

Learning Opportunities

CALLING ALL YOUNG ADULTS, AGES 18-29: A Spiritual Journey to the ecumenical monastery in **Taizé, France**, is scheduled for July 8-18. Using worship forms from Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant traditions, the Taizé community attracts Christians from around the world. (Our hymnal supplement, *With One Voice*, contains several Taizé hymns.) This annual New England Synod trip is part of our synod's young adult ministry and Bishop Margaret Payne will be joining the group this year.

DEADLINE for registration is March 15. Download the form at www.nesynod.org/calendar or call the synod house ASAP - 508-791-1530 x106.

God is calling YOU to Heal the Wounds of Racism. Sign up now for this year's retreats: a Stage I retreat will be held **August 18-20, 2006**. Stage II retreats, for those who have completed stage I, are scheduled for **May 12-14** and **September 29-Oct. 1, 2006**. You may also help with a financial gift toward this work. Following the initial retreat, attendees are invited to join the community for quarterly Bible study and fellowship in this ongoing process. The next community event is April 29 at Good Shepherd, Westboro, MA. Call for a brochure 508-791-1530 or visit the synod website www.nesynod.org (*Resources/ Healing the Wounds.*)

Is your congregation sending a group to the **2006 ELCA National Youth Gathering**? New England Synod contact person *Cindy Hall reports that "to date there are 272 youth and 91 adult leaders representing 37 congregations from around New England who will be attending the National Gathering in San Antonio, Texas!"* Our local **leader training events** are being held:

March 18th - 9:30 - 1:00 p.m., Emanuel Lutheran Church, 60 Church St., **Manchester, CT**

April 1st 10:00 - 1:00, First Lutheran Church, 900 Main St., **Brockton, MA**

April 8th 10:00 - 1:00, Messiah Lutheran Church, 303 Route 101, **Amherst, NH**

Questions? Contact Cindy at chrised@snet.net or 860-643-1193.

Spring Theological Convocation, hosted by the Synod's Leadership Support team, will be held **Thursday, April 20, 2006**. Dr. James Nieman, professor of practical theology at Hartford Seminary, will speak on *What we have seen and heard: Preaching in the stream*. Brochure enclosed and posted on www.nesynod.org (events/spring convocation). A fee of \$20 includes lunch. Deadline March 31.

Did you know? The **2006 ELCA Global Mission Event** will be held right here in New England July 27-30, at the University of Massachusetts' Amherst Campus. *Don't miss this wonderful eye-opening event – a great time for families to learn and play together.* Visit www.nesynod.org to learn more and to register on line. Pr. Blake Wamester and Ms. Deirdra Schmidt are our synod co-facilitators. **Trained speakers are eager to come to your congregation** or conference meeting with advance information. To arrange a date, contact Ms. Deirdra Schmidt at schmidtdee@aol.com or call 603-882-2876.

The ELCA Seminaries offer programs for pastors and lay leaders throughout the year. Check out their websites for new events. Thinking about seminary? They also sponsor **weekends for those considering entering full time ministry**. Sign up deadlines vary. Visit the ELCA unit for *Vocation and Education* for links to them and to Lutheran colleges www.elca.org/theologicaleducation/seminaries/

Lutheran Summer Music 2006, June 25 - July 23, at Gustavus Adolphus College, is a wonderful time of intensive musical study and performance. Join 200 students in choir, orchestra, band, and keyboard study and an outstanding faculty of artists and teachers. Discount opportunity ends March 30. Visit www.lutheransummertime.org for details.

The ELCA Board of Pensions has scheduled two **Pre-Retirement Seminars** in our synod: Monday – Wednesday, **July 17-19**, and Wednesday – Friday, **July 19-21**, 2006, at the Blue Gentian Lodge in **Londonderry, VT**. It is strongly recommended that you attend with your spouse and gather information before coming – i.e. there is homework – to prepare for this most helpful event. To reserve your space, contact Pr. Ron Jackson at maryronj@juno.com or call the synod office.

CORRECTION: The Biennial Convention of **The New England Women of the ELCA** will be held **September 14-16, 2006**, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 73 Lancaster St., Worcester, MA. We apologize that the date was reported incorrectly inside the cover of our directory book. Please refer to the synod website for the most up to date information on events.

SAVE THE DATE: **Bishop's Convocation 2006**, will be held **October 23-25** at the Crowne Plaza, Worcester, MA. We will welcome **ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson** as our speaker. Registration materials will be available late spring.

Wheat Ridge Ministries offers financial grants to Lutheran congregations providing **sabbaticals** for pastors and other full-time church workers. Visit www.wheatridge.org and click "projects/services" to reach their sabbatical resource pages.

The ELCA offers **prayer** and **devotion** materials as well as a **daily Bible reading**. Visit www.elca.org/spiritual.html or subscribe and have it forwarded to your personal email.

Augsburg Fortress is offering David Yount's ***Celebrating the Rest of Your Life: A Baby Boomer's Guide to Spirituality***. When retirement is in sight, it's time to stretch your mind, drop your emotional guard, invest in others, and cultivate new community. Read more at www.augsburgfortress.org or borrow it from the New England Synod Resource Center.

REMINDER: **World Hunger Training Events** are scheduled for
Saturday, **March 25**, 9 am – 2 pm, at Concordia, Manchester, CT and
Sunday, **March 26**, 2-7 pm, at Messiah, Amherst, NH
Keynoter Nancy Arnison, director of the ELCA World Hunger Program, will speak on "Justice and World Hunger." The event includes workshops and lunch for a \$5 fee. Questions? call Doreen Rinas 978-433-2645 or email doreenrinas@yahoo.com. Please reserve your space by March 11. See detailed brochure on the synod website www.nesynod.org under resources/news/care packet for February.