

## Meeting the Church Face-to-Face

**Vision:** Called into God's Marvelous Light: To Be Joyful Witnesses AND Strong Leaders

**Objective:** Increasing awareness of the larger church AND supporting new rostered leaders

Being ordained or commissioned as a new pastor or associate in ministry (AIM) begins a very overwhelming time. Even after years of schooling, it takes some time to get used to actually fulfilling your call. This is why the ELCA supports First Call Theological Education (FCTE) to assist newly called leaders through the transition to rostered ministry.

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod offers a trip to Chicago as part of its FCTE program. This year the trip includes individuals invited as part of the synod's endowment initiative and other interested members of the synod. This trip is a chance for people to visit the ELCA churchwide office and learn more about the larger church.

This year's participants will get the chance to hear about FCTE at the churchwide level, how to get involved with the ELCA Endowment Fund and also who it supports (including first call leaders!), and meet with Bishop Mark Hanson. They will also tour the office to learn about the churchwide organization and meet people from different divisions.

This year the trip will also include a visit to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. While there, the group will attend chapel; meet with Rev. David Miller, the dean of the chapel and director for spiritual formation, and Rev. Joy McDonald Coltvet, director for vocations and recruitment, among others; and have the opportunity to tour campus.

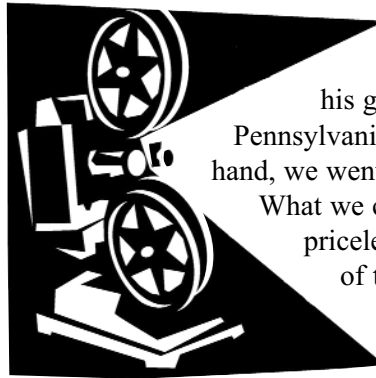
Meeting and seeing these people and places offers an opportunity to put a face to the larger church. By understanding how the church works and the people behind it all, we are better able to see how Christ's mission is being fulfilled through our church.

For those not participating in this trip, take your own trip to [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org) to read about the work of the ELCA and watch future *River Crossings* for other opportunities to travel to Chicago.

## 2007: A Synod Sharing Our Faith Stories

### Stories on Tape

By Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin  
Congregational Renewal Team



A number of years ago my husband and I visited his grandfather in Pennsylvania. With a video camera in hand, we went to collect family history. What we came away with was a priceless video detailing the life of the family during the early 1900's. We videotaped old photographs with the stories behind them

narrated by the patriarch of the family. We caught on tape stories we might have otherwise forgotten. We captured the smiles and tears we would have missed if the history had just been written down. One of the things that made grandpa more comfortable being videotaped was having one of us focused on listening to his story and interacting with him while the other quietly ran the video camera.

Using a video camera and an informal interview style may be a way of helping people, especially older people or people in the nursing home who can't come to church, tell stories of their faith. These video tapes or DVD's could prove to be a valuable source of the faith history for your congregation and also be a wonderful keepsake for families to share for generations to come.



*Called into God's Marvelous Light*

*To Be Joyful Witnesses*

*To Be Christ-Centered Disciples*

*To Be Strong Leaders*