

Learning Opportunities

The Synod's Global Mission Team's Companion Synod Pilgrimages – **RESERVE NOW!**

Honduras -- The Global Mission Team of the New England Synod invites you to tour ministry sites, churches, schools and medical clinics in northwestern Honduras **Feb. 11-16, 2008**. This is an opportunity for congregations to meet people and discern ministry sites that could become partners for ongoing relationships. The group also hopes to visit the Mayan Ruins in Copan or a similar area. Approximate cost is \$1,250. Tour guides are Pastors Jim and Lisa Hazelwood, St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Charlestown, RI. Space is limited, so a deposit of \$400 is required as soon as possible to hold your spot. Please make checks payable to New England Synod with "Honduras Pilgrimage" on the memo line, and send to New England Synod, PO Box 13, Worcester, MA 01614-0013. For more information, contact Pastor Jim Hazelwood jim@STandrewRI.org or 401-322-0088

ELCJHL - the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land:

- **Breathing in the Spirit of Peace**, the Synod's Spring Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, **April 29-May 13, 2008**. Tour Leader: Pastor Tim Keyl; Approximate cost: \$3,000. Space is limited, so to hold your spot, please make a deposit of \$400 (checks only, please) payable to New England Synod, memo: "2008 Holy Land Pilgrimage." Mail to New England Synod, PO Box 13, Worcester, MA 01614-0013. Questions? Contact Pastor Tim Keyl at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Nashua, NH: (603) 882-6142 or tkeyl@ctknashua.org
- For information on the **2008 Christmas pilgrimage to the ELCJHL** with singer Elisabeth von Trapp, granddaughter of Baron von Trapp of "Sound of Music" fame, please contact Pr. Thomas at (603) 643-3703 or michael.p.thomas@dartmouth.edu

Great resources for YOU: Did you know there is a portable labyrinth available? Visit <http://www.nesynod.org/resource-center.html> for this and other new resources in the **Janssen Resource Center** of the New England Synod. Our newest items are the video "An Inconvenient Truth," an ecological documentary by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore, and "Understanding Fundamentalism," a new resource from the ELCA's Mosaic team, which can also be viewed at <http://www.elca.org/MOSAIC/Fundamentalism/index.html> You can get a free user's guide there as well.

Want to connect with other **youth leaders**? Click on the **Get Drenched blog** site: <http://getdrenched.wordpress.com/>. Provided by the Synod's Youth and Young Adult team, this format allows you to access what was formerly posted as a newsletter. Point, click, read, and print faster and easier – and **join** the conversation. Post your own events. Bookmark this page and share with members of your own Youth Ministry Team. Things to consider posting: Got an idea that really worked in your ministry? Have a devotional thought you'd like to share? Got a question? Read a good book about ministry you'd like to write about? The possibilities are endless. Visit us today.

Need **inspiration**? The ELCA Spiritual Center offers prayer and devotion and a daily Bible reading at www.elca.org/spiritual.html While you're there, join the **Book of Faith Initiative** to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, and empowered by the Word. www.elca.org/bookoffaith/ This initiative was approved by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly.

Want to know more about "**The Public Church**"? Follow links from the Synod's main web page to find recommended readings, videos, Bible studies, and the keynote given by Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson when he spoke at our 2006 Bishop's Convocation.

Rolling Ridge Retreat Center, North Andover, MA, is offering **Intensive Ministry Reflection** days in 2008. Alice Mann, of the Alban Institute, will lead groups of four in a full day of group reflection, individual coaching, and discretionary time to rest, journal or plan. To register or learn more, go to <http://www.rollingridge.org/calendar.html> Dates are 1/3, 3/6, 5/1, 9/4, or 11/6. \$320 fee includes lunch.

Save the date: The Reconciling In Christ working group of the Synod's Task Force for Gay and Lesbian Understanding will be hosting "**Walking the Walk of Welcome**" on Saturday, June 14, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 73 Lancaster St., Worcester, MA. This day-long event is designed for all persons interested in learning more about the RIC program and how their congregation can make an intentional and public welcome to GLBT persons.

The 2008 **Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival** will take place on the campus of Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota from June 22 to July 20. If you would like to learn more about the Young Musicians Partnership, the Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival, or share a student referral, please contact Susan Olstad, Admissions Director, toll free at 888.635.6583, direct at 612.230.3291, or by email at solstad@lutheransummertime.org. LSM welcomes all calls and inquiries and can be found online at www.lutheransummertime.org. "As the only national organization dedicated to training and lifting up future musicians for the church, we are committed to providing a place for the congregational youth in your Synod to connect their gifts with the rich heritage music of the Lutheran Church. LSM provides a supportive summer home for our future organists, choir directors, music directors and worship musicians."

Plan now for the **2009 ELCA Youth Gathering**, July 22-26, 2009, in New Orleans, Louisiana. The theme is "Jesus, Justice, Jazz," with a program shaped around service. The plan is that, using an action/reflection model, 36,000 young people will learn to think biblically and theologically about what they are doing, and will experience authentic servant leadership. See details and promotional videos at: www.elca.org/youth/gathering.html

Local resource on **Tanzania** and the **LWR!** Learn about the beneficiaries of such programs as fair trade coffee, sewing quilts, and making health, school, or layette kits. Understand our connection to the rest of the world via this 45 minute presentation. Contact Pastor Melissa Buono, 371 Old Beaverbrook, Village of Nagog Woods, MA 01718 – phone: 978-263-5114 or email: mcjb2000@aol.com



Pastors: Are you helping young people **discern God's call**? Do you have high school or college students seeking to know their gifts for ministry? Point them to www.projectconnect.org where they can find personalized help in decision making, opportunities to "try out" ministry, and blogs and gatherings to "talk" with others. More questions? Email contact@projectconnect.org or call 603-539-7257. Project Connect is a program of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries.

Gettysburg Seminary will hold Seminary Weekends **Feb. 29-Mar. 2**, and **Oct. 25-26, 2008** for all prospective students who would like to experience student life at LTSG, including worship, community living, campus orientation, and interaction with students. For info or to register click <http://www.ltsg.edu/admissions/weekend.htm>. Not able to make these dates? Just call 1-800-MLUTHER, ext. 3008, to set up a personal Campus Visit that will include a staff interview, campus tour, worship, lunch, and a class visit. For links to visit **other ELCA seminaries**, click <http://www.elca.org/theologicaleducation/weekend/>

Wheat Ridge Ministries offers financial grants to Lutheran congregations providing **sabbaticals** for pastors and other full-time church workers. Visit www.wheatridge.org and choose from the top bar: "Ministry Resource Center" for sabbatical planning ideas or preparing for a congregational health fair, "Apply for a Grant" – either to do ministries of health and hope or a leader's sabbatical, or "Library" to find the monthly health newsletter and other encouragements, including prayers and poetry. They have also announced their National Symposium on Health and Hope with the topic **Living Well! The Body Language of Faith!** in Milwaukee, WI, Oct. 2-4, 2008.

The **10th International Bonhoeffer Congress** will be held in Prague, Czech Republic, **July 22-27, 2008**, and Hosted by the Hussite Theological Faculty. Visit the official Congress website (www.bonhoeffercongress2008.cuni.cz) or contact Rev. H. Gaylon Barker, vice-president of the International Bonhoeffer Society: hgaylonbarker@comcast.net for details.