



## **Gospel Seeds...**

### **Strengthening the Core...**

Fitness coaches teach that a person needs a strong core – muscles around a person’s midsection – as a firm fitness foundation.

The truth is as people of God, gathered into congregations, we need to have a strong core as well.

Synod programmatic staff spent a day in spiritual retreat with Rev. Paul Hoffman this summer. Paul has been leading clergy mentoring groups in Western North Dakota for several years. He is a retired ELCA Pastor, passionate about faith formation, and inviting people into a life-giving relationship with the risen Christ. He is certain that healthy congregations focus on their core – in other words, they invest time and energy on the central things.

What are these central things? Proclamation of the Word in worship, the celebration of Holy Communion, preparing people for the sacrament of Baptism and a solid prayer life. None of this is flashy; it is simply a consistent tending to the gifts we have been given.

I encourage all our congregations to take stock of their core. What happens in your congregation to teach the practice of prayer, of leaning to listen to one another and pray for one another? How is your congregation working to deepen the understanding of what it is that is happening in worship? Why do we do what we do? What does it mean to “gather to be sent”? How is the congregation set up to teach about the sacraments, the incredible gifts being

given in these ordinary things made Holy by God’s Word?

I invite you to deepen conversation with the leadership of your congregation. May your core, grounded and rooted in Christ, be strengthened.

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***You are invited to a Festival Worship with Holy Communion October 29, 2017 at the Bismarck Event Center to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation. Worship will begin at 11:00AM.***

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### **Another Mentoring Group to Start...**

This fall a new rostered leaders mentoring group will begin. Sherie Heine works with Pastor Hoffman to coordinate these groups. There is room for 6 to 8 participants. These groups gather for worship, conversation, prayer, learning and mutual consultation at Camp of the Cross. This is an excellent continuing education opportunity for any rostered leader.

Leaders, watch your emails for further details on how to sign up for the next mentoring group or call Sherie (701-721-5025) for more information.

### **Suggestions needed for Nominations/Elections Committee...**

This year’s Synod Assembly approved changes to the Synod Constitution including how Conference Deans are appointed. The Synod’s Nominations and Elections Committee (made up of one person from each conference) are to provide names to the Synod Council for appointment.

The next Synod Council meeting is September 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>. Prior to that meeting, Nominations and Elections are seeking the names of people interested in serving as Conference Deans in the following conferences:

-Turtle Mountain: Rev. Kathi Nygaard is serving an unexpired term and is eligible for appointment to what would be her first term.

-Western Prairie: Rev. Michon Weingartner has served two terms and is not eligible for re-appointment.

Synod Council will be discussing (and possibly approving) Continuing Resolutions which will lay out the complete process which will be used in appointing these positions in the future.

To lift up a name, please contact a member of the Nominations/Elections Committee or Sherie (liaison to the Committee).

### **Synod Council to Meet...**

Synod Council meets in September. If there are issues you believe should be discussed, I invite you to be in contact with any Synod Council member. You can find the complete list of council members either in your synod directory or on the synod web page.

**Rev. Mark Narum**

Serving as Bishop of the Western North Dakota Synod

