



Gospel Seeds ***A Monthly Update from the Synod***

Joy...

Where do you find joy? I invite you to grab a cup of coffee, sit back and ponder that question. What in your life brings you such peace, comfort or hope that you are willing to let someone else know?

Do you find this in your relationship with Jesus, the risen savior? A joy that comes from knowing you are a beloved child of God, no matter what! How does your connection to the life of your congregation help you live into your identity as God's beloved? How might you help those around you discover the same joy you have found through this relationship?

I invite you to ponder these questions. I want to push a little further though – how about if you gather with others from your congregation to think about these questions. I want us to realize that “church” is not an event – instead, worship is a relationship, a place where we can be honest before God about our failings, hear a word of forgiveness and be reminded that we are claimed as God's very own. It is in this that joy, peace and hope reside.

You are beloved! I encourage you to live out of that identity, inviting others to the joy you have found. We have been given gifts too precious to keep to ourselves.

Learnings from the Conference of Bishops...

As a conference we spent significant time talking about our priorities as a church together. We acknowledged that there is much this church does for the sake of the proclamation of the Gospel. At the same time, we wrestled with where we can best invest our resources of time, talent and treasure.

One unexpected learning has to do with property insurance. Parishes may want to discuss whether it might be wise to have the same insurance carriers. A three-point parish, which has different insurance carriers can run into difficulties of which carrier is responsible for a covered loss. One example given was the embezzlement of parish funds.

The Conference also sent a letter to President Trump asking that budgeted funds be released to help support Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem. The hospital is owned and operated by the Lutheran World Federation. It is a life line for cancer care and kidney dialysis.

End of Year Giving...

We are thankful for the faithful donations which through the years have helped build your Synod Endowment Fund. These funds help you do ministry in Christ's name. Whether it is through the Ministry Endowment which provides seminary scholarships, the Mission Endowment which helps provide seed money for creative Christ-centered ministries or the Accompaniment Endowment Fund which ensures there are people to walk with seminary candidates or those dreaming of new mission possibilities – Gospel proclamation is happening because of these funds.

As you approach the end of the year, a reminder, gifts of \$5,000 or more maybe eligible for a North Dakota State Tax Credit and may also provide a deduction on federal taxes – please check with your tax preparer for details.

I am ever so thankful for the generosity of people within this synod. Thanks be to God.

Changes in Call Status...

-Rev. Julie Anderson has accepted a call to serve at Good Shepherd Lutheran, Bismarck

-Rev. Mike Pretzer has accepted a call to serve the Western Edge Parish of Peace, Dickinson and St. John, Richardton.

-Rev. Sandy Anderson has resigned her call at First and Trinity of Tioga.

-Rev. Steve Sathre retired November 4 from Trinity, Bismarck.

-Rev. Gary Erdmann has accepted an invitation to serve as Interim at Trinity, Bismarck.

Rev. Mark Narum

Serving as Bishop of the
Western North Dakota Synod

