

SYNOD NEWS

The Spirit of Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

March 2009

Synod Council Approves Staffing Plans



At its meeting on January 28, 2009, the synod council voted overwhelmingly to approve Bishop Samuel Zeiser's recommendations on staffing.

Full-Time Staff

Current staff who will continue are the Rev. D. Michael Bennethum, the Rev.

Kurt Garbe, Associate in Ministry Karen Matthias-Long, Ethel "Smoky" Schelly, and the Rev. Catherine Ziel.

Most of these staff persons will continue with their current responsibilities, although Karen's position has been adjusted to increase the amount of her time devoted to youth ministry. To compensate for the additional youth ministry work, some of Karen's responsibility to the Resource Center has been shifted to **Debbie Frey**, who has assisted Karen with the center.

New to the full-time staff is the Rev. **Mary Gade**, former pastor of Ziegels Lutheran Church, Breinigsville. Pastor Gade is responsible for the 35 congregations of the East Berks



Mission District, candidacy, misconduct prevention/intervention, campus ministry, and Synodically Authorized Lay Ministers (SALMs). She began her position as associate of the bishop on February 15.

Part-Time Staff

The Rev. **Glenn Simmons**, shared staff with the ELCA Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission program unit (through March), is working **half-time**

as coordinator of the bishop's conference and synod assembly, and as liaison to the 34 congregations of the Lehigh Mission District, to Bear Creek Camp, to interim ministry, and to Appalachian Ministry.

Serving **quarter-time** with the 27 congregations of the Northern Lehigh Valley Mission District and union churches is the Rev. **Gene Handwerk**. Pastor Handwerk formerly served as an associate of the bishop in East Berks and Schuylkill mission districts. He began his quarter-time work on February 1.

Two other part-time associates of the bishop are the Rev. **Niels Nielsen**, relating to the 26 congregations of the Pocono Mission District, and the Rev. **Carl Shankweiler**, relating to the 29 congregations of the Schuylkill Mission District. Both will continue serving as pastors in their congregations. They began their service as associates of the bishop on February 1.

Carol Weiser, formerly director of communications and assembly/bishop's conference coordinator, retired on February 28. She continues on a **part-time** contract basis to maintain the synod **website** and produce **E-News**.



As of this writing (February 9), still to be named are someone to oversee **other synod communications** on a part-time contract basis and a **director of evangelical mission**, a deployed post with the ELCA Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission that will be funded entirely by the ELCA. That person will be responsible for outreach and ministry adjustment.

Please keep Bishop Zeiser and all those serving on the bishop's staff in your prayers.

Upcoming Events

Annual Farm Family Appreciation Celebration

Saturday, April 4, 2009

Hamburg Field House



Doors open at 6:15 p.m.; dinner buffet from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.; square dance and music by "The Majestics" from 8:00 to 11:00 p.m.

For information, go to www.godslove.org/calendar.

Lutheran Day at the Capitol Tuesday, May 12, 2009



For more information, go to www.lamp.org

2009 Synod Assembly June 5-6, 2009

Sovereign Performing Arts Center
Reading, PA

The 22nd annual assembly of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod will be held June 5-6, 2009, at the Sovereign Performing Arts Center in Reading.

The assembly will begin with forums on Friday morning, June 5, with the official opening at 1:00 p.m. that day. The assembly ends by 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 6.

More information will be available by mid-March on the synod website, www.godslove.org; click the assembly link on the *Calendar* drop-down menu.

Get ready for **LIFT!**



**Lutherans In
Faith Together**

Saturday, June 13, 2009

Muhlenberg College

Keynote Speaker: The Rev. Dr. Mark Allan Powell, Prof. of New Testament, Trinity Sem.

Music: Dakota Road

And More! Chapel concerts, games, walk for hunger, "Ask the Bishop," traveling personalities — fun for the whole family!

Get all the latest news and updates at www.godslove.org/LIFT

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Women of the ELCA
Spiritual Growth Retreat

Lessons

for

Today's Disciples

Seven Marks of Discipleship

March 7, 2009 (snow date March 14)
Hope Lutheran Church, Tatamy

For more information, see your unit president