

Celebrating Rural Life Event

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

Objective: Rural life event

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod, Southwestern Minnesota Synod, and the ELCA Rural Ministry Office are co-sponsoring an event on rural ministry June 13-16 at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn.

This gathering will provide concrete models of hope - the workshops are centered around this theme and include : youth ministry, transformational ministry, clergy stress and burnout, multicultural ministry, rural and small town evangelism and much, much more.

Speakers include: Rev. Peter Marty, host of Grace Matters, and Rev. Ruben Duran, ELCA Director for New Congregations and Tex Sample, retired Professor of Church and Society at St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Missouri.

Throughout the Celebrating Rural Life event, you will experience Spirit-filled worship, locally-grown food, prairie-style cooking, an ice cream social, and community of others who celebrate rural and small town ministry!

The brochure, suitable for use as a bulletin insert, is available at www.semnsynod.org/events/educational.html For more information, contact call 800-638-3522, X6556 or e-mail Katie.Tippins@elca.org.

More from the ELCA on rural ministry is available at www.elca.org/rural. Get connected, learn about advocacy opportunities, find worship and other resources, and more!



Telling the Story Through Word and Deed

By Rev. Richard Spande
Congregational Renewal Team

Karen Armstrong makes the observation that Christianity is different from the other religions of the world. For Christians the emphasis is upon orthodoxy, right beliefs. For most other religions the emphasis is upon orthopraxy, right behavior.

At least for Lutherans it can be no other way. We believe that we are saved by grace through faith, not by good works. The emphasis is upon what we believe.

“Indeed, we are not saved by good works, but the stories we tell without words can speak loudly.”

This does not mean that our behavior is unimportant, only that we are not saved by our good works.

We can identify a similar pattern when we talk about telling our faith story. Most of the time we use words. After all, we are telling the story. However, we must not forget the saying attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, “Preach the Gospel and, if necessary, use words.”

As hospice chaplain, I frequently meet people who say they are Christians but have no active church affiliation. Why do they not have a church?

Not once has a person told me they fell away because of what we believe and teach. Almost everyone tells a story about an incident where someone treated them in a less than Christian way. Most of the time I hear their story and can truly say I understand why they left.

Indeed, we are not saved by good works, but the stories we tell without words can speak loudly. It is important that we tell the right story.



Called into God's Marvelous Light

To Be Joyful Witnesses

To Be Christ-Centered Disciples

To Be Strong Leaders