



Iringa Task Force

In February 2010, a Service of Ordination was held at Ipogoro Lutheran Church in Iringa. Five young theology students were ordained into the Lutheran ministry in a service that lasted four hours and 35 minutes! All of the five ordinands were sponsored by congregations or individuals in the Saint Paul Area Synod. Four of the five have been sponsored by members of the synod since they began secondary school in Form I. This event speaks to the deepening relationship between the our synod and the Iringa Diocese and to the fast growing church in Tanzania.

The partnership shows positive growth in relationships, as 175 people from the Saint Paul Area Synod visited our brothers and sisters in the Iringa Diocese. Bishop Mdegella visited the synod twice in 2009. District Pastor Donald Kiwanga, Pastor Lufyagila from Mtera, and two theology students, Aska Kipaya and Daima Ngwale, were also invited to visit.

Other areas of shared ministry include:

- 1,500 secondary school scholarships provided by members and congregations of this synod;
- Ilula Lutheran Hospital has now been named the district government hospital for the Kilolo Region and the number of births now exceeds 100 per month;
- The Institute of Agriculture has now secured 30 village demonstration plots. The harvest results from the first year show an increase between four and five times the previous yields. In spite of this, where rain is not plentiful, famine still occurs.
- \$50,000 was raised through the Saint Paul Area Synod to provide some famine relief in seven different locations in the Iringa Diocese.
- Pastor Lamont Koerner served as pastor/teacher in the theology department of Tumaini University during the first semester of the 2009-10 academic year. Pastor Cheryl Indehar will be in the pastor/teacher role for the second semester.
- Tumaini University now has over 3,000 students, a faculty of 98 full-time and eight part-time professors, most of whom are Tanzanian, and an annual budget of \$6 million. A new library expansion is set to be dedicated and a new three-story science building is now under construction.
- Radio Furaha, a Christian radio station, begins broadcasting in February 2010.
- The Iringa Diocese now has 72 parishes and over 600 preaching points. Sixty of these parishes are now partnered with congregations in the synod; seven churches in other synods also participate as companion partners.
- The Iringa fall event had the largest attendance on record, with close to 300 participants.
- New members of the Iringa task force were selected by their clusters.

Since Don and Eunice Fultz began as companion synod coordinators in 2000, more than \$7 million has been given through the synod to support the various ministries in the Iringa Diocese. Adding the money that flows directly to projects from other organizations and individuals, the total would exceed \$10 million. Through it all, the most significant aspect of this partnership is the ability to support one another through prayer and worship. The tremendous hospitality extended to those who travel to Iringa leaves an indelible mark of one's heart and soul. The people of the Iringa Diocese continually greet you with "Karibu... you are welcome!"

Members of the Task Force

Trish Blomquist, David Dudley, Cindy Evans, the Rev. Don and Eunice Fultz, the Rev. Paul Harris, the Rev. Gary Langness, Kirsten Levorson, the Rev. Ralph Olsen, Ken Olson, LaDonna Olson, the Rev. Dan Poffenberger, the Rev. Julie Rogness, Murt Seltz, Bo Skillman, Tim VanRooy, and Betty Wolf. Companion congregation coordinators are the Rev. Don and Eunice Fultz, the Rev. Tom and Beth Hansen, the Rev. Lamont Koerner, the Rev. Tom Nielsen, Rev. Julie Rogness and Bo Skillman. Staff support is provided by Julie Keefe and Myrna Lamberton.

Guatemala Task Force

The Iglesia Luterana Agustina de Guatemala (ILAG) continues to grow. There are 17 congregations and several mission sites, as word of mouth spreads that Padre Horacio Castillo and the ILAG pastoral team are willing to minister to them. In remote parts of Guatemala, often a church is not attended by a priest or pastor for several years, and these Christians feel neglected. When they learn that the ILAG pastors will come, no matter if they must stand in the back of a pickup truck for hours or ride down a river in a boat to reach them, the members of these churches become interested. The ILAG pastors then introduce Lutheran doctrine to these congregations, whether they were formerly Evangelical or Catholic, requiring that they be fully informed before choosing to become Lutheran. The process may take years, as Padre Horacio requires the church leaders to come to leadership training classes, write one-year, five-year, and ten-year plans for the church, and participate fully in the holistic development of their congregations. The process is not a one-way street, simply receiving services from a pastor, but one requiring regular communication, instruction, and development.



An exciting part of our synodical partnership is the opportunity for congregations to develop a companion church relationship with one of these 17 churches. There are currently nine synod congregations that have partners, and there is always room for more! Ask the folks who have traveled to visit their companion congregation to share a highlight, and the response is strikingly similar each time: it's about people, it's about relationships! As we get better and better at the art of accompaniment, we realize with more and more certainty that the relationship has less to do with "doing" and more to do with "being."

We accompany with some acts of "doing," however, including offering classes in health care. These classes are intended to build confidence and skill levels of the local health promoters to allow them to teach disease/injury prevention and basic health care maintenance. Katherine Baumgartner and her team are developing curriculum to allow visiting delegations to support the community health promoter through participatory activities.

We continue to promote weaving projects, literacy initiatives, Bible classes, and sustainable economic projects (shampoo, chickens, cattle, etc.). Women are lifted up as equal partners in this church. Children are offered educational scholarships to allow them to go beyond the typical sixth grade education. Adults also are taking classes, often through correspondence classes, and some of those participating are the deacons and lay leaders. This is one way the ILAG pastoral team is hoping to provide for long-term leadership. This year we will celebrate the completion of the final phase of the construction of the Guest House and Seminary, and next year, 2011, we will celebrate 20 years of the ILAG's ministry among the poorest of the poor in Guatemala.

Members of the Task Force

Janet Metcalfe, task force chair, Augustana, West St. Paul; Gloria Anderson, Highview Christiania, Farmington; Betty Bauer, Salem, West St. Paul; Katherine Baumgartner, Galilee, Roseville; the Rev. Ralph Baumgartner, Galilee, Roseville; the Rev. Karn Carroll, Our Savior's, Circle Pines; Larry Cowan, Hope, St. Paul; Sandra Eliason, St. Michael's, Roseville; the Rev. Paul Erickson, staff; Lenore Franzen, Gloria Dei, St. Paul; the Rev. Paul Harris, Easter, Eagan; the Rev. Greg Isaacson, Memorial, Afton; Devan Landseidel, Easter, Eagan; Eric Lecy, Gloria Dei, St. Paul; Tom Lee, River of Joy, Prior Lake; Elsa Leven, Amazing Grace, Inver Grove Heights; Jim Lundquist, Christ the Servant, Vadnais Heights; Becky Maier, Our Savior's, Stillwater and WELCA; Deanine Mann, Our Savior's, Circle Pines; the Rev. Terry Nordheim, Bethesda, Inver Grove Heights; the Rev. Leonard Pankuch, Grace, Apple Valley; Steven Roste, Como Park, St. Paul; the Rev. Leesa Soderlind, St. Michael's, Roseville; Judy Thompson, Amazing Grace, Inver Grove Heights; the Rev. Jonathan Zielske, Hope, St. Paul.



Hunger Work Group

Compelled by God's love, we work to alleviate hunger in all of God's world by prompting congregations and their members to practice generosity and to advocate for a just sharing of the world's abundance.

The hunger work group reminded clergy and lay leadership in congregations about the resolution approved at the 2008 synod assembly challenging congregations to increase giving to the ELCA's World Hunger Appeal by \$1 per baptized member in 2008, an additional \$1 in 2009 and again in 2010, raising the synod's giving to the ELCA goal of \$5 per member. Progress in attaining this goal has been slow, but we are hopeful. We continued making personal contacts with some congregations having no record of gifts to the Hunger Appeal within two calendar years, offering education, assistance, and encouragement.

We work interdependently with the synod, region and the ELCA. Vernita, Dale, and Mark attended the January 2010 Region 3 hunger retreat, and Vernita and Paul participated in the Region 3 global gathering, sponsored by ELCA Global Mission, World Hunger, and the Lutheran Malaria Initiative and HIV/AIDS Strategy. Kennens hosted an open house for people concerned with hunger from both synods to meet the Rev. Dan Rift, ELCA director for World Hunger and Disaster Appeal. We cooperate and connect with Bread for the World, Church World Service, Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, and A Minnesota Without Poverty.

Our group evaluated and forwarded to the ELCA hunger grant applications from two agencies/organizations within the synod: Southeast Asian Ministry, and the Department of Indian Works, St. Paul Area Council of Churches. Both of these important outreach ministries did receive funding through the ELCA hunger program. Janel Kuester, intern with LCPPM, worked with us to promote, schedule and facilitate Minnesota Hunger 101 simulations within the Saint Paul Area Synod. We appreciated Janel's input and work and are delighted she has opted to continue working with us after her internship.

Hunger and food insufficiency continue to be a problem for even more people in our state, in our country and certainly around the world. We are called to share God's abundance (and ours) with those who do not have enough to eat today and tomorrow. Thank you for reaching out through the ELCA, local food banks, and many other programs. Our group continues to seek out ways to educate, prompt, nudge, and encourage congregations, individual members, and rostered people within our synod about the ELCA World Hunger program as well as other ways in which we can all answer our call from God to feed the hungry. We welcome your prayers and monetary support, your willingness to be involved, and encourage you to join our work group!

Hunger Work Group

Dale and Vernita Kennen, co-chairs, Incarnation, Shoreview; the Rev. Glen Hanggi, Elim, Scandia; Janel Kuester, House of Prayer, Oakdale; the Rev. Harvey Leuning, Gloria Dei, St. Paul; Don Myers, Redeemer, White Bear Lake; the Rev. Paul and Ruth Pallmeyer, St. Andrew's Mahtomedi; the Rev. Mark Peters, Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy in Minnesota; the Rev. Paul Erickson, staff

Book of Faith Leadership Team

Early in 2009 our team developed a mission statement for our work within the synod (see below). We also began preparing printed literature for use in synod gatherings, most significantly for the resource room at the synod assembly in May. As our team worked together to articulate our understanding of the mission of this initiative, we grew in enthusiasm for what God was doing among us as a church body and as a synod.



In terms of events, our team was glad to join a number of other organizations in planning the Book of Faith Jubilee, held at Luther Seminary in August. The event drew 287 attendees around the theme, “Equipping Everyday People to Read the Bible,” and renewed enthusiasm around numerous Bible themes and practices. Another Jubilee is being planned for August 2011.

In November, we sponsored a Book of Faith Tool Kit for congregational leaders. Dr. Karoline Lewis, assistant professor of preaching at Luther Seminary, was our plenary speaker. She spoke on “Common Obstacles often Encountered in Studying Scripture” and “How the Study of Scripture Changes Lives.” We had 71 participants who then attended workshops on topics such as leading Bible discussions, sharing team devotions, and maneuvering the initiative online. Another Book of Faith Tool Kit is planned for October 2010 with Dr. David Lose as our plenary speaker.

As a team we thank the churches and conferences who have invited us to speak, lead, and learn among them in this past year. We look forward to a new year of mission and service among the people of this synod.

Mission Statement: Saint Paul Area Synod Book of Faith

Our Saint Paul Area Synod Book of Faith mission is to:

1. *Heighten* awareness of the Book of Faith initiative
2. *Re-ignite* Biblical imagination within congregations
3. *Discover and affirm* effective leaders
4. *Connect* congregational leaders and Book of Faith resources

Book of Faith Leadership Team

The Rev. Marilyn Breckenridge, House of Prayer, Oakdale; the Rev. Hans Dahl, Gustavus Adolphus, St. Paul; the Rev. Luther Dale, Incarnation, Shoreview; the Rev. Tim Hackbarth, Lutheran Church of Peace, Maplewood; the Rev. Richard Jensen, retired, Easter, Apple Valley; Carrie Stiles, Fish Lake, Harris; the Rev. Phil Walen, Farmington, Farmington; the Rev. Carrie Tokheim, retired, All Saints, Cottage Grove; Anne Salo, Redeemer, White Bear Lake; the Rev. Susan Miller, staff; the Rev. Sara Vanderpan, synod advocate, on leave from call, Resurrection, Woodbury



Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Leadership Team

Our mission statement: *“To support, encourage, enable and develop children, youth, and family ministries as they effectively share the Good News of Jesus Christ.”*

The CYF leadership team includes representatives from both Saint Paul Area and Minneapolis Area Synods including the Rev. Susan Miller, Saint Paul Area Synod, and Jo Mueller, AiM, Minneapolis Area Synod. On the team for 2010: Amanda Berger (MAS); Raul Garcia III, AiM (MAS); Melissa Johnson (SPAS) Pastor Mark Lepper (MAS); Don Marsh, AiM (SPAS) co-chair; Chris Okey (MAS) co-chair; Pastor Cassie Nault (SPAS); Joe Rand (SPAS); and Pastor TJ Anderson (SPAS). Nina Joy (SPAS); Pastor Jason Okrzynski (MAS); and Bob Windels (MAS) also served.

A few highlights of the CYF Leadership Team’s activities in the past year:

- Support of ongoing networks and aid in creation of new networks where paid and volunteer ministry staff gather for fellowship, professional encouragement, and exchange of ideas.
- Continuing to partner with the Exemplar Youth Ministry initiatives at Luther Seminary, preparing for a fourth pilot project with congregations using team-based analysis, visioning, and coaching.
- Implemented a “Healthy Relationships; Healthy Boundaries” training for children and youth ministry professionals in November.
- Co-sponsored a “RECHARGE” conference in January with several organizations: over 500 professional and volunteer youth and children’s ministry workers gathered that day for encouragement and training.
- Hosted the eighth annual Ascension Day breakfast networking event for children and youth ministry adult leaders with 125 in attendance.
- Welcomed new-to-synod children, youth and family ministers at a lunch and reception in October.
- Gathered more than 1,900 confirmation students and their adult leaders from 40 MAS churches and 36 SPAS churches at the 7th annual “Celebration of Confirmation,” this year under the theme “Thirst(+y?).”
- Hosted a lunch for 68 MAS/SPAS guests at the ELCA Network Extravaganza in New Orleans.
- Gathering resources to be sent to supervising pastors, encouraging congregations to set continuing education goals and to budget for their CYF staff to complete training in a number of areas.

Other new initiatives for 2009, carrying forward to 2010 include:

- Advocacy for paid and volunteer ministers through prayer and caring conversation.
- Mentoring for new youth workers
- Launching an on-line salary survey to assist congregations and CYF staff people in gauging appropriate compensation.
- Hosting a spiritual spring retreat.

To aid in getting the word out about these and other ministries and partnerships, Jo Mueller and Susan Miller regularly prepare a variety of communications. Connections served as a quarterly publication, providing articles of professional interest and a calendar of upcoming events. Emails and e-newsletters are periodically sent out with announcements, links to other publications of interest, and revised information about previously announced events. Other updates can be found on both synods’ websites.

The members of the CYF leadership team remain thankful for the support that you, as congregations and members of our synods, have provided during the past year. We look forward to continued opportunities to serve alongside of you in the year to come.

Partnership for Justice with South Africa

The Saint Paul Area Synod's partnership with South Africa (CBCO-SA) is strengthened by exchanges of visits in each country. This past year Laurie Beckman Yetzer, co-chair of Partnership for Justice (PFJ), accompanied Greg Galluzzo, executive director of the Gamaliel Foundation to meet with the various projects and their leaders in South Africa. They led a National Weeklong Leadership training in church-based organizing in Soweto and also spent time with leaders in each of the other projects in Durban, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town.



Four pastors/leaders from South Africa were our guests during December of this past year. The Rev. Venerable Cierigh Samaa, Durban, the Rev. Nkosikhaya Thompson Dikana, Port Elizabeth, the Rev. Ferdinand Groenewald, Cape Town, and Mokgomatse Matseke, Soweto organizer. They were welcomed to Minnesota with a dinner at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, hosted by the Minnesota PFJ group. These leaders along with leaders from ISAIAH attended the International Leadership Assembly Dec. 3-5, in St. Louis, Mo. While there all participants engaged in workshops, plenary sessions, and a stellar talent night. The South Africans wowed the assembly with their musical number and won the second place award.

Following the gathering in St. Louis, our South African partners visited with several pastors in the Saint Paul Area Synod, the Revs. Paul Harrington, Deb Stehlin, Chris Becker, Jim Erlandson, Grant Stevensen, Keith Olstad, and Anita Hill. They attended the St. Nicholas event at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. The delegation attended a worship service at Luther Seminary, were hosted at luncheon meeting with Chanar Howard of the Global Mission Institute, and were given a tour of the Seminary by Lynne Moratzka.

In the Minneapolis Area Synod, they met with the Revs. Terrance Jacob, Kelly Chatman, and the Minneapolis Area Synod global companion table. They witnessed the community outreach programs of Jordan New Life/Hub and Redeemer Lutheran in North Minneapolis.

Our partners also presented education hours at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran, Our Saviour's Minneapolis, and Grace University and preached at Woodlake Lutheran and Jordan New Life pulpits. They met with the Minneapolis caucus planning table and attended the Northwest caucus and clergy and religious leaders caucus of ISAIAH.

We continue to focus on the issue of HIV/AIDS and working with our governments to include funding for palliative care and healthy, supportive communities as an additional component of the criteria for PEPFAR funding.

We learn from each other and share fellowship by spending time in people's homes. We wish to thank our many hosts who provided housing, transportation and meals for our partners.

PFJ Coordinating Committee Members

Laurie Beckman Yetzer and Myrna Nelson, co-chairs; Bishop N. Phaswana, the Rev. Selby Mugivhi, the Rev. Cierigh Samaai, the Rev. Cliff Felix, the Rev. Benyam Kassahun, the Rev. Phil Knutson, the Rev. Terrance Jacob, the Rev. Grant Stevensen, the Rev. Dan Garnaas, Margaret Bonsack, and Mary Gruber.



Committee for Inclusivity

The joint synod committee for inclusivity is a committee of the Minneapolis Area and Saint Paul Area Synods. Trusting the reconciling grace of Christ, who has overcome all divisions, we provide support and opportunities for growth in faith and understanding to persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities, their families and friends, and to the church and its members.

During 2009, the inclusivity committee carried out the following programs:

- Published *Listen to Their Hope: Hear Their Faith*. (Life Stories from Minneapolis and Saint Paul Area Synods). We hired a student from Luther Seminary to help us gather life stories from metro-area Lutherans regarding their life journeys in the Church. We believe that God has been working in our synods and that many people in our area have stories that can show us God's work including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) persons and their families. We published the booklet of stories and sent it to all clergy in both synods as well as making the stories available on the Internet. The booklet has an open copyright and is freely available to all at www.msp-synod-inclusivity.org.
- **Introduction to Walking the Talk of Welcome** at Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly. We presented two sessions of this hour-long introduction to welcome that featured perspectives on welcome from a congregation, a parent, and an LGBT person. Approximately 35 persons from more than a dozen congregations participated.
- **Walking the Talk of Welcome**. An annual, half-day workshop for congregations looking for ways to welcome LGBT persons into worship and church life, spurred by the decisions of the Saint Paul Area and Minneapolis Area Synods to become "Reconciling in Christ." More than 40 representatives from about a dozen Minneapolis and Saint Paul congregations participated on November 7, 2009, at Bethany Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. Presented in collaboration with Reconciling in Christ team of Lutherans Concerned Twin Cities.
- **Lutheran Student Scholarship**. The committee awarded a \$2,000 scholarship in 2009. Scholarships are awarded annually and given in support of a local Lutheran LGBT student attending college or an LGBT student attending a Lutheran college. In 2009, the scholarship award was awarded to Anna Roth of the Winona area.

Additional information is available at: www.msp-synod-inclusivity.org.

Joint Synod Committee for Inclusivity

Glenn Choquette, chair, Edina Community, Minneapolis; Ruth Halvorson, Gloria Dei, St. Paul; the Rev. Moe and Marge Johnson, Lutheran Church of Peace, Maplewood; Lee Anne Lack, Westwood, St. Louis Park; Carolyn Kienbaum, Gloria Dei, St. Paul; the Rev. Jen Nagel, Salem, Minneapolis; the Rev. Glen Wheeler, Lake Nokomis, Minneapolis; the Rev. Justin Lind-Ayers, Bethany, Minneapolis.

Synodical Women's Organization

The executive board of the Saint Paul Area Women of the ELCA met six times to conduct business during the 2009-2010 year.

Many of the churches in the Saint Paul Area Synod have women of the ELCA units. The women meet in circles monthly for Bible study. They are visible in their congregations serving at funerals, quilting, putting together kits for Lutheran World Relief and other activities too many to number. The mission statement for Women of the ELCA is: *To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.*



The board uses the mission and purpose statements of Women of the ELCA as their guide when planning the activities for the women of the Saint Paul Area Synod always remembering it is God's work we are doing.

On September 26, 2009, women of the Saint Paul Area Synod gathered at Saint Mark's Lutheran Church in North Saint Paul for Bible study enrichment. We were excited to have the Rev. Dr. Sarah Henrich as our presenter for the day. She is the author of this year's study, "To God's Beloved: Paul's Letter to the Romans". Sarah shared information about Paul and the monthly lessons to help our circle Bible study leaders.

Saint Mark's Lutheran in Circle Pines hosted the annual salad supper on October 29. The women had a delicious supper followed by a program that included several workshops from which to choose.

The conference of presidents was held in Chicago, on February 18-21, 2010. This event brings the synodical presidents from throughout the country together to meet with churchwide staff and board. There are workshops and opportunities to share ideas and information to be brought back to synodical boards. The theme for the weekend was "Navigate the Waters". The Bible study used the new Women of the ELCA resource, "Grace-Full Living".

Nancy Johnson, as SWO president, serves as an advisor on the Saint Paul Area Synod council and attends council meetings.

Saint Paul Area Synod Synodical Women's Board

Administrative: Nancy Johnson, JoAnn Hogenson, Sue Long, Carol Bidwell; Mission Action: Lorna Breiter, Julie Atkinson; Mission Growth: Barbara Wikelius, Michelle Bochman; Mission Community: Darla Kimmes, Anita Ryberg; Communication: Charlotte Coan, Lois Berg, Wanda Hurtgen