

STAFF REPORTS

PASTOR RON MOORMAN, ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP

The majority of my days are spent on identifying possible candidates for the congregational vacancies that exist in the synod. This has been a very busy process over the past year since we currently have a fair number of pastoral vacancies in the synod. In that process, we are operating on a new system of nominations: we are currently giving congregations with pastoral vacancies the choice of receiving nominations either one name at a time or three names at a time. Almost without exception congregations have been choosing the three name option. In the past it was the practice to give just one name at a time—under the new system it means identifying three times as many possible candidates. That is proving to be quite a challenge. This also involves screening the individuals who have put their Rostered Leader Profile (RLP) on the ELCA candidacy website and attempting to match that profile with the Ministry Site Profile and Seven Reflections on Ministry and Context which congregations with pastoral vacancies develop. As a part of this process I also conduct on-site Mission and Ministry meetings with the congregations around the synod to help them develop that Profile. This is to help them to reflect on both their history as well as their vision for their future. This also includes reviewing with the congregation the various roles in this process: the Call Committee, the Church Council, and the congregation to be sure that the roles are clear and do not overlap. This also includes reviewing the various components of the call process, answering questions, and providing on-going support and needed information. I have also been trying to follow-up with congregations to discuss with them the components of the interviewing process: what areas they need to cover in their interviews, what questions they might anticipate, etc. etc. The interview process is a critical component and needs to be clear and concise in its application. Once the interviews have been held, we also provide support and consultation to the congregations on the various components of the call: compensation, housing, insurance, etc. etc. so that there is uniformity in how the call process is applied throughout the synod.

I am also the staff liaison to the synod's Candidacy Subcommittee. The primary role of this position is to insure that all levels of the candidacy process are functioning as they should, to relate our candidacy processes with those of other synods, and to serve as liaison between the synod and our candidates at the various levels of the system. This subcommittee plays a critical role in the on-going work of both the synod and the ELCA particularly in making decisions about the fitness for public ministry of potential candidates—candidates who could serve either in the C/SIS or elsewhere in the ELCA. In addition to performing that screening role, the subcommittee also has the role of guiding, encouraging, and supporting candidates for public ministry. Each candidate has a "relator" who stays in periodic contact with the candidates to provide a connection back to the C/SIS and to work with the synod to address any problems or issues that might arise. We are blessed in this synod to have an exceptional Candidacy Subcommittee which takes its role quite seriously. This committee and the synod is committed

to making sure that only candidates with outstanding character and strong theological qualifications are allowed to become ELCA pastors.

Over the past year I also served as the staff liaison to the New and Renewing Congregations Committee. This committee has been working on gathering information from the congregations in the synod relative to their current programs, congregational experience, and future directions. This was done through an on-line survey of the congregations. The intent is to use the information gathered from this survey both to assess the current programmatic directions and needs of our congregational base and to begin to develop a synodical response. With the recent addition of a Director for Evangelical Mission to the synod staff in the person of Rev. Bob Dealey, it is more logical for the liaison work with this committee to come under that position and that is what has happened.

I am also trying to visit the thirty-three or so congregations to which I have been assigned to be the “lead staff” person—meaning by that that we are planning on worshipping with each of our synod congregations at least once a year. Given my role in the candidacy process this has proven difficult since there are only so many Sundays to go around. To date I have been able to visit roughly half of the congregations that are on my visit list. I hope to be able to visit the remaining congregations over the next several months. It is a great way to get to know people and to stay in touch.

In addition to these responsibilities, there are always the “other duties as assigned” component of this position. It has been and is an interesting and challenging role—constantly meeting and interacting with a great variety of people, with the other synod staff, clergy, and laity exploring new concepts, looking for ways to improve the roles and services of the synod, doing the Lord’s work, letting the ways of grace work in our midst.

PASTOR WAYLAND MIDDENDORF, ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP

The committees I am assigned to continue their assigned duties as called for in the constitution. Some of the members serving a one year term, are either up for re-election or will be replaced this year.

Social Ministry, Justice and Advocacy reviewed grant requests at their April meeting. The needs in our communities are great, while the amount to be distributed is less. This makes the process more difficult. We are taking a fresh look at why are we here—why do we exist? Our ministry is about more than grants, but if that is our primary duty can we continue to exist? It is our hope that we can answer that question more fully and become more than a source for grant funding in the coming years. We also desire to educate and inform the congregations in our synod about social ministry needs and any issues we as the church have concerns about. Of course, the use of Fair Trade products continues to be a concern and increasing awareness is something we strive to do throughout the synod.

Global Mission continues working on a trip for Bishop S. John Roth and for as many as twelve others (two from each conference) to our companion synods in Madagascar in 2014. At the present time it appears that the trip will cost around \$5,000 per person. There will also be requirements for a passport, and a number of vaccinations and immunization requirements. At this time we are finalizing the application form and that will be made available to anyone interested in joining Bishop Roth on this trip. We continue working on providing a Bible for each family in our companion synods, however, finding a source in Madagascar that can provide Bibles in the Malagasy language has been difficult. We continue that work and hope to have a proposal to put before the Synod Council in the near future. Unfortunately our hope of providing a youth from one of our companion synods for the 2012 ELCA youth gathering did not take place, due to complications with the visa. We will try to provide a youth from Madagascar for next ELCA youth gathering. We also have a representative from the ELCA who will be at our forum to offer information and answer questions about Madagascar.

S.A.M. Subcommittee has completed and approved a new handbook that serves as a guide for Synodically Authorized Ministers and congregations who use their gifts. The handbook is now available on the synod website: www.csis-elca.org We have eleven students in the process at this time, two of these will complete their studies this spring and will be recognized at the Synod Assembly Festival Worship. That leaves nine who are in the process and five of these began this past class season (two in our spring class). We continue to provide classes and continuing education opportunities for new and existing S.A.M. members. We continue to receive requests for information, so the S.A.M. program continues to thrive in our synod.

During the past year I visited congregations, conference assemblies, conference clergy confabs, S.A.M. retreats, a conference retreat, and other visits as requested.

PASTOR JAMES REENTS, ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP

In the Gospel for the third Sunday after Easter Jesus asked Peter 3 times, *“Do you love me?”* Our answer to that question leads to discipleship. As I travel around the synod, I see many examples of your love for Jesus Christ through the mission of the C/SIS. Thank you for your support.

I have been an Assistant to Bishop Roth for more than a year. It is a quarter time position. Most of my time has been spent getting acquainted. I have a number of roles in this position.

I relate to the Professional and Lay Leadership Subcommittee. You'll see in their report that we are recommending a 2% increase in salary and will be engaging conversation regarding a Sabbatical leave policy, spiritual guidance and wellness.

I am also involved in the call process. I am the first staff person to read the Rostered Leaders Profile (RLP), and pass on that information to Pastor Ron Moorman and Bishop Roth. I have visited some congregations to explain the call process, and I officiated at the Installation of Pastor Christine McNeal at St. John's Lutheran Church, Bloomington.

In an effort to get better acquainted with the congregations in the Northern and Northeast Conferences, I have visited all the pastors and preached in thirteen congregations as well as bringing greetings from the C/SIS.

Monthly I meet with Bishop Roth and the other assistants, attend Northern and Northeast Conference meetings and text studies. The quarterly synod council meetings are very informative.

There have been three special events in the past year:

- (1) Andrea Arey from Portico spoke to the professional leaders of the Northern and Northeast Conferences at St. John's Lutheran Church, Bloomington, on January 8, 2013. She talked about maximizing our benefits.
- (2) March 7-10, 2013 I had the privilege of attending an ELCA Bishops Assistants Gathering in San Antonio, Texas. We considered the theme “Go, Therefore...But How? Finding our way in a new Missional Landscape.” This gathering was helpful in networking with other Assistants.
- (3) April 11-13, 2013 I attended a teleconference at the Lutheran Church of Mahomet on “Revitalizing Your Congregation.” The webinar presentations considered four subjects: Engaging the Uninvolved, Energizing the Unclaimed, Empowering the Unknown, and Enlisting the Unafraid. Many new ideas were presented and discussed.

Thank you for the call to serve. I enjoy working with the synod staff. Let us work together to build the body of Christ.

PASTOR ROBERT DEALEY, DIRECTOR FOR EVANGELICAL MISSION
COORDINATOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND NETWORKING

On March 1, 2013, I began my duties as the Director for Evangelical Mission and the Coordinator of Communications and Networking for the Central/Southern Illinois Synod / ELCA. What an honor and privilege it is to serve in this capacity, because as I travel throughout the synod, I see first-hand the ways individuals, congregations, agencies, and institutions have been blessed and, in turn, are blessed to be a blessing to others!

The New and Renewing Congregations Committee (NRCC) is blessed by its lay and clergy leadership. Since the last synod assembly, five members have attended the Transformational Leadership 2.0 training (Part I) and anticipate participating in Part II as those dates become known. The primary tasks of this group include: identifying congregations (and their corresponding leaders), who may be in need of transformation; and providing additional training to others, so that the group of trainers may be increased. NRCC members are also involved: in providing assistance in identifying potential new mission starts; reviewing ELCA partnership support grant applications; and in facilitating the growth and development of congregational mission strategies.

The Mission Support and Stewardship Education Committee (MSSEC) is called to assist congregations in their various ministries of stewardship. As we receive the abundant blessings that God provides for us on a daily basis, how do we share those blessings with others, in order that others may understand that they, too, have been blessed by God? As congregations share their mission support with the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, the synod, in turn, forwards 56% of every dollar given with the ELCA. Because of congregational and synodical generosity, we are a blessing to Lutheran Social Services of Illinois; the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and Wartburg Seminary; the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center; the Illinois Conference of Churches, ELCA Region 5, as well as ELCA colleges and campus ministries.

The Communications Advisory Board (CAB) is served by those who have been blessed with the gift of communications (in its various aspects). Board members are currently seeking input from across the synod in an effort to develop a synodical long-range communications strategic plan. It is anticipated that not only will this facilitate more effective communication to and from the synod, but it will also include a component designed to assist congregations in improving their communications ministry as well.

I am impressed with the many ways in which God continues to bless us with the abundant riches of God's never-failing love. If you desire to discover the many ways in which you are "blessed to be a blessing", please do not hesitate to contact me. I stand ready to serve you and your congregation as a resource of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.