

# SYNOD NEWS

The Spirit of Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

December 2009



*The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.*

Jeremiah 33:14

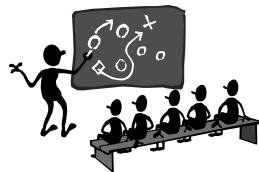
## A Season of Hope

It's early November as I write this, and I'm already thinking about Advent.

Mostly I've been thinking about my preaching responsibilities for Advent, and so I began to preview the Sunday lessons.

I didn't get beyond the first reading for the first Sunday, Jeremiah 33: 14-16: *The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah* (v. 14).

This passage caught and held my attention because it expresses so pastorally a proclamation of hope.



It's confession time. When it comes to the Hebrew prophets, I want to be on Jeremiah's team. Don't get me wrong; Isaiah's team has a strong offense and a pretty sophisticated playbook. But Jeremiah brings finesse to the field. I'm a pushover for finesse.

Consider the way each book starts. On the one hand, Isaiah – explosive, in your face: *Ah, sinful nation, people laden with iniquity,*

*offspring who do evil, children who deal corruptly...*

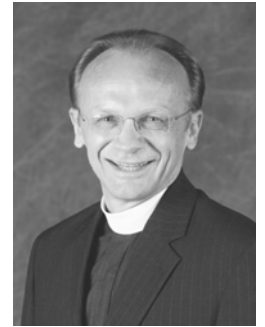
On the other hand, Jeremiah – poised, assured: *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.* There's assurance, consolation, and, yes, hope in these words.

In the church calendar, the First Sunday in Advent 2009 initiates the New Year. With Jeremiah's help, it can also initiate a spirit of hope as we move toward the Nativity of Our Lord.

It seems good that all of us be drawn toward hope.

I hear Jeremiah with a thankful heart as a new Advent approaches. My prayer is that the First Sunday in Advent will initiate a hope-filled season and new year for you.

Bishop Samuel Zeiser



# News and Upcoming Events

## October Synod Council Meeting Highlights

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council met October 15, 2009, at Trinity, Lehighton.



The council discussed next steps in the strategic planning process, including ways to begin the implementation of the five strategic directions adopted by the synod assembly.

Bishop Zeiser reported on the Churchwide Assembly, the Conference of Bishops, and Evenings with the Bishop. He and Pastor Mary Gade are working to clarify the role of a SALM.



The council adopted resolutions that—

- Set executive staff salaries for 2010
- Elected Robert Gadomski, the Rev. Eric Shafer, and Gerald A. Nau to three-year terms on the board of trustees of Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network
- Extended calls to special service to Jane Mason to serve as a diaconal minister in the position of chaplain, Hospice St. John, and Sr. Ramona Daily, an ELCA Deaconess, to serve as chaplain at St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem
- Approved "on leave from call status" to AiM Leesa Wimmer
- Approved a loan to Good Shepherd, Kreidersville, from the church loan development fund
- Adopted guidelines for using the church loan development fund
- Approved adding assets from dissolving congregations to the Prosser-Pahse Mission Fund



## Psalms: *The Poetry of Faith* 2010 Learning Ministries Day Saturday, January 23, 2010

Atonement Lutheran Church  
Wyomissing, PA

Keynote Speaker:  
**Dr. Rolf A. Jacobson**

Cost: \$20 (lunch included)  
Time: 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Check out the variety of workshops available:

- Psalms and life
- Psalms and Sunday school
- Psalms and youth ministry
- Psalms and children
- Psalms as prayer
- Psalms and sign language
- ...and a whole lot more!

Register now at [www.godslove.org](http://www.godslove.org). Click the link on the home page for more information on workshops, the keynote speaker, and everything you want to know about LM Day 2010!

A day to enrich, encourage, and excite  
teachers and **all** leaders in the church.



## Save These Dates!



**April 10, 2010** Tenth annual Farm Family Appreciation Celebration, Hamburg Field House

**June 18-19, 2010** Synod Assembly 2010, Wachovia Arena, Wilkes-Barre, PA



**July 22-25, 2010** Listen to Jesus, 2010 Regional Youth Gathering, West Chester University

