got positive reviews as the bright red-covered issue circulated. "The articles highlight Lutherans who are taking a stand and making a difference in our world and [the articles] begin to decipher how that world is transforming," wrote Daniel Lehmann, the magazine's editor who was on site for the Spring Session, on the opening page of this publication - *Being Lutheran*. "Lutherans are in a phase of reinvention, connecting

to our history of values and beliefs that also lead us on a path of discovery into the future."

Name that tune

Some recognized the tune when Alice Benson, Executive Director, Lutheran Planned Giving Consortium of Metro DC (LPGC), warbled, "I Sing a Song for the Saints of God." Verses familiar from camp and elsewhere reminded us of gratitude and vision, much as LPGC highlights through planned giving expertise and assistance. See <http://lpgmetrodc.org> for more information.

*I sing a song of the saints
of God,
Patient and brave and
true,
Who toiled and fought and
lived and died
For the Lord they loved
and knew.
And one was a doctor, and
one was a queen,
And one was a
shepherdess on the green;
They were all of them
saints of God, and I mean,
God helping, to be one too.*

New organization for GOH/ULA

As the ministry of Gifts of Hope and the United Lutheran Appeal continues to shift, action was adopted by the Synod Assembly to

amend our documents authorizing the establishment of a united organization "to increase understanding and strengthen relationships between the beneficiary organizations and the congregations of the Metro D.C. Synod and to raise funds for the beneficiary organizations." Sue Clarke noted that a coordinator will be hired for the new organization, and gifts can now be received year-round using 2010 Gifts of Hope catalog info at giftsofhopemetrodc.org.

Resolutions/ memorials adopted

Find full copies on the synod Web site, but here is an overview of resolutions and memorials adopted by the Synod Assembly.

- **Advocating Against Bullying, Harassment and Related Violence-** Taking bullying, harassment and related forms of violence seriously receives attention in this adopted resolution. Congregations locally are encouraged to speak out against it, form partnerships to address it, and on the churchwide level encourage, support and publicize new partnerships in ministry in this area. This resolution contains a "memorial" component, because it requests action by considered by the 2011

ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

- **Expression of Thanks and Gratitude** – Don't take this action for granted! Gifted and generous volunteers plus staff, visitors, guests and others leaders are thanked in this resolution for helping provide a positive Synod Assembly experience.
- **Greetings** – Four synods in addition to our own were meeting in an overlapping time period in Assembly. Best wishes are extended to them in their parallel experience.
- **Human Rights Violations Against the Oromo People-** The well-being of the Oromo people is the focus of this adopted resolution with encouragement for prayer and request for developmental and military aid to the government of Ethiopia being tied to compliance with internationally-recognized human rights agreements. A memorial component asks the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to introduce education and advocacy on behalf of the human rights of the Oromo people.
- **Investment for Positive Change in Palestine-** This memorial requests action of the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to encourage various expressions of the ELCA "to consider making positive economic investments in those Palestinian projects and businesses that peacefully strengthen the economic and social fabric of Palestinian society."
- **Kairos Palestine Response-** Reception of the "Kairos Palestine document" is resolved by this action and affirmation of its belief that "The mission of the Church is prophetic, to speak the Word of God courageously, honestly and lovingly in the local context and in the midst of daily events." An invitation to Bishop Munib A. Younan, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, to speak with our synod members will be extended by this resolution. Memorialized actions for consideration of the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly include encouraging discussion of the Kairos Palestine document in other parts of the ELCA and review of how investment fund management within the ELCA including the ELCA Foundation and ELCA Board of Pensions.
- **Policies on Child Protection and Sexual Misconduct-** This adopted resolution directs the synod bishop to provide resources to raise awareness of sexual abuse and sexual harassment issues within congregations, and help congregations make theirs a safe place for

The 501 Church in D.C. is happy to receive referrals of young adults. "Our core theology of grace and mercy can be lived out in settings other than Sunday mornings, perhaps in more nimble ways," said the Rev. Wendy Moen. As she meets with people in coffee shops and grocery stores, they "bring wonderful questions that enrich my world and my knowledge."

2011 ELCA
Churchwide
Assembly

Freed
in Christ
to Serve

August 15-19
Orlando

2011 Metro D.C. Synod Assembly

*"To See Ourselves
As Others Do"*

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victims of abuse, including through formal policies. A team of advisers is designated through this action to assist the synod and congregations should allegations of child/adult sexual abuse or harassment surface.

- **Representation of Episcopal Dioceses on Synod Program Units**
– A new way to live into full communion relationship is recommended through this resolution by inviting appointment of liaisons to synod program units from local Episcopal dioceses.

ELCA churchwide expression

The copy of "Freed in Christ to Serve," the video shown by Mark Burkhardt, ELCA churchwide rep, has been travelling between congregations which wanted to share it with wider audiences. Three stories of members and congregations are featured doing God's work with their hands in their communities, along with a brief message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson. Although the video is not scheduled to be

posted to elca.org until after more synods meet in assembly, our synod may receive advance access. Should this happen, notification will be sent.

Burkhardt discussed action in the churchwide expression of the ELCA, including the LIFT Task Force. He highlighted questions used to focus their work: 1) what is God calling this church to be and to do in the future? and 2) what changes are in order to help us respond faithfully to God's call? "I think those are great questions for all of us, as individuals and congregations."

Keynote frames in fresh way

Joseph Myers introduced many participants to new concepts and innovative ideas for reaching out in mission in our times using social economic assessment. Video of his three presentations should be posted to the synod Web site soon. Learn more about technomads and time frames of meaningful life events from the video and from notes prepared by Stephen Padre, guest

writer, on our blog ("From the Floor" at metrodcelca.org).

"ELCA are leaders in the thought and process of bringing unlike people together. You have this history currently, and far, far removed. It is a part of who you are," Myers said, reflecting on the theme of *To Know Ourselves As Others Do*. "It is a part of who you are, so this should be [a task] you can embrace in a way that is just a part of the natural workings of our lives."

Paying rostered leaders

Find the 2012 Compensation Guidelines adopted by the Synod Assembly online. Some new language pertaining to parental/family leave was added.

Don't stop here!

This overview can only scratch the surface of a wonderful time together. Find a photo album, blog posts, documents and more online.

See you in Fall Session!