

March
2011

I-K Lutheran

Where mission meets the road



From Bishop Bill Gafkjen

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

One of the most ancient seasons of the church year, Lent, peeks over the horizon as February passes into March, inspiring reflections and worries about what to “give up.” This commitment to give up something for Lent (also known as fasting) can certainly be an appropriate expression of one of the classic spiritual disciplines mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 6 (two others also mentioned in that chapter and often talked about during Lent are almsgiving and prayer). By itself, however, giving up something for Lent feels a little too individualistic to me, especially within the context of our rabidly individualistic culture.



Bishop William O. Gafkjen

One counter-cultural move this Lent might be for us to engage in one or two communal Christian practices other than the ones that we usually assume (e.g. worship, Wednesday meals at church, Bible study). In the important and transformational book, “Practicing Our Faith,” Dorothy Bass and Craig Dykstra suggest that “Christian practices are things Christian people do together over time in response to and in the light of God’s active presence for the life of the world in Christ Jesus.”

Together...over time...for the life of the world...

In an individualistic culture that demands instant results on its (each of our) own behalf, such an approach to Christian practices is both radically counter-cultural and profoundly necessary as a witness to the life-giving way of life made possible by the crucified and risen Jesus. Such practices remind us who we are, reshape us in the way of the cross, and reflect for the world who Jesus is.

Twelve distinctive practices are presented in Practicing Our Faith, found at www.practicingourfaith.org/. Look over this list and then consider adding one or two or some other communal practice inspired by this list to your Lenten journey...and invite others to join you on the way.

Honoring the body; hospitality; household economics; saying yes and saying no; keeping Sabbath; testimony; discernment; shaping communities; forgiveness; healing; dying well; singing our lives.

These 40 days, may God’s Spirit draw you deep into the gifts and promises of the baptismal waters and empower and equip you to live each day in the way of the cross that marks your brow, in the power of the Spirit who seals your heart.

Bishop Bill Gafkjen



24th Annual Indiana-Kentucky
Synod Assembly
June 3-5, 2011
Grand Wayne Convention Center
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Assembly Registration Now Open

For all information relating to assembly, including calendar, registration and hotel reservations, visit www.iksynod.org/Whats_New/Assembly2011/assembly-main2011.html

Election of a secretary, inspiring worship, celebrative dinners, fellowship-rich receptions, inspiring and informative breakout sessions, and all the other aspects of assembly that help us to be the church in assembly – sharing anew what God has done and continues to do in our lives, our congregations, and our world.

About Your Synod: I-K Synod Organizing Core Team

"Relationship building is a way of looking at the world—not just a strategy." - Robert Putnam

In April, Bishop Gafkjen will launch the Indiana-Kentucky Synod Organizing Core Team, whose mission will be to "expand Lutheran participation in local congregation-based organizing efforts and to enhance the effectiveness and vitality of synod life and congregational mission."

Values central to community-organizing include listening deeply to one another, building collaborative relationships, taking action, and holding one another accountable to our shared mission, "to empower, equip and encourage the people of God to make Christ known."

In addition to fostering participation in local community organizing efforts throughout the synod, this Team will "influence the cultivation of a relational culture in the synod." The goal will be to uncover and utilize "the gifts and passions of the people of the synod and organizing them into effective action in engaging the needs and concerns of the world."

For more information contact Pr. Ron Luckey at pastor@faithlutheranchurch.com or Faith Lutheran Church, Lexington, KY at 859.266.7621.

ELCA News: Obama Announces Intention to Appoint ELCA Presiding Bishop to Council

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- President Barack Obama announced Feb. 4 his intention to appoint the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the ELCA, to the President's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

The advisory council brings together religious and secular leaders, and scholars and experts in fields related to the work of faith-based and neighborhood organizations, to make recommendations to the government on how to improve partnerships, according to a White House news release.

"I am pleased to announce that these experienced and committed individuals have agreed to join this Administration, and I look forward to working with them in the months and years ahead," Obama said.

In 2009 Hanson was appointed to a White House task force on interreligious dialogue and cooperation, through the Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Record-Level Giving to ELCA World Hunger in December 2010

CHICAGO (ELCA) -The generous response by members and congregations of the ELCA to a World Hunger appeal resulted in gifts of \$3.3 million in December 2010, the highest ever recorded for that month. Make a gifts to ELCA World Hunger at www.ELCA.org/hungerdonate or call 800-638-3522. Send gifts by mail to ELCA World Hunger, P.O. Box 71764, Chicago, IL 60694-1764.

2011 I-K Synod Events & Opportunities: www.iksynod.org



Indiana-Kentucky Synod Stewardship Workshops

Workshops are for all stewardship leaders – stewardship committee members, congregation council members, rostered leaders, and other interested persons.

- ◆ **February 26** - *Gloria Dei, Crestview Hills, KY*
 - ◆ **March 5** - *Gethsemane, Corydon, IN*
 - ◆ **March 19** - *St. Andrew's, Indianapolis, IN*
 - ◆ **March 26** - *Calvary Lutheran, Bluffton, IN*
 - ◆ **April 2** - *Bethany, LaPorte, IN*
- \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door; covers lunch, coffee and materials.**

Learn more at www.iksynod.org/Resources/Stewardship/2011workshops.html or email cwebb@iksynod.org



Introduction to the World of the New Testament Select Learning.org

- 1: New Testament Literature & New Testament Canon
 - 2: Greco-Roman World
 - 3: The Jewish Context of Early Christian Literature
 - 4: Interpretation
- Cost: \$29.95**

Dr. Ray Pickett, Dr. Sarah Henrich, and Dr. Rick Carlson introduce the world of the text, the world behind the text, and the world in front of the text. The fourth session creates the space to work on reading and interpreting a text together, using Mark 10: 46-52.



Indiana-Kentucky Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.