

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2010 Synod Assembly

Theme: *Sowing the Seeds of Hope. God's work. Our hands.*
May 21-22, 2010

Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center, Stevens Point, Wisconsin
Joint Assembly of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and East Central Synod of Wisconsin

Thursday, May 20, 2010 from 5-9 p.m., the 2010 Synod Assembly was preceded by a pre-assembly Book of Faith event ("Digging Into the Word") held in the Stevens Point Holiday Inn Conference Center. The event was sponsored by the Synod Resource Centers from both synods and was led by Professor Diane Jacobson, Luther Seminary. Over 300 assembly goers participated.

Friday, May 21, 2010 at 9 a.m., the joint assembly convened for opening and worship. Worship with Holy Communion was led by Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson with Assisting Minister Pastor Sandra J. Johnson. The sermon text was taken from Matthew 13:1-9 and was taglined, "God's Work, Our Ears."

Following worship and announcements, the joint assembly was welcomed by Bishop Duane Pederson of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and Bishop James A. Justman of the East Central Synod of Wisconsin.

The Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, Coordinator Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) and HIV/AIDS Strategy recognized the financial contributions of both synods and presented the bishops with tee-shirts.

Lutheran Youth Organization coordinators, Carole DeJardin, Northwest Synod, and Amy Johnston, East Central Synod, announced the upcoming joint senior high youth event on November 12-14, 2010 in Wausau, Wisconsin, that will include a service project.

Reggie McNeal, special guest, provided the keynote, "Sowing Seeds of Hope," to the combined assembly from 10:45-11:45 a.m. and 1:00-2:30 p.m. Reggie McNeal currently serves as the Missional Leadership Specialist for Leadership Network of Dallas, TX. Using humor, scripture, and energy, he helps individuals, leaders, and Christian organizations pursue more intentional lives. His message focused on the missional church "doing church better," not "being church better." He shared his strategy and experiences of asking people, "How can I ask God to bless you?" His missional message suggested shifting from an *internal focus* on getting people in the pews to an *external focus* of actively being the people of God in our communities.

Ryan Jones, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, reminded the combined assembly to vote for Thrivent Choice Dollars.

Announcements included details regarding dinner and an invitation to a *Stretch and Pray* session at 7:00 a.m. Saturday, May 22, in the Prairie Room for assembly participants.

Plenary Session I – Friday, May 21, 2010

Plenary Session began at 2:45 p.m. with gathering music provided by Jonathan Rundman. Bishop Duane Pederson welcomed synod assembly voting members and guests. He introduced those on the dais: Pastor Bill Stewart, parliamentarian; Sue Zahrbock, synod vice president; and Connie Bussewitz, synod secretary. Dennis Knutson, synod treasurer, was also recognized.

SA10.05.01

VOTED The assembly agenda was distributed and a motion was made/seconded/carried to adopt the agenda as printed.

Bishop Pederson reminded assembly voting members that the resolutions deadline was 10:00 a.m. Friday, May 21, 2010. The Resolutions Committee will review any proposed resolutions. If proposed resolutions are found to be in order, they will be brought to the floor.

SA10.05.02

VOTED The *Assembly Guidelines* are printed on page 23 of the assembly book. A motion to approve the assembly guidelines as printed was made/seconded/carried.

Minutes of the 2009 Synod Assembly have been approved by the Synod Council and are printed on pages 125-129 of the most recent edition of the synod directory and are also available on the synod website.

Offerings will be distributed as follows:

Quarter Offering - One-third will be distributed to the ELCA World Hunger and two-thirds to Malawi projects.

Assembly Offering - Lutheran Malaria Initiative, the Synod Resource Center, and Malawi Pastors' Academy will each receive one-third of the offering.

Becky Carlson, ELCA Church Council member, presented the Credentials Report.

Credentials Report, Friday, May 21, 2010	
Clergy Voting Members	137
Lay Voting Members	270
Youth Voting Members	1
TOTAL VOTING MEMBERS	408
Male Voting Members – 124	
Female Voting members -147	

Chair of the Nominating Committee, Pastor Kermit Solem, presented the report of the Nominating Committee. A complete list of the nominees is found on pages 27-41 of the assembly book.

Additional nominations from the floor were called for and one nominee, Josh Toufar-Churchwide Voting Member/Lay Male/Heart of the North Conference, was added to the ballot.

No additional Synod Council or Board Position nominees were added to the ballot. Assembly delegates were instructed to review and mark the sample ballot printed on page 41 of the assembly book to expedite the voting process during Plenary Session II.

Bishop Pederson presented an oral summary of his Report to the Assembly of 2010. He presented a visual of a turtle with a rocket attached to its back saying that he has observed a transformation of the church this year in the midst of the economic downturn. Something missional is afoot. Congregations are engaged in discerning what it means to be missional in the world—both near and far. God's spirit is on the move. The Bishop's written report is available on the synod website.

SA10.05.03

VOTED Resolution No. 2 - *Standards for Compensation* - One printed copy of Resolution No. 2 was provided for each congregation, and also the entire resolution has been posted on the synod website for some time. Chair of the Resolutions Committee, Pastor Ralph Thompson, presented Resolution No. 2. This resolution was forwarded by the Synod Council and requires a two-thirds majority to pass. No second is required from the floor. Following discussion Resolution No. 2 was adopted.

Becky Carlson, ELCA Church Council member, reported to the assembly. Becky is a Gustavus Adolphus 2009 graduate and presently works as the retreat and volunteer coordinator at Luther Point and Luther Park Bible Camps. Becky reported there has been a decrease in the ELCA churchwide budget and thirty-five churchwide staff were terminated this year. Fewer people and less money impact what the churchwide organization can do in the world. A new taskforce, *Living into the Future Together (LIFT): Renewing the Ecology of the ELCA*, has been created to study what God is calling this church to be and do in the future and what changes are in order to accomplish these tasks more faithfully. Becky challenged the assembly to be actively engaged in mission and prayer, look beyond the walls of the congregation, and embrace the work of the whole church.

Scott Anderson, executive director of the Wisconsin Council of Churches, addressed the assembly. Scott shared the Wisconsin Council of Churches' priorities: (1) theological education, (2) prayer and spirituality, (3) the relationship of economic justice and nonviolence to Christian life and the mission of the Church. Scott also reminded assembly attendees of the upcoming 2010 Washington Island Forum, "*Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is telling the American Church*," to be held June 21-26, 2010.

Bishop Pederson recognized congregation anniversaries as listed on page 17 of the assembly book and as follows:

125 Years

Augustana Lutheran Church, Cumberland
Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Stanley
Saron Lutheran Church, Ashland
St. John Lutheran Church, Edgar
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Medford
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Augusta
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Curtis
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, rural Ellsworth

100 Years

Grace Lutheran Church, Eau Claire
Modena Lutheran Church, Mondovi
Bethel Lutheran Church, New Auburn
Grace of Pleasantville Lutheran Church, Whitehall
Fristad Lutheran Church, Centuria

25 Years

St. John Lutheran Church, Riplinger

Plenary session ended in announcements and closed with prayer by Bishop Pederson.

Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson held a Question & Answer session for the joint assembly from 4:15-5:30 p.m. which was very well attended. During this same timeframe, the assembly choir rehearsed.

Dinner and recognition of anniversaries and retirements for the joint assembly was held from 6:30-8:00 p.m. followed by an assembly social of root beer floats and music at Redeemer Lutheran Church located one block from the conference center.

Following dinner, Bishop Pederson recognized retirements, and anniversaries as listed on pages 17-22 of the assembly book and as follows:

Retirements

Rev. David Almlie, Rev. John Hosmann, Rev. Alice Hamm, Rev. James A. Gordon, Rev. Harlen Menk, Rev. Joel Olsen, Rev. Larry Sturgis, Rev. Vern Weeks

25 Years Ordination Anniversary

Rev. Jeffrey Tarras, Rev. Dean Simpson, Rev. Barbara Koch, Rev. Loren Barker, Rev. Michael Briggs, Rev. Alice Hamm

50 years Ordination Anniversary

Rev. Robert Esse, Rev. Richard Kelling, Rev. James Homme

Saturday, May 22, 2010 at 8:30 a.m. the Joint Synod Assembly began with worship led by Bishop James Justman and Bishop Duane Pederson preaching and presiding as a team. The assembly choir provided special music.

Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson presented from 10:00-11:30 a.m. Bishop Hanson engaged the assembly goers by asking questions and having attendees discuss responses in small groups. (Samples: What will you be doing Monday? What does your congregation do to serve? What are your unfulfilled dreams? What would you like to do before you die?) He showed a graphic on the screen of the ELCA symbol and reminded attendees that the cross is the center of our logo inside of a globe representing the world and we as a church are centered in the world. He encouraged us to engage in deeper conversation when there is conflict. We are ambassadors of reconciliation. Bishop Hanson showed the video *Every Day Evangelists* and concluded with the proclamation, "We are on the eve of Pentecost."

Announcements following Bishop Hanson's presentation included a thank you gift and special recognition to Presiding Bishop Hanson and his wife.

Both synod bishops recognized their staffs and introduced them to the assembly. Bishop Pederson thanked the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and recognized the following Synod Staff:

Bonnie Weber	Synod Resource Center
Carol DeJardin	Lutheran Youth Organization Coordinator
Gail Brown	Synod Bookkeeper
Liz Bartsch	Administrative Assistant
Merry Soyck Doring	Synod Communicator and Assembly Coordinator
Diane Kaufmann, AIM	Companion Synod Coordinator
Pastor Todd Iverson	Assistant to the Bishop
Pastor Greg Kaufmann	Assistant to the Bishop
Pastor Amy Odgren	Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Evangelical Mission

Plenary Session II – Saturday, May 22, 2010

Becky Carlson presented the credentials report.

Credentials Report, Saturday, May 22, 2010	
Clergy Voting Members	138
Lay Voting Members	270
Youth Voting Members	1
TOTAL VOTING MEMBERS	409
Male Voting Members – 124	
Female Voting members -147	

The Credentials Report for the East Central Synod of Wisconsin was 135 clergy, 154 voting members for a total of 289. The Joint Synod Assembly included 698 voting delegates and a total of 966 attendees.

Three ballots were distributed and bios of those nominated from the floor were projected on the screens.

Pastor Peter Muschinske, military chaplain, and rostered member of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin was invited to address the assembly. Pastor Muschinske serves as a Navy chaplain based out of St. Louis and is one of sixty-nine chaplains on active duty. He reminded assembly attendees that we are a nation at war and extended greetings on behalf of all the federal chaplains that serve as part of the church in the world.

Bishop Pederson confirmed that all voting members had the three required ballots and began the voting process with prayer.

Yellow 2010 Ballot for Churchwide Assembly
Blue 2010 Ballot for Boards
Pink Ballot for Synod Council

VOTED 10.05.04

Bishop Pederson requested a motion to elect all unopposed candidates by consensus. Motion made/seconded/adopted

2010 Ballot for Churchwide Assembly - Bishop declared balloting closed
2010 Ballot for Synod Council - Bishop declared balloting closed
2010 Ballot for Boards not needed as all candidates were unopposed

A thank you to E. O. Johnson for providing copiers for the assembly was extended by Bishop Pederson

A thank you to the assembly Nominating Committee and Elections Committee was extended by Bishop Pederson.

Amy Johnson, Director of the Lutheran Office of Public Policy in Wisconsin (LOPPW), was invited to address the assembly regarding their ministry. Amy's message reflected the LOPPW mission statement - *In faithful response to God's love, we engage people of faith in the ministry of advocacy for policies that support peace, justice and care for all of God's creation.* Wisconsin hunger issues will be the topic of a September event planned in Green Bay.

Bishop Pederson recognized the new pastors, associates in ministry and interns to the synod as listed on pages 16-17 of the assembly.

Ordinations

Rev. Jordan Scott, Grace Lutheran, Marshfield; Rev. Robert Schoenknecht, Holden, Norton, and North Running Valley, Colfax; Rev. Kathy Tulman, Christ Lutheran, Somerset; Rev. Erin Nelson, St. John's, Spring Valley; Rev. Mary Eide, Bethlehem and Eidsvold Lutheran Churches, Bay City; Rev. Sarah Semmler Smith, Our Savior's, Stanley; Rev. Abraham Semmler Smith, Our Savior's, Cornell.

Associate in Ministry

Ken Schmidt, Central Lutheran, Chippewa Falls

New Calls within Our Synod

Rev. Carol Ann McArdell, Salem, Shell Lake; Rev. Ned Lenhart, Living Waters, Cameron; Rev. William Wilson, Svea and Tabor Lutheran, Hager City; Rev. Mark Hall, Ezekiel, River Falls; Rev. Karen Hofstad, Augustana, Cumberland; Rev. Terri Blomberg, Zion and Calvary Lutheran, Winter/Draper; Rev. Loren Barker, Faith, Cameron.

Received From another Synod

Rev. Mark Hendrickson, Hope, River Falls; Rev. Amy Fondroy Eich, Joy, Prescott; Rev. Gail Sowell, St. John's, Edgar; Rev. Mary Strom, Long Lake, Sarona; Rev. Victor St. George, Faith, Grantsburg; Rev. James Bump, First, New Richmond; Rev. Nathan Aaseng, St. John's, Eau Claire; Rev. Joel Olsen, Our Savior's, Whitehall; Rev. R. David Jore, Minneapolis, Rev. Lowell Halvorson, retired, transferred from Northeastern Iowa Synod; Rev. Nancy Amacher, retired, transferred from Northern Great Lakes Synod; Rev. Kenneth Vollmers, retired, transferred from the Northwest Minnesota Synod; Rev. Jennifer Johnson Myers called to First Congregational UCC, River Falls.

Seminary Graduates Assigned to our Synod

Richard Reiten (Lily Foundation Candidate)
Scott Thalacker, graduate Luther Seminary, Our Savior's, Whitehall

Pastors, AIMS, and soon-to-be pastors remained standing and Pastor Valerie Peterson, interim at English Lutheran in Ellsworth, led the assembly in prayer.

Seminary Interns Amanda Kossow, Osseo Evangelical, Osseo; Doug Mackenzie, Evangelical, Black River Falls; and Lori Peper, Peace, Dresser were welcomed. This year's supervising pastors are Rev. Lewis Thompson, Rev. Eric Bakken, and Rev. Wayne Deloach.

Pastor Bill Wilson, Tabor Lutheran/Bay City and Svea Lutheran/Hager City, Chair of the Candidacy Committee, led the assembly in prayer.

The bishop announced that a three-week Pastors' Academy for continuing education will be held for the clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi in the fall of 2010. Pastors Greg Kaufmann and Todd Iverson from our synod will teach alongside Malawian instructors to provide biblical and confessional courses. English proficiency instruction will also be provided. With enough funding, training of lay evangelists will also be offered in 2011. To provide the Pastors' Academy, English instruction, and evangelist training will require \$30,000. It is the intent to provide these educational opportunities annually. Mark Stensvold and Margaret Foss-Stensvold of Norda Education Programs in Ladysmith are

offering a \$10,000 challenge grant to raise the necessary funds. Congregations and leaders should watch for further information about the matching fund opportunity.

The Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, Coordinator Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) and HIV/AIDS Strategy, spoke. The LMI goal is to contain malaria by 2015. Rev. DeGroot-Nesdahl shared three key words and a short video in her message.

1. **Call** - We are called to provide bed nets, residual spraying, eliminate standing water (drainage and swamps). We have lowered child malaria deaths from every 30 seconds to a death every 40 seconds. We can make a difference in our larger family circle.
2. **Companion** – We are in companionship across the whole continent to address the same issues.
3. **Campaign** – LMI movement is a three legged stool. (1) Education (poverty/HIV); (2) Advocacy; (3) Fundraising – \$75M total; the ELCA goal is \$30M.

According to Bishop Pederson, ELCM Bishop Joseph Bvumbwe asks that we change the expression *bed nets* to *mosquito nets* as these nets are used to protect against infectious mosquitoes during waking hours as well as being hung over beds for protection during sleeping.

Bishop Pederson reminded assembly goers to complete the assembly evaluation form found on Page 52 of the assembly book.

S10.05.05

VOTED Pastor Ralph Thompson, chair of the Resolutions Committee came to the dais and presented Resolution No. 1 as printed on pages 42-45 of the assembly book.

Dennis Knutson, Northwest Synod Treasurer, presented the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Mission Plan, led the assembly through the numbers, and addressed questions. Dennis noted that we are doing as well this year in mission support as last year. This year a 1% increase is predicted. The fiscal year runs Feb. 1, 2011 to Jan 31, 2012. We have maintained our churchwide giving of 55%. However, we dropped our churchwide giving 3 years ago from 58% to 55%. There are few major changes. Many committee members do not submit for travel and expenses and this has helped keep expenses down. The salary increase of 2% has been restored to budget. Rent and operating expenses have been reduced with the move to Luther Park.

Speaking to Resolution No. 1

It was noted that the Bishop's salary is missing from the top of page 43. Seminary student funds are a portion of the general budget as a category for direct financial support to seminarians. Amy Odgren's salary is not listed because it is funded by the churchwide organization.

The Resolution No. 1 motion was called/adopted.

Two resolutions were sent to committee for presentation, but only one of the resolutions was approved by the Resolutions Committee to come before the assembly.

S10.05.06

VOTED Resolution No. 3 - Biennial Synod Assemblies was forwarded by the Resolutions Committee for assembly consideration. The motion to add Resolution No. 3 to the Synod Assembly agenda passed.

Speaking to the resolution, Greg Gullicksrud asked how best we would elect voting members to the churchwide assembly. Bishop Pederson responded that the Synod Council would need to address this concern.

It was shared that other synods have implemented a similar resolution and subsequently rescinded the resolution.

SA10.05.07

VOTED A motion was made to amend the first RESOLVED (paragraph 7) of Resolution No. 3 striking the words ONE DAY/Passed.

Amended version reads:

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin take the necessary steps to transition the synod from an annual to biennial assembly schedule augmented in alternate years by Worship/Learning/Fellowship events; and be it further

SA10.05.08

VOTED

Bishop Pederson proposed that Resolution No. 3 be referred to the Synod Council for further study and recommendation. Motion/seconded/passed

Bishop Pederson called for the Elections Committee results. The committee reported that the election results were not available yet. The election results will be posted on the synod website.

Bishop Pederson thanked the Elections Committee and all those who served as nominees.

Pastor Greg Kauffman announced the synod offering total was \$11,911. Diane Kauffman was absent from the assembly due to health issues.

Bishop Pederson presented Pastor Bill Stewart, parliamentarian, with a gift of recognition. Pastor Stewart has served synod assemblies as a parliamentarian for several years and has served in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin for the past 18 years.

Bishop Pederson introduced his wife, Sylvia.

The 2011 Northwest Synod Assembly will be held on June 3-4, 2011 at the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire campus.

Bishop Pederson led the closing liturgy as printed on page 51 of the assembly book and declared the assembly closed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Kae Bussewitz
Secretary, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Addendum to the 2010 Synod Assembly Minutes

The Election Committee met on Tuesday, May 25, 2010 to recount the ballots for the election held at the Synod Assembly. Results of the 2010 Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Assembly Election are as follows:

2010 Ballot for Churchwide Assembly			
Apple River Conference Clergy (vote for one)		Dairyland Conference Lay Female (vote for one)	
Rev. Mary Ann Bowman	172	Blanche Thoreson	*
Rev. Diane Norstad	70		
Rev. Linda Rozumalski	78		
Apple River Conference Lay Female (vote for one)		Dairyland Conference Lay Male (vote for one)	
Helen Anderson	169	Arnie Rongstad	*
Kay Erickson	147		
Chequamegon Conference Clergy (vote for one)		Heart of the North Conf. Clergy (vote for one)	
Rev. Kris Bjerke-Ulliman	162	Rev. Bob Friese	163
Rev. Rebekah Tarras	152	Rev. Carol Ann McArdell	157
Chequamegon Conference Lay Female (vote for one)		Heart of the North Conf. Lay Male (vote for one)	
Janice Devine-Ruggles	156	Roger Hilde	153
Toni Meier	149	Josh Toufar	152
Chequamegon Conference Lay Male (vote for one)		Lake Superior Conference Clergy (vote for one)	
Mike Lindau	*	Rev. Patrick Ziems	*
Chippewa Valley Conference Clergy (vote for one)		Lake Superior Conference Lay Male (vote for one)	
Rev. Paul Oppedahl	182	Gerald Olson	152
Rev. Michael Wollman	132	Tom Potterton	156
Chippewa Valley Conference Lay Female (vote for one)		St. Croix Valley Conference Clergy (vote for one)	
Gay Fehr	*	Rev. Amy Fondroy Eich	*
Chippewa Valley Conference Lay Male (vote for one)		St. Croix Valley Conference Lay Female (vote for one)	
Aaron Sturgis	*	Lois Michaelson	*
Dairyland Conference Clergy (vote for one)		St. Croix Valley Conference Lay Male (vote for one)	
Rev. Ben Ahles-Iverson	95	Jon Schneewind	*
Rev. Ramie Bakken	219		
		Youth Representative (Vote for one)	
		Francesca Ficocello	131
		Emily Yenter	157

* This candidate was unopposed and was elected by consensus of the assembly

2010 Ballot for Synod Council			
+ Incumbent			
Apple River Conference Lay Male (vote for one)		Heart of the North Conference Lay Male (vote for one)	
Larry Blahauvietz	*	Todd Ahneman	210
		Roger Hilde	112
Chequamegon Conference Lay Female (vote for one)		Lake Superior Conference Clergy (vote for one)	
Janice Devine-Ruggles*	152	Rev. Larry Jorstad	*
Martha Scott	168		
Chippewa Valley Conference Lay Female (vote for one)		St. Croix Valley Conference Clergy (vote for one)	
Barbara Solsaa	*	Rev. Hilbert Schultz+	*
Dairyland Conference Clergy (vote for one)		Youth Representative (Vote for one)	
Rev. Eric Bakken+	168	Tianna Ohren	136
Rev. Christine Emerson	154	Michael Yohn	177

* This candidate was unopposed and was elected by consensus of the assembly

2010 Ballot for Boards	
+ Incumbent	
Lutheran School of Theology Chicago	
Rev. Greg Kaufmann	*
Lutheran Social Services	
Rev. Rick Hoyme+	*
Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers	
Rev. Sarah Larson	*
Wartburg Theological Seminary	
Rev. Amy Odgren+	*

* This candidate was unopposed and was elected by consensus of the assembly