

## Report of the Bishop – Part 1

### Ordinations

- Wendy Anderson, June 11, 2005 to Concordia Pickerel Lake, Albert Lea – July 1, 2005
- Daniel Doering, May 28, 2005 to associate, Grace, Waseca – June 5, 2005
- Joshua Ehrlar, July 17, 2005 to Pontoppidan, Ellendale & First, Hope – Sept. 1, 2005
- Kristi Koppel, Oct. 23, 2005 to associate, St. Olaf, Austin – Nov. 1, 2005
- Bradley Lindberg, Oct. 16, 2005 to associate, Christ, Byron – Oct. 25, 2005
- SiriAnna Strommen Campbell, Dec. 3, 2005 to associate, Mount Olive, Rochester – Jan. 1, 2006

### Re-Instated to the Roster

- Janet White to Trondhjem, Lonsdale – Sept. 16, 2005
- Howard White to Trondhjem, Lonsdale – Sept. 16, 2005

### Received from the Presbyterian Church USA

- Glen Bickford, Interim, St. Luke, Goodhue -- Sept. 12, 2005

### New Calls Within the Synod

- Chris Brekke, Good Shepherd, Rochester to Trinity, West Concord – Sept. 1, 2005
- Keith Homstad, on leave from call to Hegre, Kenyon (part time) – Aug. 28, 2005
- William Meiers, Calvary, Rapidan to Senior pastor, Hosanna, Rochester – Nov. 16, 2005
- John Miller, one year term call, St. Matthew & St. Paul, Harmony – March 20, 2005; extended one year – March 20, 2006
- Charles Ortloff, on leave from call to

Senior pastor, Gloria Dei, Rochester – March 15, 2006

- Todd Substad, on leave from call to Jackson Lake, Amboy & Faith, Delavan (part time) – Jan. 8, 2006
- Elaine Thoreson, AIM on leave from call to St. John, Kasson – Dec. 24, 2004

### Synod Council Calls to Specialized Ministry

- David Beckstrom, on leave from call to Interim, St. Olaf, Austin – March 1, 2005
- David Beckstrom, Interim, St. Olaf, Austin to Interim, Ascension, Albert Lea – Feb. 10, 2006
- Clark Cary, on leave from call to Interim, Ascension, Albert Lea – June 7, 2005
- Clark Cary, from Interim, Ascension, Albert Lea to Interim, United, Red Wing – Feb. 16, 2006
- Daniel Dimick, on leave from call to Interim, Gol, Kenyon – Oct. 1, 2005
- Kathryn Gauger, on leave from call to Interim, East & West St. Olaf, Byron – Oct. 15, 2004
- Karl Rydholm, associate, Messiah, North Mankato to Chaplain, St. Luke's Lutheran Care Center, Blue Earth – Aug. 22, 2005
- Jane Timmerman, on leave from call to Interim, Fountain & Root Prairie, Fountain – Dec. 1, 2005
- Susan Wallager, on leave from call to Interim, Concordia Pickerel Lake, Albert Lea – Jan. 9, 2005
- Lyndon West, on leave from call to Interim, First English, Faribault – Dec. 15, 2005

### Synod Council Calls to Specialized Ministry

- Eric Feig, First, Lake City to Army National Guard Chaplain – Aug. 1, 2005
- Scott Hagen, associate, Our Savior,



Faribault to US Army Chaplain – Dec. 1, 2005

### Received into the Synod

- David Aaker, Eastern North Dakota Synod to St. Paul, LeCenter – Aug. 15, 2005
- Robert Albing, Minneapolis Area Synod to Cross of Christ & Cannon River, Welch – Aug. 15, 2005
- David Barker, retired from Northeastern Minnesota Synod – Feb. 15, 2006
- Terry Brandt, Southwestern Minnesota Synod to associate, Grace, Fairmont – July 5, 2005
- Carl Bruihler, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin to Senior pastor, First, LeSueur – Sept. 1, 2005
- Owen Gaasedelen, retired from Northeastern Iowa Synod – Feb. 1, 2006
- Michael Gustafson, Northwestern Minnesota Synod to St. Luke, Goodhue – Dec. 4, 2005
- Tom Hanson, Southwestern Minnesota Synod to Interim, Good Shepherd, Rochester – Oct. 27, 2005
- Gail Klavetter, Southwestern Minnesota Synod to Interim, Grand Meadow & Bear Creek, Grand Meadow – March 15, 2004
- Glenn Leaf, Minneapolis Area Synod to Interim, Gloria Dei, Rochester – April 1, 2005
- Larry Lindmark, retired from LaCrosse Area Synod – Jan. 1, 2006
- Carroll Marohl, Montana Synod to Senior pastor, First, Red Wing – July 15, 2005
- Connie McCallister, St Paul Area Synod to Interim, St. Paul, Red Wing – Jan. 9, 2005
- Richard Rehfeldt, retired from Southeastern Iowa Synod – Jan. 5, 2006
- Kristin Schlauderaff, Lacrosse Area Synod to Senior pastor, St. Paul, Red Wing – Oct. 1, 2005

### Retirement

- Helen Beckstrand, AIM, Administrator, Trinity, Blue Earth – June 1, 2005
- Jeffrey Daehn, AIM, on leave from call – Feb. 11, 2005
- Kieran Darcy, Fountain & Root Prairie, Fountain – Aug. 31, 2005
- John Heruth, continuing disability – Sept. 1, 2005
- Gary Terrio, Chaplain, St. Luke's Lutheran Care Center, Blue Earth – June 30, 2005
- Elaine Thoreson, AIM, St. John, Kasson – Aug. 1, 2005

### Transfer to Other Synods

- Kieran Darcy, retired to Northwestern Ohio Synod – Sept. 1, 2005
- Scott Duffus, on leave from call to Northeastern Iowa Synod – Nov. 19, 2005
- Lynn Enloe, associate, Trinity, Blue Earth to Southwest California Synod – Feb. 28, 2006
- Rhea Evanson, Jackson Lake, Amboy & Faith, Delavan to Southwestern Minnesota Synod – Oct. 14, 2005
- Jennifer Graf Fite, associate, Christ, Preston to Southwestern Texas Synod – Oct. 17, 2005
- Mark Galbraith, associate, Bethel, Northfield to Oregon Synod – Aug. 31, 2005
- John Gannett, on leave from call to Northeastern Iowa Synod – Aug. 31, 2005
- Karl Guhn, on leave from call to Montana Synod – April 1, 2005
- David Jarvis-Schroeder, on leave from call to Southern Ohio Synod – Oct. 3, 2005
- Meredith Bedker Musaus, associate, First English, Faribault to Greater Milwaukee Synod – Sept. 1, 2005
- Scott Meyer, on leave from call to Western Iowa Synod – Jan. 8, 2006
- Leonard Pankuch, retired to St. Paul Area Synod – June 13, 2005



- Gary Terrio, retired to Northeastern Minnesota Synod – July 26, 2005
- David Watson, associate, Rushford, Rushford to St. Paul Area Synod – Dec. 13, 2005

### On Leave from Call

- Jon Becker, associate, St. Paul, Red Wing – Aug. 31, 2005
- David Beckstrom, Interim, Epiphany, Eagle Lake – Feb. 1, 2005
- Clark Cary, Interim, United Redeemer, Zumbrota – Feb. 15, 2005
- Scott Duffus, Interim, Grace, Fairmont – Nov. 16, 2004
- Elizabeth Gjellstad, AIM from Minister of Education, Gloria Dei, Rochester – July 15, 2005
- Keith Homstad, Gol, Kenyon – May 22, 2005
- Victor Jortack, associate, St. John, Owatonna – Nov. 26, 2005
- Carole Joyce, AIM, Christian Education Director, Mount Olive, Rochester – May 31, 2005
- Dennis Pettyjohn, Senior pastor, St. John, Owatonna – Sept. 30, 2005
- Connie McCallister, Interim, St. Paul, Red Wing – Sept. 1, 2005
- Richard Spande, Ascension, Albert Lea – June 1, 2005
- Susan Wallager, Interim, Concordia Bear Lake, Albert Lea – Jan. 1, 2005
- Susan Wallager, Interim, Concordia Pickerel Lake, Albert Lea – June 13, 2005
- Lyndon West, Interim, Trondhjem, Lonsdale – July 31, 2005

### Deaths

- Eugene Boschee, retired – Feb. 8, 2006
- Maurice Dronen, retired – Sept. 13, 2005
- Louisa Fure, associate, Trinity, Owatonna – Dec. 3, 2005
- Rodney Grubb, retired – July 18, 2005

- Dale Striker, retired – Feb. 18, 2006
- Lowell Smestad, retired – Sept. 1, 2005

### Interims

- David Beckstrom, St Olaf, Austin, 3/01/05 – 12/31/05
- David Beckstrom, Ascension, Albert Lea, 2/07/06
- Glen Bickford, First/Pontoppidan, Hope/Ellendale, 9/29/04 – 7/31/05
- Glen Bickford, St Luke, Goodhue, 9/07/05 – 11/30/05
- Clark Cary, United, Red Wing, 2/16/06
- Clark Cary, Ascension, Albert Lea, 6/07/05 – 2/07/06
- Wade Davick, Highland Prairie & Elstad, Peterson, 3/24/02
- Dan Dimick, Gol, Kenyon, 10/01/05
- Don Flaten, Immanuel, Wykoff, 12/01/02
- Jack Gannett, Hosanna, Rochester, 7/15/04 – 10/30/05
- Kathy Gauger, East/West St Olaf, 10/15/04
- John Hagen, Trinity, West Concord, 9/06/04 – 8/31/05
- John Hagen, Calvary, Rapidan, 12/08/05
- Thomas Hanson, Cross of Christ & Cannon River, Welch, 12/01/03 – 7/31/05
- Thomas Hanson, Good Shepherd, Rochester, 10/27/05
- Arne Jessen, Grace, Waseca, 12/19/03 – 5/29/05
- Arne Jessen, St John, Owatonna, 11/14/05
- Minette Johnson \*, Henrytown, Canton, 2/15/04
- Gail Klavetter, Bear Creek/Grand Meadow, Grand Meadow, 3/14/04
- Karl Korbel, North Waseca/Faith, Waseca/ Janesville, 11/22/04
- Dean Larson, St Paul, LeCenter, 7/21/04 – 7/31/05
- Glenn Leaf, Gloria Dei, Rochester,



4/01/05 – 3/15/06

- Tom Lee, First, Red Wing, 8/01/04 – 6/07/05
- Connie McCallister, St Paul, Red Wing, 1/09/05 – 9/18/05
- Jack Miller, St Luke, Goodhue, 1/10/05 – 3/29/05
- Charles Ortloff, First, LeSueur, 9/09/04 – 8/15/05
- Wayne Radtke, First, Lake City, 8/06/05
- Chuck Solberg, St Luke, Goodhue, 9/21/04 – 1/09/05 & 3/30/05 – 8/31/05
- Jane Timmerman, Fountain & Root Prairie, Fountain, 12/01/05
- Sue Wallager, Concordia Pickerel Lake, Albert Lea/Conger, 1/09/05 – 6/13/05
- Lyndy West, Trondhjem, Lonsdale, 7/01/04 – 7/31/05
- Lyndy West, First English, Faribault, 12/15/05

\* lay person licensed for interim ministry

## Report of the Bishop – Part 2

Christian Schwarz, in his writing about “Natural Church Development,” identifies eight important principles in churches that are alive and growing: empowering leadership, gift-orientated ministry, passionate spirituality, functional structures, inspiring worship, holistic small groups, need-orientated evangelism, and loving relationships. But he goes on to say that passionate spirituality, in other words the extent to which faith is actually lived out with “commitment, fire and enthusiasm,” is the one point that really sets churches apart.

It is interesting that almost all of our congregations that are involved in “Natural Church Development” have begun with a focus in this area. Indeed, two years ago when we asked

congregations to identify areas in which the synod could support ministry (remember the yellow inserts in your bulletins?), one of the needs that you identified was such spirituality...to grow in being Christ-centered disciples. So we have set as goals in this area: deepening prayer lives, grounding in the scriptures, attending worship weekly, increasing generosity in stewardship.

And so our strategic plan has identified a theme of passionate spirituality to gather around each year. In 2005, we were “A Synod in Prayer.” Congregations focused on ways in which prayer might be encouraged and supported among members. Sunday worship included prayers for specific congregations around the synod. Prayer teams and prayer chains were organized in a number of congregations. Devotional booklets were written by members.

In 2006, we are “A Synod in Bible Study.” If you are attending the synod assembly, you will not be able to miss this emphasis. Part of our gathering will include focus time offering over 20 Bible studies led by pastors from our synod. A synod kick-off last fall brought together a variety of study resources for synod use. The challenge is that every congregation will be involved in Bible study in 2006. This year our Lay School of Theology is traveling around the synod, offering twice as many study opportunities for the laity of our synod. Even Sunday morning worship in congregations offers the opportunity to share, even memorize, the psalm verse for the day.

And the passion to live out the faith with “commitment, fire, and enthusiasm” continues into other areas of our planning. We continue to support the efforts of our youngest mission efforts: Peace in Eyota, Rejoice! in Northfield, and Glory to God in Rochester. The 2005 synod assembly voted to hold a synod wide



Transfiguration Sunday Mission Offering for these sites. The synod Mission Planning and Action Team is also entering into a process to identify synod mission opportunities for the coming years.

We continue to deepen our mission relationships on the world scene. Our synod is one of the leaders in direct support of ELCA missionaries around the world. In addition to this, a growing number of our congregations are developing relationships with congregations in our companion synods in Tanzania and Colombia. In December of 2005, I was privileged to be part of a small group from our synod who spent two weeks in Tanzania's Central Diocese, visiting congregations and holding extensive conversations with their new bishop and synod officials. In January, a delegation from our Faribault congregations represented our synod at Bishop Sima's consecration.

Plans are now being made for a synod delegation to visit Colombia in the fall. Bishop Buitrago was with us during last year's synod assembly. He has invited us to visit and join in their 70th Anniversary Celebration this Reformation Sunday. We are very excited to receive this invitation, and hope that it might open new opportunities for developing our relationship with a church called to minister in such difficult circumstances.

Raising up strong leaders is another passion in our synod. We have been pleased to learn that we are the recipients of an \$80,000 grant from Thrivent. This has been a joint effort by the synod and Good Earth Village entitled "Leadership for the Church: Today and Tomorrow." The goal is to raise awareness around planned giving throughout our synod... offering training for pastors and leaders...and building up the endowments of the synod and Good Earth Village.

"Renewing Worship" is a church-wide

effort aimed at building up the worship life of our church. One of its accomplishments is a new worship book, "Evangelical Lutheran Worship." A synod team will be trained this June, and then introduce the new worship book later this fall in synod workshops. Neal Erickson is chairing this group, along with Pastor Tamara Dahlvang, Pat Hinz, Patricia Lundeen, and Pastor David Rossow.

During this past year, we said goodbye to our communications director, Annie Lynsen. Annie accepted a position with the Lutheran Office of Governmental Affairs and moved to Washington D.C. Annie was instrumental in developing so many of our communication avenues and we will miss her. But we are so very excited to welcome our new communications director, Katie Butler. She comes to us not only with expertise, but a passion for the church...and a couple of horses.

I give thanks for the others who I am also privileged to work with: Kathy Bolin, Audree Catalano, Beth Gabriel, Carolyn Goulet, Larry Iverson, Deborah Ann Norrie, and Cheryse Sloan. Shirley Gangstad, the synod vice-president, and the members of the synod council continue to exercise faithful leadership on your behalf. Yet I especially treasure the relationships I have discovered in visiting so many of you during our "synod overnights." My wife, Lynette, and I continue these weekend adventures with the goal of visiting in every one of our synod's congregations. It is here that I see faith lived with "commitment, fire and enthusiasm." It gives me strength and hope for this calling.

It is a privilege to share in this ministry with you,

Harold Usgaard  
Bishop



## Pastor Audree Catalano

### Synod Minister

*"I am confident of this, that the One who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."* PHILIPPIANS 1:6

This scripture reveals to me that all of us are works in progress. In these days of transition, challenges and discernment, our Church is a work in progress. Our synods are works in progress. Our congregations are works in progress, as are each and every one of us because God has indeed begun a good work among us and "will bring it to completion."

The challenge we meet in all of this is to remember for any work to continue, it is necessary to be open to changes. To be stagnant in our Church is to set ourselves up for a dying Church. Focusing on the synod's strategic plan allows us to go forward as a work in progress as people marked with the sign of the cross and called, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world.

The Lay Clergy Leadership Development team continues to provide successful workshops for Councils as Leaders in the Church, under the leadership of Bev Sundheim and the team. Rev. Scott Olson has put together a lay and clergy group to promote inviting to ministry, seeking prospective leaders for ministry in our church. One of the plans is to provide a "magical" bus trip to Luther Seminary for students interested in serving as future lay and clergy leaders.

At our conference meetings of pastors Rev. Kathie Nycklemoe and Rev. Charles Ortloff have been promoting spiritual direction and renewal for pastors to continue to build their relationship to a deeper level with God in order to be more effective spiritual shepherds. To increase the effectiveness of their work, the

Theological Conference this year will bring Rev. Brad Hanson, director of the Grace Institute of Spirituality, who will help us to continue this spiritual renewal process.

Our candidacy process continues with 32 seminarians, 2 candidates approved for entrance and beginning seminary in Fall 2006, and five potential candidates looking for entrance approval in April. The ELCA is continuing to improve and refine the selection process to find healthy leaders for ministry. God continues to bless our call process by bringing us strong and committed candidates and new pastors.

The First Call Theological Education process continues to seek new and meaningful events for our First Call pastors and we are grateful to the congregations who have offered gathering space. This past year, Rev. Larry Johnson offered a series of five presentations on "Facing Conflict and Developing Healthier Congregations." Pastor Johnson is the founder and director of Mission Builders, Inc., and a Trainer of Trainers for facilitators and mediation for congregations in conflict.

Last April for FCTE, Rev. Kathie Nycklemoe presented a program on Spiritual Disciplines. We gathered at Good Earth Village and the retreat setting certainly seemed appropriate for reflection and thought to explore and engage ourselves in a deeper relationship with God through what we learned about our spiritual disciplines.

In January, we engaged the services of Kelly Brenno-Carpenter, tax accountant, and Ms. Polly Bergerson of the Board of Pensions to speak to the First Call pastors about "Clergy Taxes and Clergy Benefits." These were informative presentations to help our first call pastors learn about changes in their tax status and to learn



about the Board of Pension benefits and health benefits and how the system works.

One of our first call pastors, Rev. Judy Reitz, now in her third year of ordained ministry, has put together a series of Lutheran teachings that she has used for both her congregation and confirmands. Judy's presentations have sparked a good deal of interest and we asked her to talk to our first call pastors. Her presentation was entitled, "Lutheran Gifts and Insights for the Whole Christian Church and for God's World."

Thanks to the work and ministry of the support staff, the committees and task forces with whom I work. Let us daily remind ourselves that we are indeed a work in progress and it is Jesus Christ who will bring all to the day of completion.

PEACE+ and blessings in Christ,  
Pastor Audree

### **Larry Iverson** **Synod Minister**

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."* COL 3:16

"A Synod Joined in Bible Study" is our 2006 focus. I hope congregations will let the "Word" dwell richly in the hearts of the members and encourage engaging in self and group Bible study this whole year. In 2005 we asked congregations to keep other congregations in their prayers, and we had such a positive response to this, congregations asked if we would continue this in 2006. In addition we have added a verse from the Psalm of the day to this listing, and we encourage

congregations to add some focus on Bible study during the year.

In the spirit of the Bible study focus, we held a training session in October to emphasize various Bible study approaches, including the Augsburg resource "No Experience Necessary." The Congregational Renewal Team will continue to hold up Bible study ideas through the year for congregations to consider.

Natural Church Development continues in 7 congregations. They will be retaking the survey around Easter time as well as celebrating what they worked on this year. We are looking at the next steps to expand this process, and it may involve training more coaches to work with congregations for 12 – 15 months as they determine and work on one of the 8 identified aspects of congregational health.

Look for Hunger 101 experiential workshops to occur across our synod and the Southwestern Minnesota Synod thanks to a joint grant from ELCA Hunger to facilitate this in 2006.

Stewardship continues to be a need and our individual staff visits with pastors and congregational presidents opened us all to the need of the giver to give and reflect the joyful opportunity we share together as congregations, synod and ELCA to jointly use our gifts to carry the good news to the world.

God's blessings as we open our hearts to the "Word," and do so with thankful hearts.

Your servant in Christ,  
Larry Iverson

