

Trip of Spiritual Renewal to Taize Community

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

Objective: Paying particular attention to young adults

There is a small community in France that accepts flocks of young adults - ages 15-29 - from all over the world all year long. These young people travel to participate in the monastic life of this ecumenical community as a journey of spiritual renewal. This year the Southeastern Minnesota Synod is joining with our companion synod - the New England Synod - for a trip to Taize for 18-29-year-olds.



The Taize community is most known for their prayers and their music. Examples of their music can be found in the new *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and *With One Voice* (search the tunes for "Taize").

The meetings last from Sunday to Sunday and are focused on "inner life and human solidarity." Participants live simply - in dormitory-like accommodations or tents - and participate in the general life of the community. Life includes times of prayer, devotions, and music as well as time for practical work.

Even though this trip is limited to young adults, entire congregations can get involved with the experience to support the young people and to enhance worship. Congregations can consider giving scholarships to one or more young people to offset the cost with the requirement that the participants then come back and share some of what they learned with the congregation.

If you or someone you know is 18-29 years old and interested in this unique opportunity to travel and meet others from the synod, from another part of the ELCA, and from other parts of the world, take a look at this month's enclosed brochure.

For more information, contact Katie Butler at the synod office at 507-280-9457, 800-426-6376 (MN only) or by e-mail at butler@semnsynod.org



Called into God's Marvelous Light

To Be Joyful Witnesses

To Be Christ-Centered Disciples

To Be Strong Leaders

2007: A Synod Sharing Our Faith Stories

Faith Stories of Ordinary People

By Mark Bradley

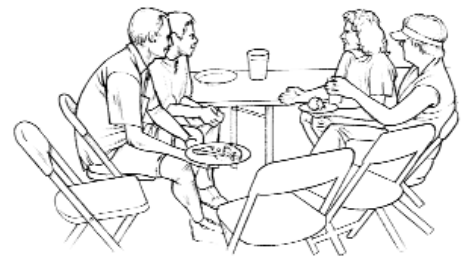
Congregational Renewal Team

"In high school I remember debating with my friends if one needed a 'conversion experience' to be a true Christian. I do not believe one does. My faith story hinges on inconsequential circumstances. Years later, as I looked back at my life, I was aghast for I simply could not attribute these circumstances to chance. God was in charge."

So began a faith story in 1995 by a member of our congregation, Maureen Hagen.

Pastor Duane Hoven had started the Lenten breakfast faith story tradition in 1980 in response to "Protestant fundamentalism" and the concern that Lutherans don't talk enough about their faith. When asked to share the journey of their faith, the answer is always the same: "Well, I don't think there's anything special about mine." After encouragement about one's "special spark" and a call for prayerful consideration, the answer back is almost always "yes."

On a typical Wednesday morning during Lent, folks gather at Zumbro Lutheran Church at 7 a.m. for fellowship and a chance to hear a faith story from someone in the congregation. A freewill donation is accepted for a continental breakfast of muffins, bagels, coffee, juice and milk. After the food, folks gather with an invocation, followed by a faith story of 10-15 minutes, a closing blessing, and the singing of the Doxology.



Then it's off to the day's work, or it's time to linger, socialize, and discuss faith stories.

To learn more, contact Pastor Carol Solovitz at zbox1@qwest.net