

# NOTES & QUOTES

Volume 26, Issue 2 & 3

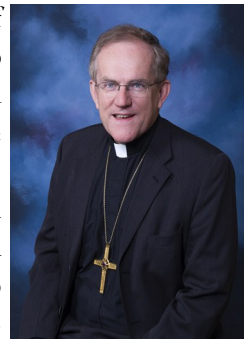
February and March 2013

## JESUS IS IT! AN EPIPHANY-LENTEN WORD

Bishop Thomas A. Skrenes

[tskrenes@nglsynod.org](mailto:tskrenes@nglsynod.org)

“By accepting Jesus as the final and definitive revelation of God, the Christian church makes it impossible for us to make up our own customized variations of the spiritual life and get away with it. Not that we don’t try. But we can’t get around him or away from him: Jesus is the incarnation of God, God among and with us. Jesus gathered God’s words spoken to and through God’s people and given to us in our scriptures and spoke them personally to us. Jesus performed God’s works of healing and compassion, forgiveness and salvation, love and sacrifice among us, men and women with personal names, with personal histories. Because Jesus was born in Bethlehem, grew up in Nazareth, gathered disciples in Galilee, ate meals in Bethany, went to a wedding in Cana, told stories in Jericho, prayed in Gethsemane, led a parade down the Mount of Olives, taught in the Jerusalem temple, was killed on the hill Golgotha, and three days later had supper with Cleopas and his friend in Emmaus, none of us are free to make up our private spiritualities; we know too much about his life, his spirituality...



Jesus prevents us from thinking that life is a matter of ideas to ponder or concepts to discuss. Jesus saves us from wasting our lives in the pursuit of cheap thrills and trivializing diversions. Jesus enables us to take seriously who we are and where we are without being seduced by the intimidating lies and illusions that fill the air and trying to be someone else or somewhere else. Jesus keeps our feet on the ground, attentive to children, in conversation with ordinary people, sharing meals with friends and strangers, listening to the wind, observing the wildflowers, touching the sick and wounded, praying simply and unselfconsciously. Jesus insists that we deal with God right here and now, in the place we find ourselves and with the people we are with. Jesus is God here and now.”

-Eugene H. Peterson, “Why Spirituality Needs Jesus”



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**BISHOP THOMAS A. SKRENES (CONTINUED)**

## **SYNOD COUNCIL MEETS IN NEGAUNEE**

The Northern Great Lakes Synod Council meets four times a year. From all eight conferences the 21 total members of the council including the four synod officers gather to hear reports from the synod executive staff as well as to review the work of committees and synod organizations. The January 2013 Synod Council meeting occurred at Immanuel in Negaunee on January 10-11. The Council:

+Received the resignation of Susan Anderson who has moved to Rhinelander, Wisconsin. The Council also received the resignation of Pastor Jean Schmidt who has moved to the LaCrosse Area Synod to accept a new call.

+Appointed Kathy Lowery from First in Ewen and Pastor Christopher Johnson from Christ the King in Escanaba to the Synod Council.

+Heard from the bishop of the new pastors received in our synod's congregations recently.

+Received reports on the resignation of Pastor Lee Goodwin as staff of the synod endowment fund; employment of the new executive director of the Northland Lutheran Retirement Community and the suspension of campus ministry at Northern Michigan University.

+Received the Treasurer's Report that indicates that the income budget for unrestricted mission support for 2012 was met in full plus 1%. Expenses are in normal budget levels with nothing unusual to report.

+Voted to ask the synod's congregations to support financially the Mbagala Tanzanian congregation that was the victim of arson and vandalization recently. The weekend of March 16-17, 2013 will be "Mbagala Sunday" in our synod.

+Affirmed the Shared Ministry Agreement of Bethany in Negaunee and Emanuel in Skandia.

+Called Pastor Peggy Rose to Interim work at First in Gladstone.

+Ratified the Job Descriptions and the Synod Personnel Policies which reduce synod support staff from 2.5 to 2 full time employees.

+Moved Pastors J. Lee Goodwin and Kenneth Michaelis from active to retired clergy status.

+Accepted the transfer request of Pastor Kim Beckmann to the Metropolitan Chicago Synod.

+Discussed the challenges that our congregations face to growing and also the assets these congregations possess. At the March council meeting more work will be done as we plan our emphasis for our mission together in 2013-2016.



**BISHOP THOMAS A. SKRENES (CONTINUED)**

## **MBAGALA SUNDAY MARCH 16-17**

One of our sister congregations Mbagala Parish in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania was destroyed by vandalism and fire on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October. This congregation is one of our companion congregations (Immanuel, Rhinelander.) In fact Pastor Norman and Mrs. Mary Peterson had just visited the church this last August when they were with the synod delegation. On the same day four other Christian congregations were also attacked by the same crowd of radical Muslims in Dar es Salaam.



(Inside the sanctuary before the fire.)



(Inside the Sanctuary after the fire.)

In a country where there is no property fire insurance and where the standard of living is very poor this loss is devastating. The Synod Council is asking that the congregations of our synod receive an offering for the Mbagala parish on March 16-17. If one of our Northern Great Lakes Synod congregations would suffer a fire loss, many of our congregations would assist financially in the rebuilding. The estimated loss of the building has been set at \$61,000. Any amount received by the synod would be appreciated and sent to the Mbagala as a sign of our encouragement and affection for the people of our Church in Tanzania.

## **A WORD FROM PRESIDING BISHOP MARK HANSON “NONVIOLENCE”**

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Matthew 5:9

Jesus' words of promise mean we have work to do.

As long as a child goes to school fearful of being shot;

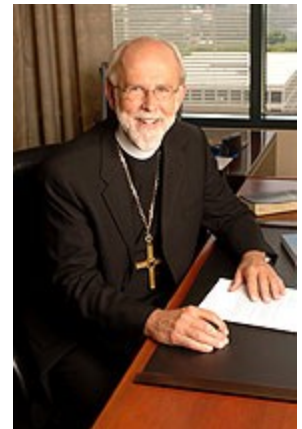
As long as one woman or child is the victim of domestic violence;

As long as we are entertained by images of violence, we have work to do.

As long as we fail to address issues of mental illness;

As long as someone is being persecuted for their faith;

As long as the creation is dying because of our consumptive living, we have work to do.



Yes, as long as a culture of violence is holding us captive -our spirits, our imagination, our debates, our actions - then we have work to do. It is the work of peacemaking, of reconciling relationships and of restoring communities. For this work you have been marked with the cross of Christ. The cross and resurrection have broken the cycle of violence, freeing us for God's future and for one another. In the ELCA social statements and messages, we promise to embrace those who are victims of violence, who need to speak of their pain and lingering fears, and who need to hear the word of new life that brings healing and hope.

We have made the commitment to being peacemakers in a culture of violence.

Let us honor the life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, who said, "The nonviolent approach does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them new self-respect. It calls up resources of strength and courage that they did not know they had."

May it be so for us.

## NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE NAMED AT NORTHLAND LUTHERAN RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Mr. Ron Lawrence of Niagara, Wisconsin has been named the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer at Northland Lutheran Retirement Community in Marinette, Wisconsin. Mr. Lawrence is an experienced executive with various human services and business experience. Most recently he has been employed by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. He also brings a sense of the Church as he has been President of his Lutheran congregation and previously active on a number of synod wide committees.

As Ron begins his work, Pastor Ken Michaelis, long time executive at Northland Lutheran, will transition into retirement. For nearly 33 years, Pastor Michaelis has served the Northland Community building the organization into a premier senior service institution in

northeastern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula. Northland operates Luther Home, a nursing home complex as well as other housing and senior service medical corporations. Northland is committed to faithful Christian ministry.

Congratulations to Ron Lawrence who with his wife will soon be moving to the Marinette area. He will be installed on February 10<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. Central Time at the Northland facility in Marinette.

## REMINDERS

\*Are you a "thanking" church? Every financial gift received by the congregation from a non-member should be thanked with a letter and receipt. Every member's gifts should be acknowledged and appreciated by several communications during the year. Do we spend time to affirm and thank our worship leaders, ushers, lectors, acolytes, church council members, committee people, altar guild, choir ?

\*This is the season of congregational audits. Every congregation is required by its own constitution to have an audit. Every few years an experienced accountant should be asked for recommendations on how to improve the financial procedures and the reporting of all finances in the congregation.

\*Please make sure that a copy of the 2013 member annual report is mailed to the synod office.

\*The 2013 Statement of Mission Support is now due in the synod office. Thanks for sending this in.



## PASTOR DANIEL R. PIEL

1943—2013

**Our brother**, Pastor Daniel Richard Piel, died on Friday, January 18, 2013. He was born on June 22, 1943 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In our synod, he served congregational ministries at First in Ewen and Our Saviour's in Paynesville, Michigan and St. James in Marinette, Wisconsin until his retirement in 2003. He was buried from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Peshtigo, Wisconsin, and is survived by his loving wife, Judy, and six children and their families. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## TRANSITIONS

+Congratulations to **Pastor-elect Tamra Harder** on her call from the people of **Emanuel in Skandia and Bethany in Negaunee**. As she begins her work, she and her husband have moved into our synod. Pastor-elect Harder will be ordained on Friday, February 22, 2013 at St. Martin's Church in Cross Plains, Wisconsin.

+God bless **Pastor Mike Mannisto (St. James, Rudyard)** who has accepted a call to St. Luke's in Sullivan, Wisconsin. Warm wishes to **Pastor Lloyd Luedeman** as he and his wife Amy leave our synod and **Prince of Peace Church in Eagle River**. He has accepted a call to Zion in Appleton, Wisconsin.

+We welcome the return of **Pastor Kurt and Pastor Mary Beth Kovanen** who were installed at the Christ Parish in Ironwood on January 20<sup>th</sup>. They previously served at Christ in Shingleton and Eden in Munising before receiving calls in Appleton, Wisconsin. Welcome home!

+**Pastor Kevin Kaiser** will be installed on Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup> as the pastor at Bethany in Republic, Michigan. Pastor Kaiser had previously served Bethany in Amasa and Trinity in Iron River. God bless his ministry!

+**Wendy Black** and **Luanne Skrenes** recently lost their fathers to death. Wendy's father, Donald Osness was buried from Garce Lutheran in Tomahawk, Wisconsin and Luanne's father, Leon Kallungi was buried from Mission United in Pelkie, Michigan. In Christ shall all be made alive.

+**Pastor Dean Peterson** was hospitalized recently in Marquette. He is home and feeling well. **Pastor John West** continues at the Mather Nursing Center in Ishpeming. He has made some progress after suffering a serious stroke.

+Thomas A. Skrenes, Bishop

[tskrenes@nglsynod.org](mailto:tskrenes@nglsynod.org)



## Urban Plunge FAQ

There are two trips:

Mar 2-6, for young adults

June 10-14, for high schoolers.

Space is limited for both trips.

Congregations who participate will be asked to take an offering or make a donation towards the ministries where we will be serving.

It is not necessary that an adult leader from your congregation accompany any participants. However, there is room on the high school trip for 2 more adults, providing we fill up a second van.

Participants will be asked to cover several meals; lunch on the way there, lunch/dinner on the way home. Everyone will be asked to contribute something to the coolers for breakfast food.

Registration forms will be sent upon request.

Direct any questions for either trip to Rev. Katherine Finegan,  
[kfinegan@nglsynod.org](mailto:kfinegan@nglsynod.org)

Please note: the trip is so affordable that youth can do this AND go to the Youth Quake/Zone at Finlandia.

And once again, space is limited. Do not wait to sign up.

## + From the Assistant to the Bishop +

### Pastor Katherine Finegan

*Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm;  
for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave.*

*Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame.*

*~Song of Solomon 8:6*

Dear Friends in Christ,

The above quote from *Song of Solomon* is one of the tamer passages from that book of the Bible. The whole of *Song of Solomon* is a love poem where the lover and the beloved go back and forth declaring their love, describing their passion, and reveling in the glory of each other. They are completely consumed with each other, on fire for the other, as passionately in love as any two people could be.

So....., a person might ask, what is this PG, if not R-rated, book doing in the Bible?

Well, while we might be a bit confused at the language, or even blush at some of the passages, there is more to be gleaned from this book than just a few nice lines for wedding ceremonies.

*Song of Solomon* gives insight into the nature of God's love. This love poem bears witness to the truth that you and I are on the receiving end of the same kind of passionate love. God loves us with a love strong as death and a passion fierce as the grave. God pursues you, seeks after you, and waits for you with the same kind of fervor as a lover who pursues and seeks after and waits for their beloved.

And we see this love most clearly in the life and death of Jesus. Through Christ, God sends love to you.

Through Christ, we see the lengths that God will go to and the effort God makes to let you know how much you are loved. Not even great suffering and death will stop God from doing what it takes to find you, woo you, and gather you to God.

This Lent, consider God's effort to pursue you through the life and death of Jesus. Listen for God's declaration of love in the passion of Christ, and see how much God loves you in the glory of the cross.

And know that poems of God's love are not limited to the *Song of Solomon*. Hymn #322 of the ELW offers more poetry to describe God's great love:

*Oh, love,*

*how deep, how broad, how high,  
Beyond all thought or fantasy,  
That God, the Son of God, should take  
Our mortal frame for mortals' sake.*

*For us he prayed, for us he taught;  
For us his daily works he wrought,  
By words and signs and actions thus  
still seeking not himself, but us.*

*For us by wickedness betrayed,  
or us, in crown of thorns arrayed,  
he bore the shameful cross and death;  
for us he gave his dying breath.*

Love in Christ,

Pastor Katherine Finegan

### Pastoral Vacancies and Interims

#### Full-time

Holy Trinity, Chassell - Pastor Chuck Fluegel  
 Shepherd of the Lakes, Sayner - Pastor Devon Barrix  
 Faith, Three Lakes - Pastor Tom Lee  
 Good Shepherd, Peshtigo - Pastor Jim Wendt  
 Sharon, Bessemer - Pastor Fran Strong  
 First, Gladstone - Pastor Peggy Rose  
 Ascension, Minocqua - Associate Pastor  
 St. James, Rudyard - Rev. Matt Lamb  
 Prince of Peace, Eagle River -  
 Bethany, Amasa and Trinity, Stambaugh - Rev. Bonny Kinnunen

#### Part-time

St. Mark's, Marquette - Pastor Bill Payne  
 Holy Cross, Baraga - Pastor John Autio  
 Bethany, Perkins - Pastor Erik Heskin

*"Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" (Psalm 150:6, NRSV)*

As we close the books on 2012, we give thanks to God for the generosity of the congregations of this Northern Great Lake Synod. We ended the year with an increase of \$9,888 in mission support giving over 2011, with 43 congregations meeting their pledge and an additional 22 congregations exceeding their pledge. Praise God for these gifts as we partner together to do the work of Christ in this Synod.

#### **Please note:**

**February 11, 2013 - Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod Office so that January 2013 gifts can be credited to the Synod's fiscal year.**

- Betsy Koski, Bookkeeper

As of 12/31	2011	2012	\$ Change	% Change
Pledged Amount	823,634	822,074	- 1,560	- .1%
Amount Received	822,798	832,686	+9,888	+ 1.2%
Designated Gifts	244,742	240,012	- 4,730	- 1.9%



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**Volume 26 - Issues 2 & 3  
Feb. 2013 & Mar. 2013**



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**A Word on Stewardship from Charles Lane**

*“The goal of our stewardship ministry is to help God’s people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of the time, talents, and finances God has entrusted to them.”*

There are six stewardship values that have shown a direct correlation between Biblical stewardship practices and a growing relationship with Jesus. They are: 1) giving intentionally; 2) giving regularly; 3) giving generously; 4) giving of our first-fruits; 5) giving proportionately; and 6) giving cheerfully.

Giving in these ways will lead a giver’s heart to Jesus. Stewardship leaders have the privilege of asking, “How can we help people become this kind of giver, so that their heart might be drawn closer to Jesus?”

- From “Ask, Thank, Tell” by Charles R. Lane





# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## February 2013



February 1-3 / **Clergy Spouse Retreat** meeting in Appleton, WI

February 6 / **World Hunger Committee** at United, Crystal Falls beginning at Noon CT

February 7-8 / **Mobility Conference** at Madison, WI starting at Noon CT

February 8-9 / **"Beyond our Doors" Congregation Councils Retreat** at FLLC

February 9 / **Lutheran Men in Mission Workshop** at First, Gladstone starting at 8:30 a.m. ET

February 10 / **Installation of Ron Lawrence** at Northland Lutheran Retirement Community starting at 3:00 p.m. CT

February 11 / **Mission Outreach Committee** meets at the Synod Office starting at 11:00 a.m. ET; and **Fiscal Closing**- Last day for checks to arrive in Synod Office so that 2012 benevolence gifts are credited to 2012!

February 16 / **Transformational Ministry** meeting at Immanuel, Escanaba starting at 10:00 a.m. ET

February 17 / **Evangelism Committee** meeting at FLLC starting at 3 p.m. CT and **Leadership Support Committee** meeting at FLLC starting at 4:00 p.m. CT and **Theological Event** at FLLC starts with registration at 4:00 p.m. CT

February 22 / **Executive Committee** at Pastor Doug Johnson's starting at 10:00 a.m. CT

*Feb. continued....*

February 23 / **Endowment Committee** meeting at the Synod Office starting at 11:00 a.m. ET

February 24 / **Installation of Pastor Kevin Kaiser** at Bethany, Republic starting at 3:00 p.m. ET

February 27-28 / **Conference of Bishops** in Chicago, IL

## March 2013



March 1-5 / **Conference of Bishops** in Chicago, IL

March 3 / **Pastor Tamra Harder Installation** at Emanuel, Skandia

March 7-10 / **Assistant to the Bishops Meeting** in San Antonio, TX

March 10 / **Pastor Tamra Harder Installation** at Bethany, Negaunee and **SPUNGE Retreat** in Waupaca, WI

March 11 /

March 12 / **Synod Assembly Planning** meets at the Synod Office starting at 11:00 a.m. ET

March 19 / **Synod Mission** meets at the Synod Office at 4:00 p.m. ET





# Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

January 23, 2013

To Governor Walker and Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature:

As faith leaders representing 809 congregations with 468,000 members throughout the state of Wisconsin, we wish to congratulate you on the start of this new legislative session, and share with you our prayers for wisdom and strength to face it all with compassion, collegiality and peace.

The congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) are committed to ending hunger and addressing the root causes of poverty in our Wisconsin communities. Our consciences demand that we earnestly defend the rights and the dignity of the weakest and poorest among us. In response, our congregations and Lutheran ministries provide critically important services to our neighbors in need of food, shelter, education, and rehabilitative care.

Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan is a long-standing partner with our congregations and the state of Wisconsin. LSS provides a variety of services from child well-being to long term care to mental health, and has seen a continued increase in demand for services over the past several years. LSS served more than 100,000 individuals in 2012 while addressing decreasing revenues. Your consideration of funding and support for these critical services is needed.

The Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin (LOPPW) serves as the public voice of the ELCA, and represents its convictions and values in the state legislative process. LOPPW and its network of advocates concentrate on legislation that transforms the lives of those living in poverty. We ask for your consideration and support of LOPPW's legislative priorities, which include services to homeless youth, and funding for school nutrition programs in the upcoming biennial budget.

We recognize the decisions and demands placed on you as our elected leaders are complicated and may impact the people of this state for years to come. At the same time, we sincerely believe it is important the decisions made by our government not place undue challenges on those who can least afford to bear those burdens. We ask that you be mindful of their needs in your consideration of policies and programs that serve the most vulnerable.



Each week our ELCA congregations pray that God grants you and your staff the strength, wisdom, and compassion to serve the people of Wisconsin. We give thanks for the commitment you have made to our state government, and we hope your negotiations and debates this session be guided by care and respect for the lives of all people.

With respect,



Bishop Thomas Skrenes  
Northern Great Lakes Synod



Bishop Jim Justman  
East Central Synod of Wisconsin



Bishop Duane Pederson  
Northwest Synod of Wisconsin



Bishop Bruce Burnside  
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin



Bishop James Arends  
La Crosse Area Synod



Bishop Jeff Barrow  
Greater Milwaukee Synod

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**Northwest Synod of Wisconsin** 944 24 ¼ St, Suite 2 • Chetek, WI • 715-849-6810 • [www.nwswi.org](http://www.nwswi.org)

**South-Central Synod of Wisconsin** 2909 Landmark Pl • Madison, WI • 608-270-0201 • [www.scsw-elca.org](http://www.scsw-elca.org)

**La Crosse Area Synod** 2301 South Ave • La Crosse, WI • 608-788-5000 • [www.lacrosseareasynd.org](http://www.lacrosseareasynd.org)

**Greater Milwaukee Synod** 1212 S. Layton Blvd • Milwaukee, WI • 414-671-1212 • [www.milwaukeeesynd.org](http://www.milwaukeeesynd.org)

**Lutheran Office for Public Policy** 2909 Landmark Pl • Madison, WI • 608-270-0201 • [www.loppw.org](http://www.loppw.org)

**Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan** [www.lsswis.org](http://www.lsswis.org)

## **Regional Coordinator Pastor Carl Richard Evenson**

### **Reflections on 37 years of Ordained Ministry**

The Rev. Carl Richard Evenson has a great smile and a positive attitude about life and this Church. For nearly four decades he has served as an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament. His field of mission for the last seventeen years has been the 1700 ELCA congregations, nearly three thousand rostered leaders and a million Lutherans in Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois and Upper Michigan. Describing his ministry as Region Five Coordinator, Pastor Evenson said, “Regional Coordinators are like the connective tissue in the church, bringing communication, collaboration and mutual ministry between synods and the churchwide office in the areas of candidacy, assignment of seminarians for call to congregations, campus ministry, mobility of pastors in the region and nurturing church leadership.”

He was born in Brooklyn, New York, and graduated from the University of Minnesota, Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Chicago. At LSTC, Carl Richard earned a Doctor of Ministry degree. He was ordained in 1975. Pastor Evenson served congregations in Boyceville, Wheeler, Green Bay and Neenah Wisconsin. He retired as Regional Coordinator at the end of 2012.

Pastor Evenson has been married for 42 years to Elsie Week Evenson and they have three married children: Carl Richard IV (Nichole), Joshua (Jennifer,) and Rev. Rakel Evenson (Rev. Ben Ingelson). Pastor Rakel serves a parish in Bolingbrook, Illinois.



Bishop Duane Pederson served as Chair of the Region 5 Council. Working with Pastor Evenson, he said, “From the moment I stepped off the dais following my election, when Carl Richard was standing at the bottom of the stairs with sage advice and the calendar of commitments that were suddenly mine, to his steady guidance in candidacy, mobility, and seminarian assignment over the years, Carl Richard has been an anchor for all of Region 5 and for me. With 12 synods scattered over a vast geography, Carl Richard traveled extensively, worked tirelessly, and served well to connect the expressions of the Lord's church with one another.”

“I’ve worked with twenty-nine bishops in the region’s twelve synods,” Evenson said. “And I have worked under all three Presiding Bishops and with so many wonderful synod staff, assistant to the bishops, and churchwide personnel. It has been my joy to serve as regional coordinator to the people, pastors, and synods of Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin and Upper Michigan.”

# Day of Theology

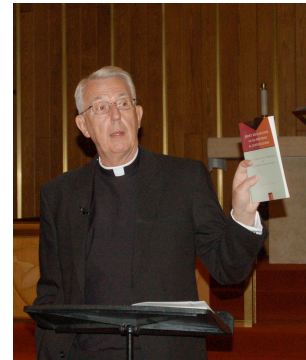
## December 6, 2012

Acknowledging how far we've come but recognizing there's much more work to do, two national speakers addressed clergy and laypeople from different denominations at the Day of Theology on Christian Unity held Dec. 6 at Messiah Lutheran Church in Marquette.

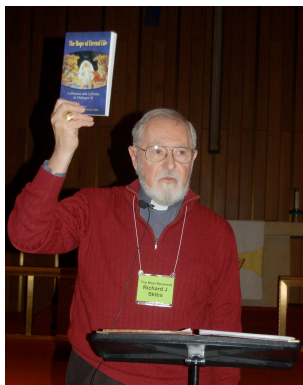
The Most Rev. Richard Sklba, auxiliary bishop emeritus of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, and the Rev. Lowell Almen, former secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, discussed their involvement with the U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue. The men were co-chairs of the dialogue's eleventh round that examined issues related to the Christian's life beyond death and resulted in the report on "The Hope of Eternal Life."

The conversation on this topic stemmed from principles of life-after-death developed in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, which the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church signed Oct. 31, 1999 in Augsburg, Germany.

Pastor Almen said, "Already 13 years have gone by as of this past October, but that date remains a significant one for Lutheran and Catholic relationships."



The Joint Declaration identified a consensus regarding justification by faith, the topic that became the first point of controversy between Martin Luther and the Catholic Church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The declaration reads: "Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works."



Bishop Sklba explained that the national Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue felt it was necessary to assess the degree to which the Joint Declaration had brought consensus to the resolution of the contentious questions regarding purgatory, indulgences and prayers for the dead. Thus, the dialogue on "the Hope of Eternal Life" began in Dec. 2005 and ended with approval of the final report in Oct. 2010.

Bishop Sklba offered this summary of the report. "In light of the 1999 Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, and in view of our meticulous study of all the questions related to 'The Hope of Eternal Life,' we members of the dialogue are convinced that the issues so bitterly debated in the sixteenth century and thereafter, no longer need be considered church-dividing. Each Church has its own preferred terminology to teach and celebrate these mysteries of faith, often sanctified by centuries of pastoral usage, which should be respected, and perhaps even shared when appropriate."

Bishop Sklba stated that his participation in the dialogue was a wonderful experience “dealing with the religious traditions that we have shared but then growing into friendship that makes all the difference and enables us to see the traditions through each other’s glasses and come together in a new way.”

Through the dialogue, Pastor Almen came to realize the importance of mutual trust in engaging questions. “If one only does it from a kind of laboratory perspective of dealing with minute theological issues, it would be possible to have some good conversations. But the deeper conversations come out of mutual trust and mutual respect, even as we recognize that the ecumenical journey will be a long one, much longer than we would prefer, but to take that task of the church seriously will require much work going forward.”



Pastor Almen thinks a sense of urgency in continuing ecumenical endeavors needs to be cultivated, especially among the young who have no experience of what life was like among the Christian Churches before the 1960s. Yet, we do need to be mindful of the various types of ecumenism that are currently in existence.

The clergy and laypeople at the event came up with examples of ecumenical undertakings that are taking place locally, such as Room at the Inn homeless shelter, Cropwalk, Cursillo, Teens Encounter Christ, vacation bible schools and ecumenical prayer services.

Pastor Almen echoed a favorite Latin phrase of Bishop Alexander Sample’s when he stated, “Lex orandi, lex credendi. As we pray, so shall we believe.”

In that vein, members of the local Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal and United Methodist Churches gathered for an ecumenical prayer service at 6:30 that night. Bishop Sklba delivered the homily and offered these words of wisdom.



“In the last analysis, such unity (that we seek) is God’s gift, not our doing. All the dialogues in the world, as long as they remain mere human endeavors, will not and cannot achieve full final ecclesial reconciliation. They only prepare the soil. The gift is God’s alone,” Bishop Sklba noted.

“There must be some dying and rising before we are truly ready to receive that gift. Consequently, our prayer this evening is not simply petition addressed to the King of the Universe, no matter how beautifully sung or phrased. Our prayer must be one of humble posture before God, which changes us, not God, and enables us, Lutheran, Methodist, Episcopal and Catholic, to become fully the face of the Christ we serve.”

*This article was written by Loreene Zeno Koskey, Catholic Diocese of Marquette.*



# EARTHKEEPERS II

## An Interfaith Environmental Initiative 2013-14

The Northern Great Lakes Synod, once again, has an unusual opportunity to join our interfaith colleagues in a new, innovative expression of our stewardship for the natural environment. Some of you may remember that, in 2004-2009, thirty-seven of our Synod's parishes participated in Earthkeeping partnership that elicited formal commendations from State governments and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Benchmarks from those efforts were the collection of 320 tons of electronic waste, the disposal of 47 tons of household toxins and the planting of 12,000 trees.

Now, thanks to three years of behind-the-scenes work building on this vision, we are invited to join the US Forest Service and the EPA in participating in a practical and cost-saving pollution prevention initiative. A second step will be establishing 30 community gardens over the next two years.

Initial efforts for Earthkeeper II will set new standards of energy conservation among our parishes. We need 10 congregations from our Synod to provide such important leadership during 2013. Funds are available for us to complete an energy audit of parish buildings at no cost to the congregation. These are funded by a grant from the US EPA and are valued at \$2500 -\$3000. They involve a team making a 2-3 hour visit to congregations. In the weeks following, a formal report will be presented to each respective faith community. There will be no obligation to implement any changes, but if your congregation so chooses, initial grants of \$500-\$1,000 will be available for your use. For larger energy conservation projects we will work with parishes to provide matching funds of up to \$15,000 which are available from the local power companies.

Pastor Elizabeth Zant and Pastor Keith Kolstad are serving as our representatives for the interfaith Earthkeeping Implementation team. Pastor Jon Magnuson, Director of the Cedar Tree Institute, will be working with the Synod Office to coordinate our Synodical involvement. Kyra Fillmore is serving as the Project Coordinator. She can be reached by phone at 906-250-7643 or by email: [kyra.fillmore@gmail.com](mailto:kyra.fillmore@gmail.com).

We will also soon be communicating with each of our congregations regarding the Earthkeeper's community garden vision. The intention is to support existing gardens already on congregational properties and establish at least 4 new sites over the coming months in collaboration with our interfaith partners. Thank you for your prayers and support as, in the weeks and months ahead, we bring this dream alive.

Respectfully,  
Bishop Tom Skrenes and Pastor Jon Magnuson

(With greetings from our interfaith partners that include the following faith traditions: Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Jewish, Presbyterian, Zen Buddhist, United Methodist, Baha'i, Unitarian Universalist, American Friends)



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# **MARKED!**

***with the cross of Christ forever***

## **Annual Events for Confirmation Classes!**

**MARKED!** is an opportunity for your confirmands to spend time with our Bishop and an opportunity for Bishop Skrenes to spend time with your confirmands! This event will introduce your youth to the larger church and help them dream about where God might be leading them. There will be music, fun, food, fellowship, worship, gifts, photo opps, and much more!

**THIS EVENT IS FOR CONFIRMATION CLASSES, THEIR PASTORS & ADULT GUIDES/MENTORS**

**The dates & locations for spring 2013 are:**

**Sunday, April 21 at Messiah Lutheran, Marquette, MI 4-7:00 pm**

**Sunday, April 28 at Prince of Peace, Eagle River, WI 4-7:00 pm**

There is no charge for these events which are sponsored by a generous grant from the Siebert Lutheran Foundation of Milwaukee in partnership with the Northern Great Lakes Synod Evangelism Committee & Youth Ministries. Our expectation is that every confirmand in the synod will attend at least one of these events (which will be held at different locations each year) during their confirmation career.

**TO REGISTER:** We need to know your congregation (name & city), the number of youth and adults, and which location you will be attending. Please register with the Synod Office at 906-228-2300 or email us at [ngls@nglsynod.org](mailto:ngls@nglsynod.org)

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS APRIL 15 FOR BOTH EVENTS**

**Hope to see you there!!!**



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[www.nglsynod.org/prayfaithfully](http://www.nglsynod.org/prayfaithfully)

## Prayer Calendar – February 2013

1	Pray for all those attending the <b>Clergy Spouse Conference</b> in Appleton this weekend.
2	Pray for all of our <b>pastors</b> , active and retired who are <b>celebrating birthdays in February</b> : <i>Bob Langseth, Doug Norquist, Tom Lee, Craig Mansur, Doug Schoen, Jim Wendt, Judy Kincaid, Les Niemi, Tom Lindblad, Wally Leno.</i>
3	Pray for all of our African American brothers and sisters as they celebrate their heritage during <b>African American History Month</b>
4	Pray for our <b>pastors who are celebrating ordination anniversaries this month</b> : <i>Steven Solberg, Chryst Hendrick, Christopher Johnson, Barb Girod.</i>
5	Pray for <b>those in prisons</b> . Keep them from harm. These are God's children, too.
6	Pray for the congregational members in our partner synod at <b>Christ, La Vale MD</b> ( <i>Rev Charles Erzkus</i> ), <b>St. John, Cumberland MD</b> ( <i>Rev Tormod Svensson</i> ), and <b>St. Luke, Cumberland MD</b> ( <i>Int: Rev David Wright</i> ).
7	Pray for our <b>retired pastors</b> and their <b>spouses</b> – <i>Robert (Mary) Williams and Thomas (Susan) Wickstrom.</i>
8	Pray for the <b>spouses of deceased pastors</b> – <i>Ruth Warmanen &amp; Helen Rankinen.</i>
9	Pray for all those <b>Active Candidates for Rostered Ministry</b> from our synod.
10	Pray for all those traveling to and attending the February <b>Fire and Ice Guys Getaway Weekend</b> and <b>Second Sunday Folk Concert/Dance</b> at Fortune Lake Camp.
11	Pray for <b>those negotiating for peace</b> in Afghanistan, Syria and other troubled lands.
12	Pray for all those in our synod who are living with heart disease. <b>February is Heart Health Month</b> when money and awareness are raised to combat this #1 killer.
13	 Pray for all the faithful in our Synod as we begin our <b>pilgrimage to the cross</b> , that with all those Christians who make this Lenten journey we may be filled with the gifts of life.
13	Pray for our <b>Sunday schools and Christian Education programs</b> throughout the church that our young people may grow in their faith and know Jesus.
14	Pray for our <b>Synod Staff</b> – <i>Bishop Tom Skrenes, Assistant Pastor Katherine Finegan, Louise Ingalls, &amp; Betsy Koski</i> as they meet on this day.
15	For the <b>unemployed and underemployed</b> , keep them and their families warm, well-fed, and hopeful this winter.
16	Pray for the <b>members of Maneromango Lutheran Church, Kisarawe, Tanzania</b> ( <i>Rev Prosper Melli</i> ) and their <b>NGLS Companion Congregation, First Lutheran, Ewen</b> ( <i>Rev Timothy Nyikako.</i> )



<b>17</b>	Pray for those attending the February 17-18 <b>Theological Conference for Leaders</b> at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp.
<b>18</b>	Pray for <b>President Obama</b> and for all past and future presidents on this <b>Presidents' Day</b> .
<b>19</b>	Pray for all of the people in this country and around the world who are not being treated with justice, respect, and dignity on this <b>World Day for Social Justice</b> . Pray that each of us will speak up for those who seem invisible and without voices.
<b>20</b>	Pray for all those participating in <b>Lenten Services</b> in our synod.
<b>21</b>	Pray for all <b>Associates in Ministry and Licensed Lay Ministers</b> in our synod.
<b>22</b>	Pray for those attending the <b>Family Weekend at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp</b> and for the <b>Synod Executive Committee</b> as they meet in Florence, W.
<b>23</b>	Pray for all <b>those addicted to drugs and/or alcohol</b> that they will seek help and keep trying to stay substance-free even when they slip up.
<b>24</b>	Pray for the congregation of <b>Bethany, Republic and Rev Kevin Kaiser</b> as he is installed as their Pastor today.
<b>25</b>	Pray for the <b>members of Holy Trinity, Chassell, Shepherd of the Lakes, Sayner and Faith, Three Lakes and their interim pastors</b> as they continue in the call process during a <b>pastoral vacancy</b> .
<b>26</b>	Pray for <b>winter activities</b> and the <b>fellowship</b> created in our congregations.
<b>27</b>	For those busy <b>pastors</b> who nevertheless expend their time and efforts to <b>teach Lay School</b> classes and for <b>all those students</b> who benefit from their hard work.
<b>28</b>	Pray for the congregational members in our partner synod members at <b>St Paul, Cumberland MD (Rev Marsha Garrett)</b> , <b>St Paul, Frostburg MD (Rev Richard Schoenly)</b> , and <b>Christ, Millersville MD (Rev David Simpson.)</b>

***"We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod  
as part of our partner synod relationship."***







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## Prayer Calendar – March 2013

<b>1</b>	Pray for our <i>Bishop, Thomas Skrenes</i> and all of the ELCA Bishops as they attend the <b>Conference of Bishops</b> in Illinois these days.
<b>2</b>	Pray for those <b>young adults attending the Urban Plunge</b> long weekend at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago <i>March 2-6</i> .
<b>3</b>	Pray for all of our <b>pastors</b> , active and retired who are <b>celebrating birthdays in March</b> : <i>Ralph Backman, Jeremy Winter, Norman Lund, Doug Buck</i> .
<b>4</b>	For those <b>brave men and women in the armed forces</b> who are away from home defending our country and pray <i>for the families they have left behind</i> .
<b>5</b>	Pray for all of the <b>Christian men and women</b> across this synod who <i>give their time, energy, and resources</i> to their congregations, the NGLS, and charitable organizations everywhere. <b>God Bless these volunteers.</b>
<b>6</b>	Pray for <b>those in jails and prisons</b> . Keep them from harm. These are God's children, too.
<b>7</b>	Pray for the congregational members in our partner synod members at <b>Glen, Glen Burnie MD</b> ( <i>Rev David Berg</i> ); <b>Gloria Dei!, Arnold MD</b> ( <i>Rev Thomas Williamsen</i> ); and <b>Joy Reigns, Edgewater, MD</b> ( <i>Rev Barbara Parrish</i> .)
<b>8</b>	Pray for our <b>Synod Council</b> as they meet at <i>Christ the King in Escanaba</i> March 8 & 9.
<b>9</b>	Pray for <i>Pastor Chad Anderson and Pastor Jeremy Winter</i> who are <b>celebrating anniveraries of their ordinations this month</b> .
<b>10</b>	Pray for those attending the <b>Second Sunday Folk dance and music</b> at <i>Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp</i> .
<b>11</b>	Pray for the <b>members of Kimara Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania</b> ( <i>Rev Elisha Mdomi</i> ) and their <b>NGLS Companion Congregation, Calvary Lutheran, Minocqua</b> ( <i>Rev Maxine Gray</i> .)
<b>12</b>	For those <b>struggling with gender orientation and identity</b> issues. May they find peace and confidence in their lives.
<b>13</b>	Pray for the <b>spouses of deceased pastors</b> – <i>Diane Shepard &amp; Lenita Scholer</i> .
<b>14</b>	Pray for the <b>victims of bullying and violence</b> , whether physical, emotional, or verbal. Pray for <b>enlightenment of the bullies</b> that they may truly see and understand the harm they are inflicting.
<b>15</b>	Pray for <b>seminarians</b> who await assignments to synods and calls to congregations.
<b>16</b>	Pray and give thanks for <b>police officers and fire fighters</b> who risk their lives to keep us safe.

<b>17</b>	Pray for the <b>restoration of the church building and the members of the congregation of the Mbagala Lutheran Church</b> in <i>Dar es Salaam, Tanzania</i> that was heavy damaged by an arson fire during an interreligious insurrection in October.
<b>18</b>	For the <b>peace makers</b> in <i>Afghanistan, Syria, Mali, and in other troubled lands across this globe</i> . We pray for true <b>Peace on Earth</b> .
<b>19</b>	Pray for the <b>Synod Mission Outreach Committee</b> as they meet today.
<b>20</b>	For those <b>busy pastors</b> who expend their time and efforts to <b>teach Lay School classes</b> and <b>for the students</b> who benefit from their efforts with <i>knowledge and spiritual enrichment</i> .
<b>21</b>	Pray for our <b>retired clergy</b> and their <b>spouses</b> : <i>Pastor Harry(Dorothy) Andersen &amp; Pastor Peter (Marilyn) Andersen</i> .
<b>22</b>	Pray for <i>sustainable sources of clean drinking water</i> for all on this <b>World Water Day</b> . Pray also for our <b>Northern Great Lakes</b> that our elected officials will guard their purity and allow access to their beauty and power of restoration and recreation.
<b>23</b>	Pray for the congregational members in our partner synod members at <b>Living Water, Kent Island MD</b> ( <i>Rev Mark Walter</i> ); <b>Our Redeemer, Glen Burnie MD</b> ( <i>Rev Alan Traher</i> ); and <b>Our Shepherd, Severna Park, MD</b> ( <i>Rev Earl Janssen</i> .)
<b>24</b>	Pray for all <b>church musicians</b> who always practice and perform above and beyond our expectations.
<b>25</b>	Pray for <b>prayer ministries</b> – those who write devotions and those whose lives are touched by them.
<b>26</b>	Pray for our <b>Jewish</b> brothers and sisters as they remember our common past during their <b>Passover Seder</b> meals.
<b>27</b>	Pray for the <b>members of Holy Cross, Baraga, St. Mark's, Marquette, and Bethany, Perkins</b> and their <i>interim Pastors</i> as they continue in the call process during a <b>pastoral vacancy</b> .
<b>28</b>	 <p>As Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, pray that you too may find wholeness in a life of service as you seek to be a faithful disciple of your Savior.</p>
<b>29</b>	 <p>We are here at the foot of the cross, we gaze into his eyes, we see his pain, and in all this we experience God's gifts of grace. Pray that as you leave the cross you take the crucified Christ with you.</p>
<b>30</b>	 <p>As the day draws to a close and darkness descends and deepens, we do not yet see light, yet we know the blazing light of Easter is about to burst forth. Pray for hope in the dark times of your life, knowing that the life of the resurrected Christ is God's gift to you.</p>
<b>31</b>	 <p><b>Christ is risen! Alleluia!</b> Say these words over and over this day – make this your breath prayer today and every day. Repeat it when you wake and when you go to bed.</p>

*"We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod as part of our partner synod relationship."*

# *Thank You for Your Gifts!*

## **Beacon House**

Grace, Gwinn

## **Central UP Food Bank, INC.**

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## **ELCA Disaster Funds**

First, Ewen  
Immanuel, Negaunee  
First, Iron River  
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All Saints, Wakefield  
Salem, Ironwood  
Grace, South Range  
Mission United, Pelkie  
Bethany, Ishpeming  
Calvary, Minocqua  
United, L'Anse  
Ascension, Minocqua  
Faith, Calumet  
Immanuel, Rhineland  
Trinity, Rhineland  
Grace, Gwinn  
Eden, Munising  
First, Gladstone  
Bethel, Menominee  
Bethany, Norway  
United, Crystal Falls  
Community, Palmer  
Shepherd of the Lakes, Sayner

## **ELCA Global Barnyard**

Christ the King, Escanaba

## **ELCA 100 Wells Challenge**

Our Redeemer, Newberry

## **Endowment Fund/Answer the Call**

Grace, Pembine  
Christ Luth. Parish, Ironwood  
Community, Palmer  
Our Saviour, Paynesville  
Prince of Peace, Marquette  
Eden, Munising  
Karin Carlson  
Axel and Barbara Anderson  
Victor Klumb  
Emmanuel, Menominee  
Mary White  
Kristine Carlson  
Wayne and Eileen Stordahl  
James and Judith Quirk  
Rev. Lee & Jean Goodwin

## **Feeding America 50105**

Immanuel, Negaunee

## **Heifer Project**

Trinity, Rhineland

## **Kisarawe Maintenance**

Karl Langseth  
Alice Pegram

## **Lutheran Campus Ministry**

Immanuel, Negaunee  
Calvary, Rapid River  
United, Crystal Falls  
Grace, Gwinn

## **Lutheran Social Services**

First, Trenary  
Our Redeemer, Newberry

## **Lutheran World Relief**

Prince of Peace, Marquette  
Calvary, Rapid River  
Salem, Ironwood  
Faith, Calumet  
Bethlehem, Florence  
Grace, Gwinn  
Immanuel WELCA, Negaunee

## **Malaria Net Project**

All Saints, Wakefield  
Immanuel WELCA, Negaunee  
St. Paul's, Mass City  
First, Gladstone  
Faith, Ishpeming  
Bethany, Amasa

## **Mission Outreach**

Immanuel, Escanaba  
Faith, Calumet  
Bethany, Ishpeming

## **Mwangaza Ed. for Partnership**

Bethel, Ishpeming

## **Planned Giving Counselor**

David & Dawn Veldhuizen  
Bishop Tom & Luanne Skrenes

## **Seminarian Support**

Calvary, Minocqua  
Sharon, Bessemer  
Dick and Evy Bjorklund  
Faith WELCA, Rock  
Faith, Sault Ste. Marie  
Rev. Keving Kaiser

## **Skogman Scholarship Fund**

Rev. James and Laura Wendt  
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Steven and Joni Peffers  
Bishop Tom & Luanne Skrenes

## **St. Vincent DePaul**

Grace, Gwinn

## **Tanzanian Dental Mission**

Rev. Douglas & Marilyn Schoen  
St. Mark's, Marquette  
Cluster 8, Sup. Central SWO  
Cluster 3, Headwaters SWO  
Bishop Tom & Luanne Skrenes  
Bishop Dale & Jo Skogman

## **Tanzanian Projects**

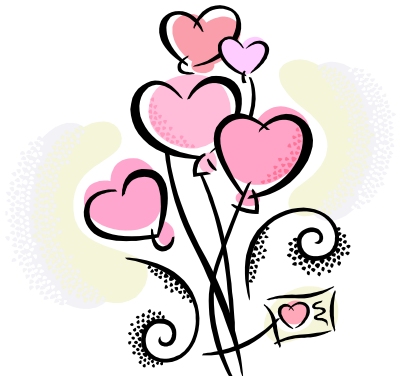
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## **Tanzanian Student Scholarships**

Trinity, Rhineland  
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## **World Missionary Support**

Pioneer Lake, Conover  
Trinity, Rhineland  
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Trinity, Stambaugh  
Our Redeemer, Newberry



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