

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

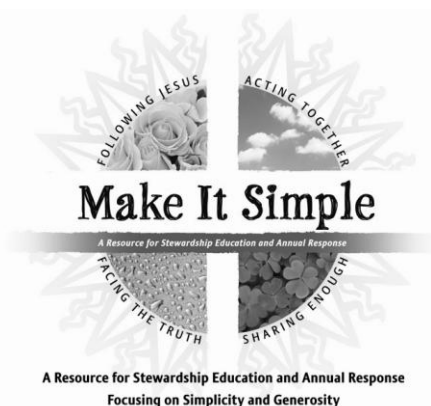
For Our North/West Lower Michigan Synod

Winter 2009

Make It Simple

Make It Simple is a new ELCA stewardship resource designed to assist congregations in their stewardship ministry. From congregational, small group and household learning events to activities for children and youth, *Make It Simple* provides tools to engage all age groups. A series of nine video segments add personal witness.

With *Make It Simple*, you can learn about simplicity and generosity in stewardship, and get help in conducting a response method to receive your members' commitments to financially support God's mission in your congregation. Three different response methods are included.



Make It Simple is available in an interactive DVD version as well as a free web-based, downloadable version at www.elca.org/makeitsimple.

Fall 2010 Mission Support Consultations

"Mission Support" is defined as, "What your congregation shares with our synod and ELCA churchwide ministries beyond your congregation."

Each fall our synod participates in *Mission Support Consultations*. The process will be a little different in the fall of 2010. One Sunday will be designated for each of our eight conferences. The goal is for each congregation in a conference to be visited by a member of a visitation team consisting of leaders in our synod. Bishop John Schleicher or another stewardship leader will then visit with conference rostered leaders the following Monday morning.

Here is the schedule for each conference:

Sunrise	September 19 & 20
Traverse	September 26 & 27
Jack Pine	October 3 & 4
Stony Lake	October 10 & 11
Greater Grand Rapids	October 17 & 18
Kalamazoo	October 24 & 25
Capitol	Oct. 31 & Nov. 1
Bay Area	November 7 & 8

Please mark your calendars now, to set aside the dates for your conference consultation.

Stewardship begins when God blesses us; with faith, life, vocation, family, church, all of creation, and our possessions. Stewardship continues with how we make use of those blessings. It comes full circle when we devote them to God's honor and glory.

2010 Statement of Intent

The 2010 Statement of Intent form was mailed to each congregation in the fall. It is also available at www.mittensynod.org/resources, under “Stewardship”.

Please ask your treasurer to mail your statement to our synod office, so that we can plan ahead knowing the amount of mission support that will be coming in. Thank you for your partnership in all that we do together.

Effective January 25, 2010 our new postal address will be: 2900 N Waverly Road, Lansing, MI 48906.

Mission Partners

Mission Partners are mutually supportive congregations who offer whatever each has (*Prayer, Presence, and Presents*) for the good of the other. Partners understand themselves as blessed to be a blessing.

Mission Partners “accompany” one another. Accompaniment is walking together, practicing interdependence and mutuality. Gifts, resources, and experiences are shared with the object of lifting up God’s mission.

If you belong to a congregation who is a mission partner with another congregation, thank you very much for your continuing support. Please continue to pray for your partner congregation.

If you would be interested in the possibility of becoming a new or renewing congregation’s mission partner, please contact Clay Bates at the synod office for more information (claybates@mittensynod.org).

Ideas for Using Three Weeks for Mission

Three Weeks for Mission materials were mailed to your congregation in September. This resource can still be used in a variety of ways in your congregation.

It could be used on a Sunday prior to your annual meeting, either at worship or during an education hour. It could be useful for a new member class or confirmation class. If your congregation is a mission partner with one or more of the featured congregations, you could show the brief video associated with that congregation at the annual meeting. The introduction to the video can be skipped, in order to go directly to the main menu.

Stories of Faith in Action

Stories of Faith in Action is a free resource for congregations, sharing dynamic stories of how God changes lives through the mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

If you go to www.elca.org/stories, you will find links to 18 stories, resources on mission support, the financial contributions given to the churchwide expression from synods and congregations, budget information, and material to download.

Stories of Faith in Action can be used in Adult Education Classes and Forums, Retreats and Leadership Planning, Devotions, Helping new members become better acquainted with the ministries of this church, Mission Moments, Information for worship guests, Homebound members, and Weekly Bulletin and Monthly Newsletter inserts.

Annual Report Covers

Annual Report Covers are a valuable way for the churchwide expression of our church to communicate with our members. The cover includes a Thank You message from Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, encouragement to tell stories of our ministry together, and information about how our mission support dollars are used.

The Annual Report Cover can be ordered from Augsburg Fortress, 800-328-4648, Item #001341.

Mission Interpreter Ministry

Mission Interpreters are people telling stories in their congregation of how God is making a difference through the ministries of our church. This may take the form of Temple talks, Mission Moments, or providing articles for the newsletter.

Congregations benefit from mission interpreter ministry in the following ways:

- “Mission minded” congregations are growing in discipleship and spirit.
- By looking beyond the congregation, members see how they are personally connected to mission and ministry around the world.
- The mission interpreter ministry helps congregations by increasing the understanding of the work we do together beyond the congregation.
- When people understand their identity as partners in a wider church, many become strong advocates supporting the mission and ministry we share beyond the congregation—through our synod and on through our churchwide organization.



Mission Interpreters are provided with resources and training by our synod and our Mission Interpreter Coordinator, Bruce Belanger.

Please contact either Bruce Belanger (BHBpacker@aol.com) or Clay Bates (claybates@mittensynod.org) at our synod office for more information.

Money Leadership for Thriving Congregations

Workshop April 16-17

This twenty-four hour retreat for rostered leaders, SAMs, Lay Ministers, and spouses will provide an opportunity to grow in faith, personal stewardship and congregational leadership. It is through Scripture, reflection, prayer and conversation that our understanding of giving, saving, spending and the role of debt lay the groundwork for healthy financial life planning.

It is important for leaders to take a leadership role in stewardship ministry within the congregation. This role is greatly enhanced through a better understanding of family systems and congregational dynamics. Cost for lodging, meals, and materials is \$75 per person. Spouses are invited and welcome to attend. More information will be coming at a later date.

“Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”
Ephesians 3:20-21