

Bethlehem Communion Ware To Be Passed Around Southeastern Minnesota Synod

Synod Strategic Plan Highlights, Oct. 2005



• **Vision:** Called into God's Marvelous Light: To Be Joyful Witnesses

Objective: Connecting Our Local and Global Context

At Churchwide Assembly this August, each synod of the ELCA received a set of communion ware, formed in the Holy Land. The communion set is a gift from ELCA Global Mission. The communion ware will "journey" throughout each synod, going from congregation to congregation before being used at the 2006 Synod Assemblies. Each set carries a critical educational component of the Middle East Strategy, approved by the ELCA Church Council in April: "Peace Not Walls – Stand for Justice in the Holy Land."

Congregations are encouraged to call Carolyn Goulet at (507) 280-9457 or (800) 426-6376 and reserve the communion ware for a particular Sunday (please have a few choices in mind when you call; some Sundays are already reserved).

Congregations who reserve the communion ware will pick up the communion ware from the synod

office the Thursday before they need to use it, and return it to the synod office the Tuesday after they use it. Alternatively, congregations may arrange to pass the Communion Ware directly between them. However, the synod office must be notified of those arrangements.

Resources for education and worship will be packaged with each communion ware set and are available at www.elca.org/peacenotwalls or by calling (800) 638-3522 ext. 2654. Congregations may duplicate these resources. Another useful resource, a DVD called *The Dividing Wall*, was sent to all ELCA synods this spring. The 23-minute video explores the social and political impact of the Israeli-built security barrier. Contact the synod office to borrow the DVD for your congregation.

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

Objective: Supporting healthy rostered leaders

The 2005 Synod Theological Conference this year will be held Nov. 6-8, 2005 at the Holiday Inn Select in Bloomington, Minn. The theme is "Addicted to Hurry? Find Rest in the Storm." Keynote speaker Kirk Byron Jones will speak to participants about self-care.

This annual event allows rostered leaders, lay church workers, and their spouses a chance for education, relaxation, and fellowship.

• **Vision:** Called into God's Marvelous Light: To Be Joyful Witnesses

Objective: Natural Church Development

Several congregational leaders who have been working with the Natural Church Development (NCD) process over the past year will soon be ready to serve as coaches for other congregations interested in starting the NCD process. If your congregation is interested in learning more about NCD, contact Larry Iverson in the synod office: (507) 280-9457 or (800) 426-6376.

The Natural Church Development process offers an evaluative tool to measure eight quality characteristics relating to the overall health of the congregation. After the evaluation is done, the congregation then forms a "Health Team" composed of active leaders in the congregation. This Health Team then identifies ways the congregation can improve the lowest rated of those qualities for a year.

At the end of the year they again do the evaluative tool to determine progress, and again address one quality over the course of the next year. Each year only one quality will be focused upon.

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*

