

Wellness: Thinking of Spiritual Well-being

By Deborah Ann Norrie
Synod Executive Assistant

Spiritual Well-being...hmm...I must confess that my spiritual well-being takes a beating – even though I work in the church! How about yours?

It is very easy to get caught up in this ministry of interruptions. The best laid plans for the day are quickly derailed when the phone rings or a colleague comes in the office. This is the very reason that spiritual well-being is the foundation on which our wholeness turns, centered in our baptism. We are encouraged to "Begin each day by turning the day over to God. In the water in which you wash, reflect on the waters of baptism, which call you to live well and share your gifts for the body of Christ."

Our physical, vocational, intellectual, social and emotional well-being all depend on how we are spiritually. But how do we carve out this time to nurture our relationship to God? Martin Luther encourages us with his morning and evening blessings; prayer, devotions, meditation and spiritual disciplines are other ways to focus on our relationship with God. I have struggled with ways to be a more spiritual person and I confess to falling asleep long before my prayers are done. Since returning from my sabbatical I have tried to use a small part at the beginning of each day to do the daily Bible reading and prayers from *Bread for the Day 2008* (Augsburg Fortress). Some days I get caught up in the day before turning to the daily reading – even when I put the books on the desk where they are in the way. But then I realize I haven't done my reading for a while and I stop and pick up the books and turn my mind to God.

Working in the synod office has the added blessing of coming into the holy space of the Franciscan Sisters at Assisi Heights. I begin my prayers as I make the drive up the hill, noticing the deer peering out of the woods, the new fallen snow gently piled on the boughs of the pine trees and occasionally the sunshine bathing the hill in light and wonder. At times I pause before entering the door to give the day over to God and ask for calm, patience and guidance for the day ahead.

There are many ways to find space in our busy lives to give over to God. So when the phone rings, say a prayer for the person calling...and let God in on your day.

Ministry Profile: Synod Executive Committee

By Shirley Gangstad
Synod Vice-President

What does the executive committee of the synod council do?

The executive committee of the synod council consists of the bishop (who serves as the president), vice president, secretary, treasurer, and two members of the synod council—one clergy and one lay—who are chosen by the synod council and who may serve up to two years. The three officers are elected positions, and each officer may serve up to three four-year terms. The vice president must be a lay person and chairs the executive committee and synod council meetings, but the other officers may be either clergy or lay. We have regular meetings at least five times per year in months that the synod council does not meet. We may have other meetings as the need arises.

In our synod the executive committee also serves as the personnel committee, so we interview and hire or call all of the staff in the bishop's office and deal with personnel issues. We also oversee the constitution and recommend changes in it and with other policies of governance, first to the synod council who then bring it to the synod assembly.

The executive committee serves as a sounding board for the bishop and is a place for him to share concerns about the synod and to try out new ideas or plans the bishop has. We also create the budget and bring it as a recommendation to the full council. We oversee the details of the synod assembly and give final approval to themes, speakers, and general assembly plans.

The primary concern of the executive committee is the health and well-being of the bishop and all the staff, the congregations of the synod, and the clergy and staff of those congregations. While we primarily deal with the bishop and some of the staff, we are there to encourage, support and pray for all in our synod. We all take our positions seriously and do our best to discern God's will for our synod and its ministries and to carry out those ministries to the best of our abilities.



Get it Online

- Synod executive committee and council meeting dates, minutes, and lists of members are available at www.semnsynod.org/council.html