



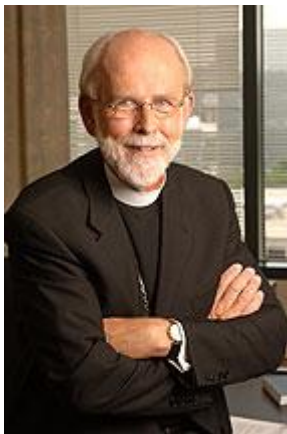
**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

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Congregation Newsletter Insert - July 2010

A Summer of Ordinations

Our synod will be especially blessed with a number of newly ordained pastors. Please pray for Sue Hand, Rachel Laughlin, Chris Laughlin, Jacob Lehman, Wayne Shearier and Aaron Werner as they begin their journeys as ministers of Word and Sacrament. See upcoming Bishop's Letters for details about their ordinations and installations.



Bass Lake Festival

August 6-9, 2010

Michi-Lu-Ca Conference Center and Camp

Featuring Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson

Bass Lake Festival for high school aged youth provides an "outside the box," grace-filled experience of the Christian faith. Through great music, unique learning opportunities, and a relaxed, community-building atmosphere, this event shares the Gospel with youth from all backgrounds and levels of maturity in a beautiful outdoor setting. And this year our young people will have a chance to interact with our presiding bishop who counts time with young people a special joy.

Registration costs are \$105.00 per person. One adult sponsor for every eight (or fewer) youth is required.

First-time attendees or individual registrants may be paired with a church that can provide assistance with issues like food preparation, packing necessities, showing you around camp, and familiarizing you with the schedule. Indicate on the registration form that you would like to be paired with another congregation and one will be provided for you. Individual registrants can be assigned to a group.

Bass Lake Festival is a remarkable discipling event for your people held annually now for more than 30 years. For more information, visit <http://www.elcalivingwater.com/>

Caring for Creation: Summer EKO Tips

Dawn Smith, EKO Member

It is summer time and here are a few EKO friendly tips. First of all we all love to stay cool, but we all know the cost. Make sure appliances are not near room air conditioners. It skews the temperature and the air conditioner runs constantly. Be sure to clean the air conditioner's filter monthly - and replace as needed. Insulate your attic; warm air as well as cold air can escape. Save money all year round.

Planning a trip this summer? Here are a couple of websites that can help you stay committed to keeping the earth beautiful and still having a great vacation. The first site has a green travel book available online.

- www.ecotourism.org
- www.ecotour.org
- www.responsibletravel.com

Mission Support Frequently Asked Questions

What is mission support? I've heard this term used, but I'm not sure what it means.

Mission support is the portion of your financial offering that your congregation shares with your synod and the churchwide organization, the other two expressions of this church. As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we do mission together through our financial giving. We do God's work in ways that no individual, congregation or synod can do alone.

Is mission support different from my weekly offering?

Mission support is a small percentage of your weekly offering. It's best defined as that part of your gift that moves on to the other two expressions of this church — your synod and the churchwide organization — to fund the work of the broader church. Many synods, including ours, set a goal of 10 percent from each of their congregations. The rest of your offering (about 90 percent) remains within your congregation. You help pay for local ministries, outreach, salaries, utilities and the building, ensuring your congregation's vital presence in your community.

Does mission support do more than fund the work of ELCA missionaries in other countries?

Yes. Mission support is the lifeblood of the work that God does through the ELCA, providing over 80 percent of the resources for our ministries. "Mission" is a broad term used to describe all the ministries of this church, not just those relating to missionaries. "Support" is the financial backing that covers the costs of delivering these ministries (including administrative costs, materials and more) here and abroad. Supporting our missionaries through the Global Mission program unit is an example of one of the many ways mission support enables us to do God's work with our hands.

How does my congregation benefit from mission support?

Every congregation benefits as an active partner in the ELCA's mission to share God's boundless love with the world. *Stories of Faith in Action* is filled with powerful examples of how lives have been changed because of our members' generosity. More specifically, some mission support funds may return to your congregation in the way of grants, services, programs and resources. Check with your pastor for concrete illustrations that apply to your congregation, as well as opportunities to explore for the future.

Sometimes I write a check to ELCA World Hunger or to Lutheran World Relief. Is that the same as mission support?

When you designate your gift to one of the many ministries within the pan-Lutheran community, this is not mission support. Mission support is, by its very nature, an undesignated gift to the broader church. It enables the churchwide organization to respond to ministry opportunities as they become available and ensures the ongoing financial stability so essential to our future. We applaud your designated support of such programs as ELCA World Hunger, a ministry of this church, and Lutheran World Relief, a partner ministry with the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. But we recommend that such gifts are above and beyond, and never in place of, your commitment to your regular offering in your congregation.

What guides the churchwide expression in its decisions regarding mission support?

The members of the ELCA and its various expressions and institutions share a calling. We proclaim in our mission statement that, "Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we have been claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of the world." This vision shapes all decisions and activities of the churchwide expression, especially budget planning. More specifically, the churchwide expression looks to the churchwide assembly, the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization, for direction and guidance. The ELCA Church Council functions as the board of directors of this expression and acts as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the churchwide assembly.

Five strategic directions guide our life together in the ELCA:

- Support congregations;
- Grow in evangelical outreach;
- Step forward as a public church;
- Deepen and extend our global, ecumenical and interfaith relationships; and
- Bring forth and support faithful, wise and courageous leaders.