

2012 Mission Area Assembly- Information

Election of a Bishop

Two different, but equally important, gatherings will be held between January 1 and March 31 that will affect the process for the election of our new bishop. During January and February, rostered leaders and all interested lay people will gather in conference meetings to consider the mission of the synod and the gifts needed in the new bishop. Information from those conference meetings will be shared and reviewed at the Doing What Matters Mission Area Assemblies to be held throughout the synod during the month of March. Lay people and rostered leaders attending these assemblies will formulate questions which will be asked of the seven top candidates on Friday evening, June 8, at the Synod Assembly. Widespread participation in the process leading up to the June Synod Assembly is desired. Your input is important.

**Go to the New England Synod website- <http://www.nesynod.org/>
For more information about the Election of a New Bishop or "Doing What Matters"**



"What is a Mission Area Assembly?"

Glad you asked! That's a question that comes up a lot in congregations throughout our synod. First of all, a mission area assembly is NOT a "missionary" assembly, although upon first hearing, it's easy to make that mistake. Rather, as the Rev. Lisa Hazelwood, co-pastor of St. Andrew in Charlestown, R.I. explained, "it is one in a series of regional gatherings of lay people and clergy from a couple of conferences who have been grouped together in a 'mission area'. These assemblies have served many different purposes, and have lots of potential to be whatever we want them to be. The Rev. Dr. Jane O'Hara Shields, Director for Evangelical Mission adds, "these mission areas were created for the purpose of encouraging contextual starts in mission and ministry. By grouping the synod into regional areas, each one can look at its unique gifts and its unique calling."

In the past, students and staff from the School of Lay Ministry - as well other lay leaders in these mission areas - have worked together to plan workshops and activities, and to recruit speakers that suited local interests. Last year, the Doing What Matters team brought a program to each mission area, while working with local planners on logistics. This will be a very important year for the assemblies, as each mission area will serve as a venue for the preparation of the election of a new bishop in June. "While the Ad Hoc Committee for the Election of a Bishop completes its necessary work, the Doing What Matters team will have an hour or two to keep the momentum going," Lisa said. "We can continue our shared work of listening to our communities for assets, wows and needs."

Mission area assemblies are also about building relationships. "It's a great opportunity to come together and share best practices and best ideas with others," Pr. Hazelwood said. "Here, you meet people and find out what they're doing in their congregations and communities. At these assemblies, we raise up new leaders as participants take turns planning and hosting, as well as leading presentations and worship."

Finally, a mission area assembly provides a wonderful opportunity to experience a connection to the "wider" church, a connection that goes beyond the congregation where we worship, learn and serve. "It is our conference, our synod, and the whole church captured in its national form," said Lisa.

Doing What Matters: Listening to Each Other

For more than two years now, we have been wrestling with the question, "What in the world is God up to, and how can we help?" Sometimes it's good for a congregation -- and a synod -- to spend intentional time in prayer and conversation to answer that question together. That's what the "Doing What Matters" process in New England is all about. One outcome of our work has been a new purpose statement and set of guiding principles:

The Purpose of the New England Synod:
to go where love leads, to serve where love calls

Our Guiding Principles:

pray always
give of ourselves
stand with others
embrace change and diversity
make room for joy

The next phase of this process is the one we are in now -- gathering information about the "assets, wows and needs" in our congregations, and in the communities we serve as the New England Synod. This information will help our new bishop and staff to identify the strategic directions where we will begin to focus our energy, attention and resources over the next few years. This is one of the most important things you can do to participate in God's mission for our synod. Our synod leaders have designed a "Toolkit" to help you gather this information in your congregation and community. Go to the "Doing What Matters" page on the Synod website, to download the Toolkit as well as other resources. You can begin this process whenever it makes sense for you and your congregation, but we are asking that all information you gather be returned to the Synod Office no later than May 15th.

2012 Mission Area Assembly Registration Form

Last Name:

First Name:

Title: (optional)

Email Address:

Telephone:

Address:

Home Congregation (city, state):

*Register now to take advantage of the
early registration fee:

\$15.00 per person before March 1st

(After March 1st the fee is \$20.00 per person)

Make Checks Payable to:

*The Host Congregation
for your Mission Area Assembly*

Please Write:

"Mission Area Assembly" on the memo line

MAIL REGISTRATION FORM AND CHECK TO:

*The Host Congregation
ATTN: "Mission Area Assembly"
(Choose from the Location List)*

2012 Mission Area Assembly Locations

EAST CENTRAL- 3/10/12

Trinity Lutheran Church
170 Old Westford Rd.
Chelmsford , MA 01824
(978) 256-6300

NORTHEAST- 3/10/12

Immanuel Indonesian/
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
22 Fox Run Rd.
Newington , NH 03801
(603) 380-1181

CENTRAL MA- 3/10/12

Bethel Lutheran Church
90 Bryn Mawr Ave.
Auburn, MA 01501
(508) 832-3427

NORTHWEST- 3/17/12

Trinity Lutheran Church
161 Western Ave.
Brattleboro , VT 05301
(802) 254-4220

SOUTHERN- 3/17/12

St. John Lutheran Church
884 Newfield Ave
Stamford , CT 06905
(203) 322-0066

SOUTHEAST- 3/17/12

Zion Lutheran Church
384 Court St.
Plymouth, MA
508-746-3041

SOUTH CENTRAL- 3/31/12

First Lutheran Church of the Reformation
77 Franklin Sq
New Britain, CT 06051
(860) 224-2475

You're Invited To Be

Doing What Matters

At Your Annual Spring Mission Area Assembly

Please join the Ad Hoc Committee for the Election of a New Bishop and the "Doing What Matters" Facilitateam for a day of prayerful conversation and fellowship at one of the seven Mission Area Assemblies scheduled for this spring. We need your insight and your voice as we come together to discern what directions the synod will pursue in both our leadership and mission. We invite you and a big crew from your congregation to come and explore these central questions:

What is God up to in the New England Synod?
Where is love leading?

Who is love calling the New England Synod to serve?
Who is love calling to serve the New England Synod?

Schedule

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| 9:30am-10:00am | Registration Coffee Reception |
| 10:00am- 10:30am | Worship Welcome |
| 10:30am-12:30pm | Session 1 Ad Hoc Committee for the Election of a New Bishop |
| 12:30pm-1:15pm | Lunch Congregational and Synod Announcements |
| 1:15pm-3:00pm | Session 2 Doing What Matters |
| 3:00pm | Closing Prayer |