



2005: A Synod Joined in Prayer

Let's Pray!

By Cathy Mannel
Congregational Renewal Team

Several times each day, one of the nursing home residents greets me and says this: "Let's pray!" It doesn't matter what time of day it is or where we meet. In the lobby, in the hallway, in the dining room, wherever he finds me, we pray. Sometimes we pray a familiar psalm. Other times, it's the Lord's prayer, a prayer song, or something composed on the spot.

Each time though, I am blessed and grateful for this resident who reminds me to take time throughout the busy day to stop, give thanks, and lift up concerns to the One who listens to and answers our prayers.

As we pray with and for others, we are encouraged and strengthened to carry on with living. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why our synod leadership is focusing on prayer and saying to each person: "Let's pray!" May the One who has promised to hear our petitions guide and direct us as we say to each other: "Let's pray!"

God's blessings as we pray, grow, learn, and serve in the name of Jesus Christ.

The Congregational Renewal Team of the Synod Council encourages all congregations to make 2005 the year of "A Synod Joined in Prayer." Please include these congregations in the prayers of the Church, and in your personal prayers:

Apr. 3 (2 Easter): Hosanna, Rochester; Emmons, Emmons; Grace, Nerstrand; North Waseca, Waseca

Apr. 10 (3 Easter): Garness Trinity, Mabel; Le Roy, Le Roy; Faith, Delavan; Hegre, Kenyon

Apr. 17 (4 Easter): Our Savior, Cleveland; Grace, Peterson; Little Cedar, Adams; First, Albert Lea

Apr. 24 (5 Easter): Holden, Kenyon; Our Savior, Owatonna; Greenfield, Harmony; Marshall, Adams

May 1 (6 Easter): Bishop Harold Usgaard and staff of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod; Synod Assembly Planning Committee and volunteers, guest speakers and Synod Assembly voters

The complete synod prayer calendar is available on the web at www.semnsynod.org/prayercalendar.html

Synod Council Designates Funds for Strategic Plan Initiatives

Synod Strategic Plan Highlights, Apr. 2004

At its meeting Feb. 19, the Synod Council voted to put \$10,000 toward unbudgeted strategic plan initiatives. The executive committee will determine for what specific purposes the money will be used.

• **Vision:** Called into God's Marvelous Light: To Be Strong Leaders

Objective: Raising up new leaders to serve Christ's church

At the April meeting of the Synod Council, Pastor Roger L. Sasse from the Nebraska Synod will be speaking to the Lay and Clergy Leadership Development Team about their Invite Discern Excite Act (IDEA) program for raising up leaders. Sasse is the executive director of Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. Operation IDEA sets out to boldly identify persons with gifts, and invite them to use their gifts in Christ's church. Started in 2002, the program has resulted in a doubling of the number of people registered with Nebraska's candidacy committee and a quadrupling of the number of people from the Nebraska Synod visiting seminaries.

• **Vision:** Called into God's Marvelous Light: To Be Christ-Centered Disciples

Objective: 2006: A Synod Joined in Bible Study

Plans are being made for an education resource fair this fall with Augsburg Fortress. This will be an opportunity for congregation members to view Augsburg Fortress' new Bible study, confirmation, and vacation Bible school materials. This resource fair will help prepare congregations for the 2006 emphasis: "A Synod Joined in Bible Study." More details about this fair will be available soon. Watch future issues of *River Crossings* for more information!

For more information on the synod's strategic plan, visit www.semnsynod.org and click the "Strategic Plan" link on the left.



Called into God's Marvelous Light

To Be Joyful Witnesses

To Be Christ-Centered Disciples

To Be Strong Leaders