



Gospel Seeds - March 2019

A Monthly Update from Western ND Synod Staff

Why????

I was reading the Peace Lutheran, Burlington newsletter recently and in it Pastor Emily Nesdahl wrote about spending a year paying attention and asking a simple question “Why?” Shortly after reading that column I had conversation with another leader – who was trying to understand lots of “whys” about their context. Later I attended a training event, where we were taught to “peel back the onion”, to dig deeper into the layers, asking questions like – “Why do you think that is so?” “Why has that been important?” Why – Why – Why – indeed.

Asking good questions helps us think deeply about issues of faith and life. Questions like “Why?” can help us rediscover what is at the core of our lives, recover forgotten stories of our history, help us ponder if what has always been done is really what we need to be doing now.

I hope that asking good questions helps us be reminded that at the heart of what we do as church is Jesus Christ. We have been saved and set free by his death and resurrection. This gift we have been given is not meant to be kept to ourselves but shared. Why? Because it is too precious, too costly, too life-giving to hoard.

As we move into Lent, I encourage you to be asking lots of good faith questions. Questions open our minds to new learning and deeper faith.

Calling all Lutherans!

Lutheran Day at the Capitol is Thursday, **April 4th** in Bismarck. This is an opportunity for you to put **Your Faith in Action**. Meet your legislators, learn about the issues and give Voice to the concerns of our Just and Caring communities.

Highlights will include a breakfast with legislators, including good conversation with ELCA and LSS leaders, opportunities to observe committee work with debates on issues of the day, displays and presentations on the social ministries and good work of Lutherans across North Dakota, and a chance to join your District Senator or one of your State Representatives at their desk that day for Floor Session. Let us know if you can join us for **Lutheran Day at the Capitol**, or if you have questions. Please specify which Legislative District you are coming from, or which legislator you would like to sit with at Floor Session. Email Dan Hannaher, Director of Community Engagement at LSSND DanH@lssnd.org

Register now for the March 29th Youth Ministry Event with Matt Skinner, “Does the Bible Tell me What to Believe.”
Open to youth confirmation age through high school.
Also, registration is open for the March 30th Matt Skinner GIFTS Event – “Understand the Apostle Paul and his understanding of the Gospel.”

Synod Council Actions...

Your Western ND Synod Council met February 15 and 16 in Minot. I am thankful for this faithful and wise group of lay and rostered leaders from across our synod. Here is some of what happened:

- Spent a significant amount of time talking about Cultural Diversity-ethnic, economic, racial and philosophical. Formed a task force to create a plan to expand competency
- Spent time Dwelling in the Word and sharing “Times when we have experienced God’s miracles.”
- Celebrated the fact that congregations shared over \$1.148 million dollars in unrestricted Mission Support – and talked about the incredible generosity in this synod from both individuals and congregations
- Heard an update from Deacon Anna Dykeman with Lutheran Campus Ministry at Minot State including student engagement in Service Learning Projects and the concern over among students
- Heard an update on Synod Assembly 2019, “The Kingdom of God Is Like... Dreams...Demands...Desires” and that Rev. Phil Hirsch, newly appointed Executive Director for Domestic Mission, will be our churchwide representative.
- Revised the 2019 Fiscal Plan and Approved a 2020 Fiscal Spending Plan which will be shared, discussed and voted on at Synod Assembly
- Approved Minimum Compensation Guidelines which are based on a 2.8% raise calculated on the first year step, this proposal will be presented and voted on at synod assembly
- Appointed the Synod Council Executive Committee to the role of Synod Transition Team it will be their task to prepare for the process of discernment leading up to the election of the next Bishop.

God Bless All!

Mark Narum

Serving as Bishop of the Western North Dakota Synod



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.