



Upstate New York Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

A REPORT FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE Conference Assembly - Fall 2012

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

Isaiah 52:7

Resurrection people who pray first, walk together and change lives

As Resurrection People, this synod has been putting faith into action all year long. In the name of Christ and in partnership with the whole ELCA, we have engaged in leadership development, received a visit from our global companions from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe, gathered and served in New Orleans, and responded to disasters here at home. In all these endeavors we have prayed first, walked together and changed lives.

Walking with Zimbabwe

It was a privilege to host three visitors from our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ) for two weeks in early summer. Bishop Stephen and Mrs. Elfina Dube, as well as General Secretary M.M. Dube (no relation) sang and prayed their way across the synod, visiting in rural and urban areas from Central Bridge to Jamestown. They participated fully in our Synod Assembly, including time with Youth Convo. Mrs. Dube also connected with our synod's Women of the ELCA. This visit was the result of many people who helped with hosting, transportation and finances. Special thanks go to Beth Walker and the Global Mission Team which she chairs. Planning continues for future visits and exchanges. Walking together with our global partners changes our perspective and encourages and inspires us for mission in Christ's name.



Leadership Development

Many and talented leaders started new calls in Upstate New York. We were delighted to welcome the Rev. Judith VanOsdol to Synod Staff as our Director of Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop. She has been visiting in all seven conferences of the synod, identifying areas of mission focus together with the Deans and other leaders, and has been assembling Dream Teams and training in "mission schools" in order to form our synodical Mission Strategy and Mission Support/Stewardship tables.



Patrice Sampson-Bouchard was elected to the Office of Secretary and has begun her work with the Synod Council and Executive Committee.



More than 40 lay and clergy leaders attended Peter Steinke's New Visions for Mission workshop. We are in the process of planning another event for next year.



Transitions

Pastoral transitions are among the most critical times in a congregation's life. The Mission in Transition Team offers a new way of approaching pastoral transitions in congregations. After several years of planning and then piloting this work we gathered 40 lay and clergy leaders, for training. This will become the primary way we assist congregations in times of transition as we move into the future. Four leaders will serve as Coordinators, working with the Conference Deans and Staff. My thanks to Pastor Jim Slater, Pastor Katie Yahns, Mr. Ed Currier and Pastor Steve Biegner for volunteering to help make this work. And also to Pastor Chuck Schwartz, Mr. Duane Keeler and Ms. Samantha Rossi for assisting with the training session.



2012 Youth Gathering *Citizens with the Saints*

It was back to New Orleans for the second time in row. Youth and adults numbered 33,300 in addition to more than 2000 volunteers. The themes of practicing Discipleship, Peacemaking and Justice structured our days based on Ephesians 2. For the first time, we gathered together as a Synod at a Gathering...all 320 of us in one room...for worship and bible study. This was our largest gathering of Synod youth in at least 10 years! Service projects included de-constructing a house, painting schools and homes, clearing fields, running book fairs and reading to children and learning local history and culture (even cooking lessons!) Evenings in the dome offered incredible music, inspiring speakers and energy. So many helped to make this happen – volunteers, staff, adults, and of course youth and their families and congregations. We offered incredible service and witness and we all grew in our understanding of what it means to live our faith in a way that makes a difference in the world. And more than \$400,000 was raised for wells for clean water around the world!

Feed the Roots of Leadership

A capital campaign of the Upstate New York Synod for:
Campus Ministry, Outdoor Ministry and Seminary Education

visit <http://upstatenynod.org/capital-campaign> to find out more today!

The *Feed the Roots for Leadership* Capital Appeal continues. Funds have already started their work in support of outdoor ministries, campus ministries and seminary scholarships. The ELCA Fund for Leaders will provide about \$5000

in scholarships in 2012-2013 to candidate(s) for ordained ministry attending ELCA seminaries. More than \$230,000 has already been distributed, and put to work, in ministries lifting up tomorrow's leaders. Gifts and pledges to date bring our total to over \$700,000 raised towards these worthy causes.

GIVE NOW



Resurrection people who pray first, walk together and change lives

A REPORT FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

<http://upstatenynod.org>

page 2