

6 Reports to the Assembly

Letter from Bishop Hanson

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San Francisco Night Ministry

California Lutheran University

St. Olaf College



Office of the Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Spring 2010

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In Advent, I invited you to dwell in words from Paul's letter to the Romans:

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand. Romans 5:1–2a

This spring, as we gather for the 2010 synod assemblies, we are standing together in God's grace, but we are not standing still. Through God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is fully engaged in the mission of proclaiming Christ and caring for the world that God so deeply loves.

This journey together in Christ does not lead us away from difficulties: neither the earthshaking tragedy in Haiti, nor the discernment, disagreements and decisions of congregations and individuals, nor economic hardship in a global recession, nor any of the other challenges we encounter in communities and households.

Instead, in the midst of it all, God meets us in a renewing word:

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:17–18

This word, read during the Lenten season, renews both our identity and our calling. God has given us the grace to stand and to serve in a place filled with promise and opportunity. As the apostle Paul wrote to the Romans, God's Holy Spirit is being poured out so that hope abounds and love fills our hearts (Romans 5:4–5).

Trusting that God's new creation is made evident in and through us, we rejoice that:

- Directors for evangelical mission are prepared, based in synods and ready to serve so that all ELCA congregations are growing as evangelical centers for mission.
- Synod-based partners in evangelical worship are being identified to assist congregations as we seek to be an evangelizing church centered in the means of grace.
- The ELCA's priority for developing new congregations continues. In 2009, 32 new congregations were planted, many in ethnic-specific or multicultural communities, among people living in poverty, and in urban areas. Camino de Vida, a new congregation under development in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is a joint new start with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Mission Developer Jaime Guillermo Yela welcomed more than 400 people for the first worship service in December 2009.
- Leadership is the focus for young adults of African Descent who, in response to "Elisha's Call," are identifying at least 100 new young adult leaders within their communities.
- Creativity abounds through the Book of Faith Initiative as congregations and colleges gather around Scripture in coffee shops and pubs, in homes and in dorm rooms. In one congregation, confirmation students receive Bibles in which their parents, mentors, sponsors and pastors have already marked their favorite passages.
- Social media is playing a vital new role in connecting people to this church. The ELCA News Service transmits releases in real-time via Twitter (twitter.com/elcanews). More than 13,000 fans on the ELCA Facebook page (facebook.com/Lutherans) share stories, encouragement and prayers online.

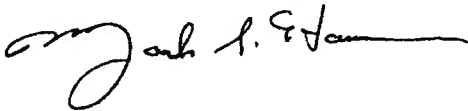
The Book of Faith site (www.bookoffaith.ning.com) has welcomed more than 3,300 participants into a conversation about the first language of faith.

- Generosity marks the ELCA's response to the devastating earthquake in Haiti. In the first five weeks, ELCA members gave nearly \$5.3 million dollars, and more contributions continue to flow in. Lutheran Disaster Response works with our partners, The Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran World Relief, to meet urgent needs, including shelter, medicine, drinking water, food, sanitation and psychosocial assistance, in a commitment that will continue for years to come. Mission support, the portion of a member's financial offering that a congregation shares with its synod and the churchwide organization, provides the infrastructure that makes it possible for this church to apply 100 percent of every designated gift to disaster response.

Living in the hope of the risen Christ who is making all things new, we are moving forward in mission and are supported and encouraged by your synod's fervent prayers, generous financial support and evangelical missional imagination.

I give thanks to God for your service in the mission and ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and for the time and resources you share with your congregation, synod and churchwide ministries. As we stand together in God's grace, it is my prayer that God's work will be served with our hands.

In God's grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark S. Hanson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Report to the Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly from the Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA continues to serve this synod by providing vital loans for capital projects to new mission congregations, established congregations and ELCA-related ministries. The fund is able to fund these loans through the sale of investments to ELCA ministries and congregation members.

Nearly **800 MIF loans** totaling more than **\$465 million** are at work today in ELCA ministries throughout the United States, Virgin Islands and the Caribbean.

In the Sierra Pacific Synod, 19 congregations and ministries currently have Mission Investment Fund loans totaling \$17.1 million, while many individuals and 66 ministries, including the synod, have investments in the fund totaling \$ 8.7 million.*

MIF serves ELCA ministries. In addition to the ministry loans and investments that it offers, the fund provides consulting services to ELCA congregations through its church building consultants and staff architects. The consultants help congregations design building programs that support their mission and evaluate the effectiveness of existing facilities or plans for new facilities. Staff architects provide initial schematic design proposals that congregations can take to local architects. The consultants and architects' services are provided at no charge. Area representatives are available to meet with congregations and ELCA-related ministries regarding the fund's loan and investment opportunities.

Has your congregation invested? Have members of your congregation invested? Join the thousands of individuals, ELCA congregations, ELCA-related ministries and synods – **including the Sierra Pacific Synod** – that are earning interest on their investments as they help to build the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Your participation enables the fund to continue this vital ministry. A variety of fixed- and adjustable-rate investment opportunities are available and may be opened with initial investments of as low as \$5. Information on investments and ministry loans is available at www.elca.org/mif and through the fund's representatives listed below who serve this synod.

Thank you for your support of and participation in the Mission Investment Fund. It is a joy to work in partnership with you for the advancement of God's kingdom.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Thomas A. Dudley
MIF Area Representative
619-750-6271
Thomas.Dudley@elca.org

Carol Schneider
Church Building Consultant
602-957-5288
Carol.Schneider@elca.org

*as of December 31, 2009

Mission Investment Fund | 8765 West Higgins Road | Chicago, Illinois 60631 | web: elca.org/mif
e-mail: mif@elca.org | 877.886.3522 (toll free)

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY
Actions of the Synod Council
2009-2010

The Sierra Pacific Synod Council met in April, June, September and December of 2009 and January of 2010. During the course of the year, Synod staff members and various representatives of our Ministry Partners attended and participated as did the Discipling Team chairs.

Members of the Council during 2009/10 included: Larry Moeller (Vice President), Elaine Alexander (Treasurer), Pat Cash (Secretary), Karen Anderson, Pr Adisa Armand-Miller, Pr Tom Beck*, Pam Bertani, Pr Susan Birkelo*, Ann Brannen, Gisela Daetz, Karen Goldsmith, Perry Grey-Reneberg, Maurie Hamilton, Merle Hansen, Jay Hines-Shah, Pr Sarah Isakson*, Pr Newt Kerney, John Kuehner, Pr Brian Malison, Sharon Seegmiller, and Don Strauch. (* indicates Executive Committee members) In July, Larry Moeller submitted his resignation and John Kuehner served as chair pro tem for the subsequent meetings. Elaine Alexander also submitted her letter of resignation in the fall. The finance committee was tasked with covering her duties under the leadership of Lou Smith. Karen Goldsmith resigned her position as a Council member and as a member of the Finance Committee at the January 2010 meeting.

Following its initial meeting on February 28, the Transition Team work groups accomplished a number of tasks and presented a report to the Council at its September meeting. Council approved moving forward with the then identified office sites, increasing the FTE from 7.5 to 8.75, increasing monthly expenditures by \$15, 000 to cover the added staff and technological upgrades, and expending funds for the upgrade of facilities at the sites approved.

The Discipling Teams offered ongoing reports to the Council, updating their work and the opportunities provided for the Synod. The September meeting featured long range programming ideas and plans. Many thanks for the continued leadership of Ann Watkins, Pr Jim Goldsmith and Margaret McLean, and the important work of the Team members.

During the year, the Council

- adopted the 2010 Budget as it was presented to the 2009 Assembly
- approved the Elder Care Alliance refinancing of the Alma Via property in San Rafael, CA
- voted to memorialize Resolution 09-06 Social Statement on Human Disability to the Churchwide Assembly
- created a Task Force for each of Resolution 09-05 Care of Creation and Resolution 09-04 Seminary Student Support
- discussed all the Churchwide Assembly actions, their opportunities and their impact.
- approved appointments to various committee and working groups including the Consultation and Discipline Committees,
- approved the following special calls: Pr Susan Strouse (to an independent Lutheran Congregation), Pr Marcus Hess and Pr Lori Eickmann (Interim Ministry), Ray Waespi and Pr Bob Crabb (Mission Developers), Pr Mary Stein-Webber (*A Safe Place to Heal*), Pr Donna Duensing (special service, Contextual Education), Pr Diane Bowers and Pr Martin Malzahn (study leave), Pr Janine Blakely, Pr Chris Warner-Carey, Pr Steve Simmond, Pr Trudy Franzen (on leave from call).

The Council also approved a call to Pr Jim Goldsmith to the position of Director of Mission Support and Assistant to the Bishop for the Fresno area. Pr Goldsmith accepted the call and started in the position February 1, 2010.

The Council received two educational opportunities in 2009/10 from the Antiracism Team of the Racial and Ethnic Ministries Task Force, one presented by ALAMEH (Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage) representatives and another on Antiracism presented by Pastors Adisa Armand-Miller and Joseph Barndt. In addition, Pr Craig Settlage, ELCA Director for Mission Support, brought a report to the January, 2010 meeting of Council.

The Synod Council serves on behalf of this Synod between assemblies and is thankful for the ongoing faithfulness, support and action of the congregations here in the Northern California and Northern Nevada. God is indeed using our hands to accomplish God's mission here in this place. May all the ministries of the Sierra Pacific Synod continue to bless others from our neighborhoods to the far reaches of the globe.

In Christ,
Pat Cash
Synod Secretary

Leadership Discipling Team
Sierra Pacific Synod • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
REPORT TO THE 2010 SYNOD ASSEMBLY
May 6-8, 2010 • Margaret R. McLean, Chair

The Leadership Discipling Team (LDT) strives to cultivate and encourage the professional development and well-being of professional leaders in the Sierra Pacific Synod. Our team is concerned with the spiritual, relational, theological, professional, financial, physical, and interpersonal aspects of the lives of our professional leaders and provides support through the call process, coaching, interim ministry, facilitated groups, spiritual care, and the annual Professional Leaders Conference.

The 2009 Professional Leaders Conference in Asilomar considered "Building a Community of Lutheran Leaders" with Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore, Luther Seminary, and Dr. Steed Davidson, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. The PLC Team—Kerstin Barnes (secretary), Anne Carlson (LDT liaison), Frank Espegren (treasurer), Christian Jennert (co-chair), Diane McGeoch (co-chair), and Reg Schultz-Akerson—explored new location options for the PLC and Granlibakken Conference Center & Lodge in North Lake Tahoe will host the 2010 PLC. The team is excited about the beautiful location! The topic for 2010 (October 12 -14) is "Dietrich Bonhoeffer for 21st Century Leaders" with guest speakers Rev. Dr. Mark Brocker, Beaverton, Oregon and Rev. Dr. Lisa Dahill, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio.

The Interim Steering Committee—Bruce Johnson, Stan Niemi, Cindy Beck, Pamela Pond, Kirk Shipley, and Marcus Hess; facilitated by Dale Sollom-Brotherton—continues to provide support and training for pastors serving as interims in our synod. All interim pastors gather together twice a year, and regionally twice a year. The Steering Committee has been developing a process to distinguish interim pastors who have received training, been mentored, and served in an effective interim experience.

Twelve Coaches have been trained and are ready for assignment to walk alongside Pastors providing encouragement, insights, and focus toward healthy congregations for mission. Currently, three Coaches are working alongside Pastors who are in the process of Renewal. Others are providing guidance through the Natural Church Development process that seeks to identify strengths for use in growing areas demanding further development; and, some are assisting Coaches in developing mission statements, core values and vision. A plan is in place to integrate all three of these activities into one process. Sharon Lubkeman, Synod Coach Coordinator, attended a seminar with Christian Schwarz on new insights for further development of Passionate Spirituality. These will be passed along through the coaches in the near future.

Responding to a request made by the Conference Deans, the LDT focused on the call process during 2009, developing one-page summaries of the process for the exiting pastor, the interim pastor, the congregational president, and the congregation. This work continues. Responding to a request from Bp. Holmerud, the team began a detailed review of the Salary Guidelines for professional leaders in our synod. This review will pave the way for consideration of a new model for compensation. Input on this process will be sought by the Team at the 2010 Synod Assembly.

The LDT members are: Ann Brewer, Anne Carlson, Nick Droge, Mary Lou Petitjean, Margaret McLean (chair), Susan Scott (dean), Carol Starr, John Valentine, and Jim White. Nancy Feniuk Nelson provides staff support to the Team.

Witness and Service Discipling Team
Sierra Pacific Synod • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

REPORT TO THE 2010 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

May 6–8, 2010 • Reno, Nevada

New Ministry in American Canyon

The Witness and Service Discipling Team has been working closely with Pr. Harvey Blomberg, Director for Evangelical Mission, to prepare for a new mission start in American Canyon, located between Vallejo and Napa. A development plan has been approved and funded by the Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) unit of the ELCA. Funding has also been allocated from the Sierra Pacific Synod. Work is now focused on identifying and interviewing a mission developer for this new congregation under development.

Ministries Under Development or in Transformation

Fifteen other ministries are financially supported by the synod and/or EOCM. They are:

Christ, Fairfax	Immanuel, San Jose	El Buen Pastor, Salinas
St. Andrews, San Mateo	Resurrection, Oakland	Grace, Richmond
Miracles of Faith, Oakland	Paradise, Paradise	Christ Oromo, San Lorenzo
Central Valley, Madera	St. John, Sacramento	Pueblo de Dios, San Jose
Grace Lao, Richmond	South Asian, Fremont	Gift of Grace, Fernley, NV

Learning Opportunities

The Discipling Team has arranged for practical learning opportunities to be offered for congregational leaders at our Synod Assemblies in 2009 and 2010:

“Small Town and Rural Ministry” was a workshop presented at the 2009 Synod Assembly in Fresno.

“Best Practices in Email Church Communications & Email Newsletters” is a workshop offered at the 2010 Synod Assembly in Reno. Mr. Stu Carty from *Constant Contact*, an email marketing resource provider, will help congregations to utilize email communications more effectively. The Sierra Pacific Synod uses *Constant Contact* to produce and send its weekly newsletter and other email announcements.

“Who’s In Your Ministry Neighborhood?” is also a Reno 2010 workshop presented by Mr. Peter Wernett of *MissionInsite*. Our Discipling Team provides the funding for this web-based mission resource with which congregations can study the demographic information and trends in their ministry location.

“Stewardship from Cradle to Grave” will be presented in Reno by Pr. Jim Goldsmith, our Synod’s new Director for Mission Support. Why do people give? What are some “best practices” for stewardship in the 21st century?

“Congregational Vitality: Assessing, Reviving and Leading” will feature Pr. Harvey Blomberg, Director for Evangelical Mission, helping congregations to focus on the reason for their existence, the mission God has called them to in their context of location and culture.

God’s Work. Our Hands.

Word and Sacrament Discipling Team
Sierra Pacific Synod • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
REPORT TO THE 2010 SYNOD ASSEMBLY
May 6-8, 2010 • Ann Watkins, Chair

The Word & Sacrament Discipling Team exists to help the congregations of the Sierra Pacific Synod equip believers for baptismal living, and thus to further the mission of the ELCA. It works in collaboration with the Bishop, the Bishop's staff, and congregations. The team is committed to exploring and sharing fresh ideas for worship and baptismal living.

The team has four areas of focus: 1) Christian Education, 2) the Catechumenate, 3) Music as a part of worship, and 4) Lay Leadership Education. The discipling team also has been delegated to promote the Book of Faith Initiative throughout the Sierra Pacific Synod.

The team is comprised of nine members, a chairperson, five representatives of the various districts, two At-Large members, and a Dean. They meet four times a year on a Saturday for planning. They also hold events, relating to the areas of focus, periodically throughout the year. Examples of these include: Book of Faith Conversations; Leadership Forums, Catechumenate training, and music events.

The Team maintains a website, www.wordandsacrament.org, where information about the team and up-coming events can be found.

COUNCIL OF DEANS SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD

The Sierra Pacific Synod Council of Deans is comprised of the Deans of each of the 18 Conferences in the Synod, plus the Bishop and the Chairperson, who is appointed by the Bishop.

The Council meets three times a year to, in the words of the Deans Mission Statement, *"provide counsel and support to the bishop in the task of oversight; assist the bishop in carrying out the administrative, pastoral, and ecclesiastical functions in the conferences; reflect with the bishop on the vision of the synod; and provide mutual support for one another."* In addition, the Council meets annually at the time of the Synod Assembly to care for matters germane to its interests and responsibilities at the Assembly.

During the year 2009, the Council met January 13-14 at Christ the King Retreat Center in Citrus Heights, May 28 at the Radisson Hotel in Fresno, June 10 at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Vacaville, and October 19-20 at the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove.

The January meeting was the annual retreat, the theme for which was, *"Spirituality from a Lutheran Point of View."* The leader was the Rev. Dr. David L. Miller, former Editor of The Lutheran.

The May meeting was a luncheon meeting immediately preceding the opening of the Synod Assembly. The purpose of this annual gathering is to:

- say "thank you" to the Deans for all they do on behalf of the Synod
- provide a time of fellowship together with the Bishop
- prepare for the District Caucuses convening later that same day
- receive instructions for the distribution of communion at the Closing Worship Service

At the June meeting, the Deans:

- received a report from Bishop Holmerud on what's happening around the Synod
- reviewed the 2009 Synod Assembly and how the resolutions from it would be implemented
- shared plans for the 2009 Fall Conference/District Assemblies
- considered a bylaw change to allow District Caucuses to be held prior to Synod Assembly
- considered a new bylaw to provide for filling vacancies on Discipling Teams
- received reports from the Discipling Teams by the Deans who serve as liaisons to those teams
- reviewed provisions and arrangements for interim pastors in the Synod
- reviewed the Job Descriptions for Conference Deans and the Chair of the Council of Deans
- discussed a variety of other issues, including pastoral care of clergy and spouses, congregational outreach, the Book of Faith Initiative, and workshop ideas for Conference/District Gatherings

At the October meeting, the Deans:

- received an update from the Bishop's Associate on the status of the Synod's transition plans
- received reports from one another on what's happening in the congregations of their Conferences
- received an update from the Bishop on what's happening around the ELCA
- received reports on the Fall District/Conference Assemblies
- received reports from the Discipling Teams by the Deans who serve as liaisons to those teams
- received status reports on proposed bylaw changes regarding District Caucuses & D.T. vacancies
- received updates on the call process and interim pastors
- reviewed the role of Conference pastors in Congregational Installation Services
- reviewed plans for future Professional Leaders Conferences and the annual Deans Retreat

David E. Baker, Chair, Council of Deans

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary: 100 Years and Thriving

“Despite the fact that most of the pastors who have labored in the Pacific Synod have been trained in eastern schools, the dream of western men ‘trained in a western school’ has persisted in the Synod from the very first.”
– Unknown, 1910

“What the Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary has been and is to the cause of Lutheranism, particularly in the Middle West, that the summer school at Berkeley will eventually grow to be to our Western Lutheranism....Though it has necessarily a small beginning...and no visible means of support save a mighty faith in our Heavenly Father, it will and must speedily assume greater thoroughness and dignity until it becomes the alma mater of a host of Western missionaries....”

– Pastor Leas, 1902

Dear Friends in the Sierra Pacifica Synod,

It’s hard to imagine that the West was once considered a foreign mission field.

It was.

And in October of 1910, a handful of faithful, determined people founded the Divinity School of the Pacific Synod. The first classes met under the tutelage of four professors in the balcony of St. James Lutheran Church in downtown Portland. A few years later, the seminary moved to Seattle, and was renamed the Pacific Lutheran Seminary.

Hard times during the Depression forced the seminary to close in 1934. The small property was sold and the proceeds of the sale were invested so that one day a new theological school could be reborn in the west.

That day came in 1950 when two magnificent mansions perched atop Marin Avenue in Berkeley, California, were purchased for \$150,000. These two estates would become the campus of the resurrected Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, and again the west would have a place of its own to prepare and equip its church leaders.

The dream from the very first days of the church in the west has been fulfilled. And while it may not have been a speedy process, PLTS has become the alma mater to a host of Western missionaries... 1361, to be exact.

This fall we celebrate our 100th birthday on Sunday, October 10. On 10/10/10 we will be at St. James Lutheran Church in Portland to honor the faith and courage of those who gave us our beginnings. We invite you to join in the celebration by recalling the stories of faith and courage that brought you to where you are today – and to ponder how the smallest acts of faithfulness can result in infinite good.

Peace,



Dr. Phyllis Anderson
President





Lutheran Social Services of Northern California (LSS) currently provides support in Contra Costa County, Sacramento County, San Joaquin County and San Francisco County. LSS programs cover a wide range of activity, and respond to the needs of many different kinds of people. Some are innocent children or young adults who've had little or nothing to do with their unfortunate life circumstances. Others are individuals struggling to regain the ability to be responsible for their own actions. We offer grace and hope for the future, often serving as catalysts to propel human beings toward a higher level of existence.

LSS Programs and Services include:

Contra Costa County (Concord, CA) – **Mi Casa** (*Transitional Housing for Homeless Former Foster Youth ages 18-25*).

Sacramento County (Sacramento, CA) – **Connections** (*Transitional Supportive Housing Program for Youth*); **Focus and Youth Moving On** (*Transitional Housing Plus Programs*); **Adolfo** (*Permanent Supportive Housing*); **Saybrook** (*Permanent Housing*); **Transitional Housing Program for Families; Building Bridges** (*Supportive Services to Individuals and Families*); **Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program** (*Supportive Services, primarily housing stability*).

San Francisco County (San Francisco, CA) – **Money Management Services; Housing Services; Bernal Gateway Apartments** (*Case Management and Activities Coordination*); **Folsom Dore Apartments** (*Permanent Supportive Housing*); **Polk St. Apartments** (*Housing for formerly homeless and very low income seniors*).

San Joaquin County (Stockton, CA) – **Project Hope** (*Transitional Housing for Homeless Former Foster Youth ages 18-25*).

LSS strives to continually improve the scope of its service to a client base in need of our assistance. In these difficult economic times, State, Local, and County budget cuts have greatly affected some of our programs, amongst many other non-profit organizations that are finding it difficult to keep programs open. LSS is making every effort to find additional resources to continue to serve those in need.

Currently, LSS is in conversations with local and federal representatives of the Veteran's Administration about using our experience and history with vulnerable individuals and families to develop new site based innovative programs for Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). These families are even more vulnerable arriving home due to the economic recession.

Our plan is to develop our former church site that will have 40 units of housing for recent Veterans and their families, with other sites being explored on an on-going basis. Referrals will come from the entire Bay Area.

LSS needs your generous donations, as well as individual and congregational support to continue to serve the communities we live in. If you would like to make a donation or learn more about a charitable bequest in your will or living trust, please contact us at 925.825.1060 or visit us on the web at www.lssnorcal.org. Thank you for your continued support!

Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed, "but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:15-17)

Blessings,
Barbara Dröher Kline, President/CEO, May 2010



LUTHERAN OFFICE OF PUBLIC POLICY – CALIFORNIA

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Vital Congregations/Just Communities . . . the Lutheran Office of Public Policy - California (LOPP) marked its 25th year of service as a ministry of public policy education and advocacy in 2009, operating as a partnership of the Sierra Pacific, Pacifica, and Southwest California Synods, and the ELCA's Church in Society Program Unit. The freedom we have been given together in Christ unites us in a way that transcends divisions – shaping **vital congregations** – and calls us to be “little Christs” to our neighbors, as we recognize Christ's presence in them (Matt. 25). With gratitude for God's grace, we seek the well-being of all – **just communities** – as we step forward as a “public church which witnesses boldly to God's love for all the God has created” (a strategic direction of the ELCA). We embrace our varied gifts of the spirit, acknowledge our diverse views on matters of public policy, and join hands in a common effort to promote policies which address poverty, care for God's creation, reduce violence and discrimination, and promote equity and reconciliation.

Public policy at the state and local levels in California continues to be dominated by the consequences of the recession, including declines in public revenue and increased demands on safety net services. An LOPP priority for 2009 was direct advocacy and constituent organizing for budget solutions that minimized harm as a result of cuts in health and human services, and that embodied a spirit of compromise that included both revenue increases and reduced spending. The \$60 billion in complex and confusing “solutions” over 18 months included large cuts in medical care for the poor, social services, benefits for low-income, elderly, and disabled people, and public education. Long, intense budget debates took place as several versions of the budget were adopted in the context of fiscal emergency. LOPP made an effort to help voters understand the choices in the May 2009 special budget election. Voters rejected, for a variety of reasons, all measures placed on the ballot by the Legislature. Eight special sessions of the Legislature took place, and with a current gap of about \$20 billion in 2010, projections are for more of the same legislative conflict and gridlock. In the midst of budget debates, LOPP has been able to offer support for selected legislation relating to poverty, hunger, and care for creation, and continues to be a place of hospitality for groups engaging in advocacy. One highlight was passage of legislation creating a transitional food stamp program for emancipating foster youth, who are at high risk of homelessness and incarceration. A priority bill to regulate and allocate any future carbon credits, in a way that helps prevent gaming of the system and promotes equity and green jobs in California, was vetoed. Priorities for LOPP in 2010 include health care, reform of the broken and dysfunctional budget (and initiative) process which adversely affects people living in poverty, and care for creation/climate change. These priorities are expressed through advocacy in the budget process, on specific bills, and on selected 2010 ballot propositions.

In 2009, LOPP had a budget of about \$74,000, of which \$49,881 was provided by the ELCA Church in Society Program Unit through a World Hunger grant, from funds allocated to address systemic causes of hunger and poverty. Synod support included Sierra Pacific (\$6,000; \$3,496 Second Mile) Pacifica (\$4,462), Southwest California (\$6,953). As a result of a decline in World Hunger receipts, due mostly to the economic recession, the director's position was reduced from full to half time, and part-time staff support ended. A Policy Council provides oversight for LOPP, and members representing the Sierra Pacific Synod include Steven Krefting (Treas.), Jay Hines-Shah, Kinnon Falk, and Edie Lott. Virginia Greenwald replaced Nancy Nielsen as the LSS of Northern California representative. We are grateful for this Lutheran partnership for public witness in California: **vital congregations** working for **just communities**. – Respectfully submitted, *Mark E. Carlson*, Director



**Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Nevada (LAMN)
2009-2010 Report
For Sierra Pacific and Grand Canyon Synods, ELCA
By Larry Struve, Director of Advocacy for Nevada**

I. What is LAMN?

LAMN is a joint ministry of the Sierra Pacific and Grand Canyon Synods within the State of Nevada. Since 1991, LAMN has provided a voice within the State of Nevada to engage those who shape public policy so as to persuade them that the primary duty of society is the care of those who are least able to speak for themselves or who have the least basic necessities of life. We hear the Prophet Micah (6:8) and seek “to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.”

LAMN is represented in the Nevada Legislature by Larry Struve, Director of Advocacy for Nevada and Assistant to Bishop Steve Talmage of the Grand Canyon Synod, and he also reports to Bishop Mark Holmerud of the Sierra Pacific Synod. LAMN is an active partner in an ecumenical advocacy group known as RAIN (Religious Alliance in Nevada), which is comprised of leaders from 5 major denominations in Nevada: ELCA Lutherans, Presbyterians, United Methodists, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics. Over 600,000 Nevadans identify with these 5 mainline denominations.

The basis of LAMN’s advocacy in influencing the formation of public policy are the social statements of the ELCA, the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the ecumenical creeds, and Lutheran confessional writings. As the economy has faltered and legislators consider significant budget cuts that threaten the ability of government to provide essential services, the LAMN statewide policy council has affirmed the following principles to guide its work in Nevada

- The moral imperative underpinning the legitimacy of government is a commitment to help everyone in society to seek and obtain a sufficient and sustainable livelihood;
- Caring for one’s neighbor and reaching out to those who are excluded from achieving all of their human potential are fundamental responses by which the people represented by LAMN live out their faith, through concrete acts of justice and compassion such as feeding people who are hungry, caring for the sick, and helping those trapped in poverty and hopelessness;
- Government plays a critical role in providing essential services needed by many in society, such as helping children to have a reasonable chance of getting a good education, and assisting many needy individuals (including seniors, those with handicaps, and those living in poverty) to live safer, healthier, hopeful lives.

II. Highlights of LAMN’s Advocacy Ministry in 2009-2010

- Maintaining a physical presence in the 2009 regular session and the 2010 special session of the Nevada Legislature, highlighting social justice concerns such as helping people in poverty and those without housing, children in need of protective services, preparation of prisoners who’ve served their time and are being released back into society, assuring access to health care by poor and uninsured people, and better utilizing hunger programs to feed the hungry.
- Launching a web site (www.lutheranadvocacynv.org) linked to other faith organizations, to provide information on LAMN activities and their basis in Scripture and Church policy.
- Passage of Senate Bill 236, creating a “reentry account” within the Nevada State Treasury to receive gifts, grants, and donations to support development of reentry programs to help those who sincerely desire to turn their lives around, and launching an effort to raise funds to help ex-offenders obtain proper identification when released back into society.
- Preparing for an event in the Las Vegas area in 2010 to simulate the challenges facing an increasing number of Nevadans who are coping with problems of hunger and access to food.

III. Financial Support and Operations of LAMN

The 2010/2011 projected annual budget of LAMN is approximately \$21,150, of which 33% will come from the churchwide ELCA's Division of Church in Society, 31% from the Grand Canyon Synod, 14% from Sierra Pacific Synod, its congregations, and its Second Mile Giving, 9 % from RAIN, and 13% from other sources.

IV. Goals of LAMN in 2010:

- a. Educate Nevadans on the root causes of hunger and enlist parishioners' support both in terms of direct giving, serving, and advocating to better address hunger and poverty;
- b. Educate Nevadans on the need for criminal justice reform, with particular focus on raising contributions for the Reentry Account to help prisoners newly released back into society obtain proper identification, so that recidivism is reduced;
- c. Help Lutherans to address homelessness, its causes and its costs to the community, so that work can be done to obtain policy changes to better address homelessness in Nevada.
- d. Work to make sense of health care reform, so that policy changes can be made to increase access to health care for all;
- e. Monitor the work of a legislative committee reviewing Nevada's tax structure in 2010, because of the need to broaden the tax base available to support basic services required of government (especially in light of the November 2009 report of the Pew Center on the States identifying Nevada as one of ten states whose fiscal situation is untenable);
- f. Participate in 2010 Synod Assemblies, explaining advocacy ministry and the work of the ELCA as a public church in Nevada.

V. Activities Planned in 2010:

- a. LAMN participates and works with the Grand Canyon Synod Hunger Committee through members of the staff in the Synod Office. Efforts are under way to plan a Hunger 101 event in Las Vegas, by which members in ELCA congregations and others will be recruited to participate in a simulation to learn what it means to be hungry in the State's most populous area.
- b. Legislative Forums are planned in Las Vegas on May 15, 2010 and in Carson City on Feb. 7, 2011 to identify for parishioners in the congregations associated with RAIN and LAMN as well as for legislators and other interested citizens the legislative issues with which these faith advocacy groups will be concerned in the 2011 Nevada Legislative Session.

2010 Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly Report

Mt. Cross Ministries
Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Northern California
Felton, California

Mission

Igniting Passionate Faith
Equipping Servant Leaders
Spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ

2009 Camp Year

Considering the economy, Mt. Cross was still able to serve almost as many campers and retreat groups in 2009 as in 2008 – which was a record year.

Individual giving increased due to many generous individual donations, memorials and bequests.

Mt. Cross Ministries ... Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Northern California	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total · Gifts & Donations	269,758.86	228,287.50	204,910.25	197,405.10	209,970.75

2010 Camp Year

Mt. Cross...

- 🔥 is adding additional activities for summer camp (additional team building activities, low profile “race trikes,” and possibly a 40 foot water slide) to better engage specific populations,
- 🔥 is strengthening its challenge course programming (more proactive in complete facilitator training for specific summer staff and constructing additional team challenges),
- 🔥 has hired over 40 summer staff representing both ELCA and LCMS (staff traveled for 2-weeks to ELCA colleges and universities to recruit),
- 🔥 has a complete year-round staff that is extremely competent in their work (of the 6 year-round staff, there is 1 doctorate, 3 masters, 2 almost completed masters, and all have an undergrad degree),
- 🔥 needs additional year-round staff but is choosing to wait out the economy a little while longer (this means each of the staff has agreed to take on more load for the time being), and
- 🔥 Board of Directors was presented a draft of the master plan in March, will be presenting it publically at the Memorial Day BBQ (please buy tickets and come), and tentatively hopes to approve it by fall 2010 (the plan is being worked on by a professional designer/architect and getting approval by Santa Cruz County so that it will be fully able to be permitted).

Please continue to contact Executive Director, Craig Oldenburg (craig@mtcross.org) for constructive critiques of Mt. Cross, to offer your encouragement and support, and to be a positive force for the team ministry it is in the Sierra Pacific Synod. Please pray for all the staff and their families. Thank you.



Craig 😊

Dr. Craig S. Oldenburg, Executive Director



Sierra Pacific Synod Women of the ELCA Annual Report

Like many Americans, Women of the ELCA and Women of Sierra Pacific Synod faced many challenges in 2009. The national recession impacted individuals, congregational units and the synodical organization. We found great strength in knowing we were like a tree that had been deeply rooted in our faith in Jesus Christ. As women we were able to continue to boldly share our faith with others. We continued to grow in faith through Bible study, working in food pantries, making quilts and advocating for justice for women and children.

In November we met at Peace Lutheran Church in Grass Valley for the ninth biennial convention. Over 200 women were in attendance and were inspired and challenged by keynote speaker and Bible study leader Dr. Marva Dawn. Mrs. Diane Brauer, Women of the ELCA Board member brought greetings and updates on Women of the ELCA. The Holden Evening Worship service was very meaningful and conducted by Bishop Mark Holmerud and Pastor Dick Johnson. There were many workshops and great music to stimulate and motivate us in our faith journeys. The closing worship service was conducted by Pastor Judith Morgado and sent us on our way to branch out and serve the Triune God.

One of our goals has been to raise \$150,000 to fully fund the Women of the Sierra Pacific Synod Woman Seminarian Endowment Fund at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. In the past two years we have raised \$10,000 towards this goal. Our efforts will continue so that in the near future a woman seminarian may be a recipient of a grant.

It has been a blessing to serve as your president and to work with the Board. I encourage you to continue to share your faith stories. Keep on telling them. God Bless you in your service.

Jacque Haar, out going President Sierra Pacific Synod Women of the ELCA

It's a bold new year! In 2010 the W-ELCA will continue past board members' efforts to Act Bold in Our Faith. Our Synod-wide women's retreat will take place November 19-21, 2010 at Asilomar in Pacific Grove. The board is preparing for this event and we need your prayers, support and participation. We are focusing on acting boldly and connecting with the women of congregations leaving the ELCA to provide support, encouragement and help them stay connected to the W-ELCA. We are also working on the Triennial Gathering for July 2011 in Spokane, Washington.

I had the opportunity in February to attend the W-ELCA's Presidents Conference in Chicago. This was an amazing opportunity to learn how to *Navigate The Waters*, what it means to be your president, and about the ways we are responding to the needs of women around the world. I brought back many ideas for future ways we can Act Bold in Our Faith! I pray that I am ready to raise the anchor and set sail with God as our navigator. I look forward to hearing about you and your ministries, and to sharing what I learned and the many other things we are doing.

Blessings, Cindy Arnett, incoming President, Sierra Pacific Synod Women of the ELCA

REPORT FOR SIERRA PACIFIC ASSEMBLY 2010

LUTHERANS CONCERNED SAN FRANCISCO/BAY AREA

Last year has brought tremendous progress in the Lutherans Concerned goal of equality and justice for sexual minority people in the church and in society. Our church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, through the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, a major decision to permit lesbian and gay clergy in publically accountable lifelong monogamous relationships to serve as pastors of its congregations. We thank all of you who has prayed and worked for such a bold step in faith and in justice.

We are also mindful of fellow Lutherans who cannot put all this together as part of their faith and understanding of Scripture. We honor them, as we always have, as brothers and sisters in Christ –mindful that we all cannot be at the same place at the same time. To help our brothers and sisters we offer the *Reconciling in Christ (RIC)* program in our synod as a way for you and your congregation to look at the issues and the interpretation of Scripture as a process in your community of faith without any commitment or obligation to acceptance. If you are interested you can find a link to the RIC program at www.lcna.org. We also stand ready to assist you in any way. Our own website is <http://www.lcsanfrancisco.org/> and our email is info@lcsanfrancisco.org

We also participate in the Gay Pride Parade on the last Sunday of the month in June. While this parade might be associated with extreme publicity of extreme behavior, it is much more an expression of joy and hope of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning persons. Churches, including Lutherans under the banner of Lutherans Concerned, have brought witness of Jesus Christ and God's love, often receiving applause from the crowds, many of whom have suffered religious abuse in their lives. You see in many so much healing taking place in their faces as we march. We invite you to join us.

The world is changing. Thanks to the scientifically based understanding of how people develop their sexual identity and orientation, we, people of the Bible, are learning how to relate that understanding in a Christian way to the Christian way of life. And so the church is changing.

God bless you in your faith journey in Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Robert Goldstein
Co-chair
Lutherans Concerned/SFBA

San Francisco Night Ministry

*Mailing address: 1031 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109
www.nightministry.com + sfnightministry@aol.com + (415) 441-0123*

Thank you for your faithful and generous support. On behalf of the people we serve, our staff, Governing Board members and volunteer Crisis Line Counselors, I offer my deepest gratitude to the Sierra Pacific Synod for your partnership with us.

Focus and Operation of the Night Ministry

The San Francisco Night Ministry serves as the Churches' Night Shift. We provide a compassionate non-judgmental presence that includes listening, prayer, blessings, pastoral care, care of the soul, counseling, referral and crisis intervention to anyone in any kind of distress or difficulty **every night of the year between the hours of 10:00 P.M. and 4:00 A.M.**

This assistance is provided face-to-face through our **Night Ministers** to people on the streets of San Francisco, and in the city's bars, transportation centers, coffee shops, and other places where people gather at night, and through our **Crisis Telephone Line** which is staffed by **42 trained volunteer Crisis Line Counselors**. Calls come from the **entire Bay Area and beyond**. When requested, Crisis Line Counselors can dispatch a Night Minister to meet with a caller at their hotel room, apartment, house, hospital room or any place of the caller's choosing. We are also available to provide transportation to emergency shelters or hospitals when referred by other crisis intervention agencies in the city.

In 2009, Crisis Line Counselors responded to **5,100 calls** while Night Ministers engaged in **13,960 significant conversations**. Since January 1, 2010 we have seen a dramatic increase in the numbers of calls and personal visits due to a continuing anxiety over the economy, cutbacks in programs, and increasing violence in some of the communities in the San Francisco Bay area.

In addition, we offer a weekly outdoor Eucharist - **Open Cathedral** - followed by lunch and a time for personal conversation and prayer. We gather each Sunday at 2:00 near UN Plaza in the Civic Center area of San Francisco. On the average 45 people attend worship and 80 participate in lunch.

What's New?

The most recent addition to the outreach is **Open Cathedral / Castro** - our second weekly outdoor Eucharist with a focus toward people with little or no involvement in the church.

Sierra Pacific Synod Support

In 2009 **50 congregations and ministries** of the Sierra Pacific Synod and **many individuals** supported Night Ministry with direct financial contributions or with contributions sent through the Synod office in response to the **Second Mile Giving** campaign. Several congregations also donated items which could be distributed to those in need, such as coats, hats, gloves, socks and blankets, or prepared and served lunch for Open Cathedral. In addition, 3 of our Governing Board members, 3 staff members, and several volunteers, including Crisis Line Counselors, join with me and **the Rev. Chuck Lewis, Night Minister Emeritus**, in providing a Lutheran presence to our ministry which is ecumenical and interdenominational.

Thank you for your continued support and pledge to hold us, and those whom we serve, in your prayers. Please remember that we exist as **an extension of your congregations' ministry** to the troubled, lonely, anxious and those on the margins in our midst, and that we are available at a time when distress is often the most acute - **in the middle of the night**.

Thank you for helping Night Ministry to achieve its goal - **to lighten the darkness and rekindle the hope that comes from God's love**.

In Christ,
Lyle J. Beckman, Night Minister

March 2010

As California Lutheran University celebrates its 50th anniversary, it is significant that President Chris Kimball continues to stress the strategic goal on Lutheran identity. CLU, though building on its past, is looking towards its future celebrating and claiming its identity. Information on this plan can be found at www.callutheran.edu/strategic_planning/index.php

- Along with Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, California Lutheran University is the only ELCA institution of higher learning geographically located in Region 2. CLU is owned by the congregations in this region. These congregations are represented by the members of the CLU Convocation.
- With record enrollment over the last several years, applications for first year students have increased by 70% over last year's applications
- A Theology and Christian Leadership Major has been inaugurated at CLU. The first phase of the major is an emphasis on youth and family ministry. A congregation in Region 2 has offered to help establish a chair for the Youth and Family Ministry emphasis. The search for a professor to fill that position is nearly complete and we anticipate this new faculty member joining CLU in the fall.
- Podcasting of the Wednesday, University Chapel Services is available on the University's website at www.callutheran.edu/university_ministries/campus_ministry/
- Only 5-7 % of Lutheran youth go on to higher education in a Lutheran university. "When schools flourish," Martin Luther was recorded as saying, "then things go well and the church is secure." Cal Lutheran is flourishing but we need the congregations help to increase our Lutheran student population.
- The University has received the largest gift in its 50-year history. Mr. William Roland has donated \$5 million plus \$1 for a new football stadium. While Mr. Roland is neither Lutheran nor alumni, he is so impressed with the mission of CLU that he has granted this transformational gift. This gift will also help pave the way for future building projects.

The 50th anniversary theme is "Fulfilling Our Promise." This theme reflects the commitment of determined visionaries with the hope of establishing a Lutheran college in California. These early supporters created the Advisory National Committee on Lutheran Higher Education. Soon after, Conejo Valley rancher Richard Pederson, the son of Norwegian pioneers, donated his land to make their dreams a reality. These dedicated pioneers — and over the years all of us — have been charged with fulfilling some very special promises.

California Lutheran University celebrates the 50-year milestone by honoring the dedication of supporters who advanced the University's academic achievements and successfully nurtured generations of students. The "Fulfilling our Promise" tagline reinforces the continued commitment to educate leaders for a global society who are strong in character and judgment, confident in their identity and vocation and committed to service and justice.





David R. Anderson
President

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ELCA Synod Assemblies 2010

Greetings from St. Olaf College!

Since 1874, St. Olaf College has educated students in an academic community shaped by its commitment to the Lutheran tradition. At St. Olaf, students work closely with dedicated faculty who challenge them to grow in mind, body, and spirit. St. Olaf has always seen its vital connection to the Lutheran tradition as enhancing its standing as one of the leading liberal arts colleges in the United States.

Like its predecessors, this year's entering class brings outstanding academic talent to campus. The majority of first-year students ranked in the top 10% of their high school class. Their average academic grade point average in high school was 3.63. The class' median ACT composite score was 29 and the median combined SAT score was 1300.

St. Olaf continues to enroll a higher percentage of Lutheran students than most ELCA colleges. Forty two percent of this year's incoming students who indicated their religious affiliation identified themselves as Lutheran. Among these Lutheran students, the academic indicators such as ACT score, GPA, and rank in class are higher than for the class of 2013 as a whole.

St. Olaf graduates make a significant contribution to the church and to the study of religion. St. Olaf continues to be among the top three colleges where rostered ELCA clergy receive their undergraduate degrees. Among all baccalaureate colleges, St. Olaf is second in the number of graduates who go on to earn doctorates in religion and theology.

I invite you to visit St. Olaf in two ways, in person and online. Come to campus to join us at concerts, lectures, conferences, and summer camps. Or visit the St. Olaf website at stolaf.edu to join in many of these events online. Upcoming events include the biennial St. Olaf Conference on Worship, Theology and the Arts, which will be held July 19–23. The conference theme is "The News and The Good News," exploring how media and the arts further (or hinder) the church's work. Summer camps for 2010 include chess, music, swimming, basketball, and engineering. During the academic year, daily Chapel and Sunday morning worship services are held at Boe Memorial Chapel and streamed online at stolaf.edu/church/chapel. We look forward to welcoming you to St. Olaf either in person or online.

We thank you for your prayers and support; we encourage you to send students to St. Olaf; and we wish you well.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David R. Anderson".

David R. Anderson '74
President