



## Moments for Mission

Southwestern Washington Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
*Spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ by empowering congregations and church leaders to grow in worship, education, outreach, stewardship and other ministries.*  
 February 2020

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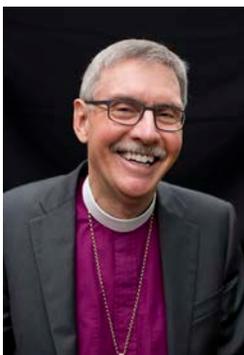
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## Where Do You Feel Trapped?

by Bishop Richard Jaech, Synod Bishop



Dear Friends in Christ,

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Last Sunday (February 2), the news from Punxsutawney, PA, was that Phil, the groundhog, did not see his shadow, which happily means that warmer weather is just around the corner. That same day, Bill Murray and cast members from the movie, *Groundhog Day*, were back on the scene, this time selling Jeeps in a Superbowl ad. It was good to see Phil and Bill again and, believe it or not, it led me to think about Transfiguration Sunday

and the season of Lent, which are fast approaching on our Church Calendar.

Many of you remember how, in *Groundhog Day*, Bill Murray is in Punxsutawney as a TV reporter ready to announce whether Phil sees his shadow or not. For some unknown reason, a spell is cast and Murray is forced to re-live Groundhog Day over and over again. Each morning he wakes up and it is still February 2. He meets the same people, experiences the same events and hears the same music on the radio. Soon he discovers that he has the freedom to make some choices about what he will do each day, but he can't escape the day itself. The cycle goes on and on, sometimes to his liking, and sometimes not. He becomes desperate to get out.

These days, many of us can feel like we are caught in a repeating and inescapable cycle. The same bleak news on the TV. The same grim conflicts in the world. The same arguments at home. The same headaches at work. The same bills to pay and problems to solve. The dates on the calendar change, but our lives and our planet seem to re-cycle through the same grinding patterns. We begin to wonder, as the bistro song puts it, "Is that all there is, my friends; is that all there is?"

In *Groundhog Day*, it is love and trust that finally frees Bill Murray from his numbing, repeating trap. He tries everything else at first. He tries to rescue himself through force, manipulation, and even self-destruction. Yet life is always outside of his control. Freedom arrives when love comes to him as a gift from the outside (grace) and he lets go and entrusts himself to that love.

In the life of God's people, the same thing happens. Feeling caught in a never-ending cycle of fear and disappointment, we try to get what we want by force, manipulation, money or mutually destructive behavior. We try to take charge of our life and grasp

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Evangelical Lutheran  
 Church in America  
 God's work. Our hands.

*Where do you feel trapped, continued from page 1*

for what we want, but the safety and happiness we desire often feels just beyond our reach.

But then the love of God breaks into our midst and we are invited simply to trust that love and release ourselves into God's grace and power.

For example, in the book of Exodus, God hears the cry of the Israelites living in a constant cycle of slavery, poverty and violence in Egypt. God comes to set them free to a new life in a new country. On the way there, God takes them on a journey through the wilderness, which becomes for them a forty-year graduate course in how to let go and trust God's love.

In the Gospels, Jesus again and again meets people who are caught in a cycle of fear, sickness, abuse or violence. Lepers; outcasts; the paralyzed; desperate poor people; anxious rich people. They all feel trapped. Yet, when they meet Jesus, the grace and love of God open up a new day and Jesus simply says to them, "Let go of everything and follow me."

Where do we feel trapped? Where do we find ourselves repeatedly trying to manipulate and compete for what we want? How are we exhausted from trying to control a life that is basically out of our control?

Jesus announces that the love of God, which forever surrounds and fills us, now also comes to set us free. We are invited to let ourselves go and trust that love, which takes us on the path to new life. That is the gift of transformation we witness on Transfiguration Sunday. That is the journey of renewal which we will walk in the season of Lent. May God bring us blessings, grace, and new beginnings in the weeks ahead.

In Christ,

Bishop Rick Jaech

## Congregations in Transition – February 2020

*Lord, we pray for your wisdom, insight and peace for the congregations and the leaders in our synod who are working through a time of pastoral transition. We give you thanks for each and every one. Amen.*

<b>Congregations</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Pastoral Care</b>
Christ, Federal Way	P	TR	Pr. Mark Peterson
Emanuel, Yelm	P	Pulpit Supply	Louise Buckles
Lutheran Church of Christ the King, Tacoma	P	TR	Pr. Linda Milks
Peace Lutheran Fellowship, Port Ludlow	P	I	Bradly Hayward, Deacon Cynthia Buschagen
Vinland, Poulsbo	P	I	Pr. Mike Hanson
Zion, Camas	P	TR	Assoc Pr. Susan Dollinger

*Mobility position key*  
*P – Pastor*  
*AP – Associate Pastor*  
*D- Deacon*

*Mobility status key:*  
*NV – New Vacancy*  
*TR – Transition*  
*I – Interviewing*  
*C – Calling*

### Calls/Appointments:

**Pastor Mark Peterson** received a called by the Synod Council to serve as Interim Pastor at **Christ Lutheran Church in Federal Way** beginning January 12, 2020. Pastor Peterson has served several interim calls in other synods prior to this one.

Pastor Susan Dollinger will be installed by Pastor Rebecca Shjerven on Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at Zion Lutheran, Camas. The color of the day will be white.

## On The Road with the Bishop



**January 5** Director of Evangelical Mission Pastor Melanie Wallschlaeger and I worshipped with members of Bethlehem Lutheran, Tacoma, and United Lutheran, Tacoma, who are jointly served by Pastor Mary Sanders. The service took place at Bethlehem Lutheran.



**January 12** Celebrated the Ordination and Installation of Pastor Hallie Parkins, who has been called to be Associate Pastor at St. Mark's by the Narrows, Tacoma, working with Pastor Jan Ruud and Deacon Ingelaurie Lisher.



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**January 20-22** Attended both the Under 45 Retreat and the Bishop's Convocation at Seabeck Conference Center. Those pictured with me, *above*, are ministers who are graduates of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, together with Sara Wilson who is on the administrative staff at PLTS (middle row, far left).



**January 25** Participated in a planning retreat with the bishops and Synod Council officers of all six synods in Region I, all pictured below. With me from the Southwestern Washington Synod were Kathryn Nelson-Synod Secretary, and Darcy Huffman- VP- Elect.



## **A Note to Treasurers:**

### **Is your Pastor an Employee or an Independent Contractor?**

Your called Pastor should have received a W-2 Form from your congregation last month, not a 1099 Form. Though, it is possible, that they'd receive both for 2 different jobs. For IRS purposes, clergy are self-employed, though for social security and income tax, you are an employee. Confusing, but also easy to understand.

An easy way to understand is that Ministers of Word and Sacrament are considered an employee and given a W-2 if the congregation has a specific worship time and place and the pastor is expected lead it. They would receive a 1099 as a self-employed contractor, if they are able to lead worship anytime they want, anywhere they want and probably with several congregations.

Here's a good document from the Nazarene Benefits group explaining an Independent Contractor vs an employee:

[http://www.ecfa.org/Documents/ChurchEmployees\\_IndependentContractors.pdf](http://www.ecfa.org/Documents/ChurchEmployees_IndependentContractors.pdf)

## **Seeking Partners in Affordable Housing**

The #1 cause of homelessness in Washington state is the lack of affordable housing. The Synod is still investigating different affordable housing options with congregations in our synod that want to provide affordable housing ministry and have land that can be used. During the Bishop's Advent Eucharists and the Bishop's Convocation in January, Pastor Melanie Wallschlaeger made a request that synod congregations send church property information if they have property or facilities to be considered. The synod will use this property information to research the potential for affordable housing throughout the synod and in building a case for grant funds to support such an effort. Collectively, we can all do more for advancing affordable housing, if we work together. We hope to be able to present a affordable housing developer with an initial inventory of at least 25% of our congregational properties by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The submission of specs does not commit a congregation to build affordable housing, but opens the room for conversation and next steps should the property be viable. The model we are envisioning is affordable housing built on or adjacent to church facilities, with congregations providing wrap around services to residents. Management of the affordable housing will be through a partner organization, so that the congregation is not in a landlord relationship. An Affordable Housing Task Force is being developed to move this project forward. Pastor Melanie Wallschlaeger, our Director for Evangelical Mission, is leading the efforts at this time.

*For an article on the use of church land and the power of faith communities working together to create affordable housing, go to:*

<https://religionnews.com/2019/11/12/yes-in-gods-backyard-to-use-church-land-for-affordable-housing>

## **Climate Justice & Faith Concentration at PLTS**

***Empowering leaders to cultivate moral, spiritual, and practical power for the work of climate justice in communities of faith.***

This concentration is designed for students interested in earth-honoring theology, ethics, spirituality, and practices that connect ecological well-being with racial, economic, and gender justice.

**This concentration prepares students to:**

- Lead congregations in developing climate justice work
- Practice climate justice as a spiritual practice
- Address intersections of climate change with racial, economic, and gender-based inequity
- Articulate biblical, ethical, theological, and spiritual grounding for climate justice
- Employ scientific resources related to climate change
- Collaborate with interfaith and community partners

Learn more at [plts.edu/mdiv](https://plts.edu/mdiv)

## **Domestic Hunger Grant Awarded**

*By Beth Ann Johnson, Synod Hunger Committee member*

Each year organizations across the country have the opportunity to apply for an ELCA Domestic Hunger Grant. From its inception, ELCA hunger has been focused on “supporting sustainable solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty.” In recent years many of the organizations receiving grants were focused on short-term solutions to hunger such as food banks and meal sites. While these programs remain important, they don’t solve the bigger problem confronting many communities, poverty. Wanting to be good stewards of limited funding and true to the vision of addressing root causes, ELCA Domestic Hunger is giving out fewer grants and focusing on organizations with the capacity to create lasting change for children, families and seniors who are struggling. This year, as in 2019, ELCA Domestic Hunger will award grants of up to \$30,000 distributed at up to \$10,000 per year for three years.

It is our great pleasure to announce that Resources, Integration, Services and Education Lewis County (RISE) will receive a 2020 ELCA Domestic Hunger Grant. The mission of RISE is to *work with multiple agencies throughout our entire county to interactively develop strategic plans that address root causes of poverty in a coordinated and cooperative manner.* “We are so excited to receive this funding! It’s going to make a real difference,” Donna Moir, of RISE told us. “Lewis County is a rural county, with a population around 75,000. We are experiencing a housing crisis with less than 1% rental availability,” according to Moir. At least 300 families and over 800 students in Lewis County are documented as homeless; and 60% of students in the county qualify for free/reduced lunches.

“There are many organizations in the county working to do something about it, but we haven’t been working together. Part of our focus is going to be on combining our resources so we can tackle the issues facing our neighbors.” For more information on RISE Lewis County, you can *Continued next page*

*Domestic Hunger Grant, continued from page 7*

visit their website at <http://riselewiscounty.org/>

Twelve organizations in SW Washington Synod applied for funding from ELCA Domestic Hunger for the 2020 grant cycle; Our synod, like most others, has one new grant awardee this year, and one continuing from last.

The next funding cycle for ELCA Domestic Hunger Grants opens March 18. For more information, visit the website at <https://www.elca.org/domestichungergrants>. Funding for ELCA Domestic Hunger Grants comes from money raised by the ELCA Hunger Appeal from individuals and congregations across the country.

## Mission Moments

by Lori Jacobwith



What if you could have a team or an army of people who talk about your congregation or organization every day? People who were proud to share stories about the impact of the life-changing work being done at your congregation/organization? Telling stories so compelling people who hear them want to take action and give their time or financial support?

It's a simple but powerful tool I often recommend to organizations I work with, begin a practice of holding a "mission moment" at meetings and gatherings with staff and board.

**I define a "mission moment" as any example of how your organization is making an impact.**

It's an example about a real person, family, or human situation.

- It can be a board member telling how they felt to participate at your recent fundraising event.
- It can be a staff person talking about the family that got turned away that day.
- It can be a volunteer saying thank you for allowing them to "work" with your organization.

Mission moments are short, inspirational examples of your work that put a face on what you do. They are stories and examples that can be repeated by others because they are not too long. They are inspiring and often give visibility to something you'd like to do more of but due to limited resources you simply can't do all that you'd like.

I recently heard a mission moment about Neal, a young man with Down Syndrome who, after a great deal of support in a residential housing environment, made a toast at his brother's wedding — to a room of 200 people! Making a toast in front of lots of people can scare many of us, but the work done at this organization made it possible for Neal to feel great, be prepared, and able to share in a special family event. The telling of the story of his toast was a memorable moment for Neal and for the organization that provides him ongoing care and support. *Continued next page*

*Mission Moments, continued from page 8*

The story was shared in such a way that listeners wanted to learn more about how to help. That's what I call a powerful mission moment.

### **So, how to begin?**

1. Make time at each staff, council, and committee meeting. Ask for someone to share an example of a "mission moment." (You may have to be the first example to show people how to do it.)
2. Just one "mission moment" shared at each meeting is plenty.
3. Rotate who shares.
4. Keep the sharing to literally a minute or two at the most.
5. No rules about what the mission moment is about.
6. Get people talking and connecting about real people and real feelings.

This is also a great activity to kick off a one-on-one donor visit. Ask THEM if they have an example of a mission moment for why they support your congregation/organization. OR you share a short example of your work as a mission moment to connect the donor to something fresh and new about your congregation/organization.

**The moments shared do not always have to have a happy ending. But they DO always have to cause people to feel something.**

Start today. It will change things. I promise. And you WILL build an army of people who share powerful stories about your congregation/organization.

*This post was used with permission by author. It was originally included in Withism's from Lori: Boldness, Clarity & Wisdom for Fundraising Professionals Making a Difference (Volume 1)*

## **Online Registration for the May Youth Weekends at Holden Village NOW OPEN!**

**Choose from May 15-17 or May 22-24**

Registration is open NOW thru April 16 (or until filled).

The theme: Transformation! Change is constant and transformation is sacred. How can we express our changing hearts and minds to speak out as change makers in God's World?

170 people max per session. | Cost: \$205 per person | To Register:

<https://www.lutheransnw.org/content.cfm?id=558>

## **Spring Synod Educational Gatherings**

**Theme: Building Community. Being Church.**

**Locations and Dates:** (pick the best one for your schedule) All sites 9am – 3:30pm

- Holy Trinity, Port Angeles- Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>
- Messiah, Vancouver- Saturday, May 2nd
- St Marks by the Narrows, Tacoma- Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>
- 

**What is an Educational Gathering?** Worship and learn together.

**Who Should Attend?:** Lay members and roster ministers who want to learn and be a part of the whole church.

**Workshop options: (Most workshops will be presented at each location)**

- Church Finances Training
- Growing Young
- What could it mean if the Synod was RIC
- Care Practices
- 3 Things you can do on Social Media to Build Community
- Essential Ingredients for a Healthy Church Council
- Rainings Money for Ministry
- Working with Community Partners and your Non-Profit Status
- Affordable Housing
- Congregation Safety
- PSALM (Program for Strengthening Lay Ministry)
- Art in Community
- Companionate Integrity

Registration starts March 4<sup>th</sup>.

## **Calling New Board Members to serve Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Washington**

Currently on a program hiatus, Lutheran Campus Council (the Board of Directors for LCMUW), is looking for new board members to help guide this important ministry into its next chapter. Big decisions that need to be made include:

- Vision for the future of this important ministry
- Stewardship of financial resources into either a University District Parsonage OR Permanent Meeting Space for program purposes.
- Drafting of Ministry Site Profile and formation of a Call Committee for the next Ministry Leader.

Do you or do you know someone who has skills in real estate, financial management, visioning, leadership, event planning, and/or passion for new beginnings? Please contact either Callie Moothart at [president@uwlutherans.org](mailto:president@uwlutherans.org), David Wells at [treasurer@uwlutherans.org](mailto:treasurer@uwlutherans.org), and/or Pastor Paul Eldred at [vice-president@uwlutherans.org](mailto:vice-president@uwlutherans.org) for more information! Proximity to Seattle is not necessarily a requirement - virtual meetings are an option!

## Bonhoeffer and Resistance to Political Corruption Lecture



Christ Church Parish in the Stadium District in Tacoma will welcome ELCA Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Mark Brocker on **Wednesday, February 12**, for a public lecture on *Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Resistance to Corruption, and Living the Sermon on the Mount*. The lecture will begin at **7:00 PM in Wells Hall**. The lecture is free, though donations to support the Christ Church Lecture Series will be gladly welcomed at the door. Dr. Brocker edited the following volumes in the critical edition of Dietrich Bonhoeffer works: *Ecumenical, Academic, and Pastoral Work: 1931-1932*; *Theological Education at Finkenwalde: 1935-1937*; and *Conspiracy and Imprisonment 1940-1945*. Dr. Brocker is a former president of the International Bonhoeffer Society. Christ

Church is located at 310 N K St, Tacoma.

## Silverdale's Lay School of Theology

Silverdale Lutheran Church (SLC) will be hosting their next Lay School of Theology on Saturday March 21 and Sunday March 22. It is open to all. The theme is *Rooted and Renewing: Imagining the church's future in light of its New Testament origins*". Troy M.



Troftgruben as the guest speaker, *shown left*.

To discern our future, as a church, we need to start with our past. Many of the questions we face today – about spaces, unity, leadership, practices, and witness – were no less relevant to the earliest believers. Building off themes in the book *Rooted and Renewing* (2019), we will engage scripture and our family history (as a church) to think about such topics as unity, core spiritual practices, and bearing public witness. Pre-registration requested <https://silverdalelutheran.org/event-items/lay-school-of-theology-2/>

## Congregation News

**All Saints Lutheran, Auburn** has a **Rock Painting** ministry. Clara Kongelbak is leading the group in painting rocks for their flower bed and parking lots with various art and symbols. These are meant to surprise and delight those people who park in their lots and come to the church. The first set were placed outdoors.



**Agnus Dei Lutheran, Gig Harbor** is collecting toilet paper for FISH. Bailey, their Little Lambs Preschool helper, is happy to cheer them on, *shown left*.

Laura Olsen, at **Christ Lutheran, Federal Way**, is leading their group art project for Lent. They will do a project and learn about the resurrection theology through the process of creating something new.

**Holy Trinity Lutheran in Port Angeles** has a weekly Hula Ministry called "Lei Melia" which is lead by Pastor Kristin-Luana Baumann. On another note, Holy Trinity received over 21 inches of snow mid-January and is thankful for their snow removal team: Candance Hall, David & Elizabeth Christian, Deb Reed, Jim & Marianne Ude and Deacon Joy Lingerfelt.