



## 2010 Synod Festival Assembly God's work. Our hands.

The Western Iowa Synod met in festival assembly May 1-2, 2010, at the Sioux City Convention Center. More than 450 voting members and visitors participated, including more than 40 youth.

The Rev. Ruben Duran, ELCA Director for New Evangelizing Congregations, brought greetings and a message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson which focused on 'everyday evangelists.' Pastor Duran echoed that theme in his lively and inspiring presentation on the future of the ELCA. Now that the ELCA is more than 20 years old, Pastor Duran urged us all to 'get out of the house,' and to respond to God's call with the words 'send me!' He noted that historically, large increases in U.S. Lutheran church membership were caused by immigration and later by baby boomers. Rather than try to relive Abraham and Sarah's story, Pastor Duran suggested we embrace immigration today as a wonderful way to build the body of Christ.



...tive, those who desire greater inclusivity, and those who believe there are limits. And we hear the words, 'the body of Christ given for you.' No stipulations. And in that we find our unity, jagged and rough in spots, but enough for all sinners who stand in need of grace to find unity. Enough. Christ's body and blood is enough." You can read Bishop Last's entire sermon on the synod Web site, [www.wisynod.org/assembly.htm](http://www.wisynod.org/assembly.htm).

Fantastic music was showcased Saturday evening. During the banquet, Western Iowa's own Okoboji Boys played a mix of praise, gospel and camp songs, plus original tunes for our enjoyment. Lightswitch, a Christian rock band performed in concert after the banquet. Christian comedians and storytellers, Kathi Ondracek and Pastor Wayne Garman, also entertained us.

The participation of so many enthusiastic youth was a highlight of this year's festival assembly. The engaging youth report reminded us that youth are not only the future of our church, but a very vital part of our church right now. "We are as diverse as our t-shirts and our dress. Some of us are fancy. Some of us roll out of bed in the morning and go. Some of us sing, others are active in sports. We have different likes and dislikes, different talents and abilities, yet we are all the children of God, and we are all members of this church. We are learning, growing, changing, and serving together with you! Who are the youth in your congregation? What are they up to? Get to know them! We are a lot of fun ... and we are doing God's Work with Our Hands every day!"

Thanks be to God for the opportunity to gather as the people of the Western Iowa Synod ELCA, to worship, deliberate, learn, celebrate and break bread together! And thanks to you for your attendance at the 2010 synod assembly. Your time and participation are greatly appreciated.

## Assembly Offering

To date, assembly offerings total \$7,890 which will be split between Lutheran Services in Iowa and the Siouxland Lutheran Mission Center.

Many assembly-goers brought in-kind offerings of canned goods and used clothing, linens and kitchen items. The food donations will go to several outreach organizations in the Sioux City area. The other in-kind donations will go to The Mission of the Messiah, an outreach ministry of the Western Iowa Synod.

Several used laptops were donated for use in our Companion Synod, the Southern Diocese of Tanzania, and folks gave \$635 to the Companion Synod Well Project as they picked up their drinking mugs for use during assembly.

The Ten Dollar Textbook for Tanzania project sponsored by the Western Iowa Synod Lutheran Youth Organization has collected \$835 to date.

Thank you for your generosity!



Assembly-goers also had the opportunity to learn about the ELCA Strategy on HIV/AIDS and the Lutheran Malaria Initiative from the Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, ELCA coordinator for both initiatives. Pastor DeGroot-Nesdahl led a forum exploring ways in which we can make a positive difference for those affected by these diseases.

Worship Saturday morning provided the foundation of our time together. As Bishop Last remarked in his sermon, "In the next moments we will gather around the Lord's table ... orthodox and moderate, conservative and not as conserva-



*The youth presence!*  
 Above: Youth on the assembly stage, giving the youth report.  
 Right: A member of the Christian rock band Lightswitch gets a little help from a friend!



The 2010 synod assembly took the following actions on resolutions (a complete text of all resolutions is available in the 2010 Report of the Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel on the synod Web site, [www.wisynod.org](http://www.wisynod.org)):

### **1. Amend the Western Iowa Synod ELCA Constitution**

Amendments to the synod constitution regarding synodically authorized worshiping communities, fidelity bonds, and processes to grant synod assembly voice and vote to retired rostered leaders and rostered leaders on disability or on leave from call.

*Referred to Synod Council*

### **2. Western Iowa Synod 2011 Compensation Guidelines**

Recommended guidelines for the compensation of Western Iowa Synod rostered leaders.

*Adopted*

### **3. Adopt the Budget**

Synod Treasurer Jim Mohn noted the following:

- During **fiscal year 2009**, mission support from Western Iowa Synod congregations was 10% less than was received in the prior fiscal year. Due to the significant reduction in mission support income, the Synod Council authorized several expenditure adjustments: a 3% across the board reduction in all synod employee salaries beginning September 1, 2009; a reduction of mission support sent to churchwide from 49.5% to 43.5%, and an additional emphasis on carefully monitoring all expenditures.
- As part of the **2010 revised budget**, mission support income from congregations is estimated to be \$1,000,000, an anticipated 10% reduction from the 2009 fiscal year. Of the mission support income, 35.1% will be distributed to churchwide. However, *all mission support received above the \$1,000,000 level will be distributed to churchwide* until the total amount distributed reaches a level of 49.75%. At that point, additional mission support received will be shared between churchwide and other agencies and institutions.
- The proposed budget for the **2011 fiscal year** projects an estimated \$1,050,000 in mission support. Of that amount, 37.6% will be distributed to churchwide. Any additional mission support income above \$1,050,000 will be distributed to churchwide.

*Adopted a revised 2010 Western Iowa Synod budget of \$1,172,362 and a proposed 2011 Western Iowa Synod budget of \$1,221,282.*

### **4. Authorization of Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach Board**

Authorizes the Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach Board of Di-

rectors to administer funds in the Iowa ELCA Chaplaincy Scholarship Fund.

*Adopted*

### **5. Raising Funds for Lutheran Chaplaincy Scholarships**

Directs the Synod Council to authorize efforts to help fund an ELCA chaplain at the University of Iowa Hospitals in Iowa City.

Amended to delete 'Scholarships' from title

*Adopted as amended*

### **6. Support and Encouragement for Waldorf College**

Encourages prayer and financial support of the Waldorf Foundation by Western Iowa Synod congregations and encourages the ELCA Division of Vocation and Education to continue to recognize Waldorf College as an Historically Lutheran College.

*Adopted*

### **7. Resolution of Unity in Christ**

Amended as follows:

**Whereas**, we believe that the church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, who is our Lord and our wisdom, our righteousness, sanctification and redemption; and

**Whereas**, we are called by the Holy Spirit to become a part of this body of faith by baptism in the Triune Name of God, and are claimed, named and marked as Christ's own people forever; and

**Whereas**, as a church we affirm the Bible as interpreted by the Lutheran Confessions, declaring that we are justified in God's sight not by works of the law, but by God's grace appropriated by faith in our Lord Jesus; therefore be it

**Resolved**, within the 2010 assembly as the Western Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, that we uphold each other as members of the body of Christ, through prayer, speech, gracious and respectful interaction, whether in agreement or disagreement of the topics we consider.

*Adopted as amended*

### **8A. A Resolution concerning 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Actions Regarding "Report of Ministry Policies"**

Urges the ELCA to reverse the decision adopting "Report on Ministry Policies" and to return to the 1990 "Vision & Expectations" standards for rostered leaders. In addition, rostered leaders will not recognize, officiate at, nor conduct any ceremony with contradicts the understanding of marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman.

*Adopted*

## **Election Results**

### **Synod Secretary**

*Karen Post (Immanuel, Titonka)*

### **Synod Council**

Northwest Conference: *Pastor John Wolf (Bethlehem & Our Savior's, Inwood)*

Lakes Area Conference: *Jana Mathiesen (St. John, Cylinder)*

Youth, Male: *Chad Borchers (St. Paul, Holstein)*

Young Adult, Female: *Amanda Den Beste (Trinity, Sioux City)*

### **Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel**

Little Sioux Conference: *Susan Entrikin (Bethlehem, Cherokee)*

Twin River Valley Conference: *Pastor Jim Davis (Countryside Ministry)*

### **Nominating Committee**

Twin River Valley Conference: *Pastor Jim Zuehls (Christ, Fort Dodge / Washington, Duncombe)*

### **Consultation Committee**

Greater Plymouth Conference: *Mark Juhl (St. Paul, Remsen)*

Sioux City Conference: *Pastor Mark Groves (New Life, Sergeant Bluff)*

### **2011 Churchwide Assembly Members**

Northwest Conference: *David Kuehl (Trinity, Sibley)*

Little Sioux Conference: *No Nomination (young adult, lay female)*

Lakes Area Conference: *Pastor Luther Thoresen (Zion & Lost Island, Ruthven)*

Waldorf Conference: *Karen Post (Immanuel, Titonka)*

Greater Plymouth Conference: *Jeff Neary (St. John, Merrill)*

Twin Lakes Conference: *Pastor Steve Sherer (St. Paul, Manson)*

Knutson-Goldfield Conference: *Christy Van Deventer (First, Algona)*

Twin River Valley Conference: *Pastor Mike Kroona (Trinity, Webster City)*

Sioux City Conference: *Pastor Mark Groves (New Life, Sergeant Bluff)*

Nishna Valley Conference: *Alex Paulsen (St. John, Carroll)*

Council Bluffs Conference: *Pastor Yvonne Marshall (Our Savior's, Council Bluffs)*

Southern Hills Conference: *No Nomination (lay female)*

Person of Color or Language Other than English: *No Nomination*