

# The VISTA *lite*

## DWELLING IN... RENEWAL

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds.*  
Romans 12:2



What are you reading these days? My recent reads: The Culture Map by Erin Meyer; Black Box Thinking by Matthew Sayed; Christians at the Border by M Daniel Carroll; The Jesus Heist by Greg Doyle; Faithful Metrics from Lead; and a little postcard-sized book by my friend and colleague Dave Daubert, titled The Invitational Christian.

Dave starts with a surprising statistic. One in six Americans are part of a church. We often lament about this, but we can celebrate that we have such a mission field to share the good news of God's saving love in Jesus Christ. The opportunities to invite others into a compassionate

community are endless, and we can encourage one another in lives of service and discipleship. Dave's book is great for church councils, evangelism committees and even pastors' study groups to read together.

The other books challenge you to reimagine the church, the mission field, and your part in it. The Invitational Christian is available at [www.Day8Strategies.com](http://www.Day8Strategies.com). Discounts are available for larger quantities. May your words be blessed as you invite and accompany new participants into the life of your congregation. Pastor Judith Spindt

### CELEBRATING THE TIEMANN'S 35 YEARS IN ORDAINED MINISTRY

By Aug. 31—Bishop Tiemann's final day of service as Bishop—he will have served three terms (18 years) as the chief pastor of the synod. His entire public ordained ministry of 35 years was spent in this synod, serving Abiding Savior, Cameron and Holy Ghost, Fredericksburg until his election as the fourth bishop of the synod in 2000. In addition to his work and ministry as Bishop, he has served as a member of the Texas Lutheran University Corporation board and the boards of Wartburg Theological Seminary and Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. The Tiemann Endowment Fund, managed by the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest, has been created to honor the Tiemanns' service and will provide grants into perpetuity for leadership development for lay leaders, deacons and pastors.

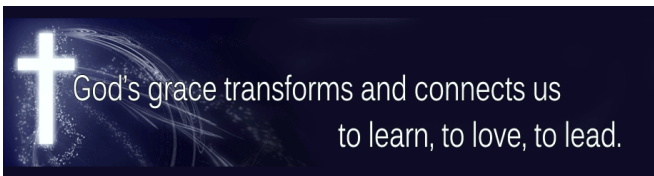


Rev. Jessica Cain was installed on March 18 as pastor of Living Word Lutheran in Buda.

Pastor Jessica is currently also serving as the synod's Children, Youth, and Family Coordinator.



Things are progressing for Pastor Rosemarie Doucette to be called to serve as a Global Mission pastor at ILCO, the Synod's Companion church in Costa Rica. The plan is for her to serve in their ministries and strengthen our connection with them. She says she is fixing up the guestroom and you are welcome! [Contact Rosemarie](#) or [Pastor Sue Briner](#) about how to engage with this new opportunity.





**GET READY FOR ASSEMBLY 2018!**

For everything you need to know about the 2018 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly, please visit [www.swtsynod.org/assembly2018](http://www.swtsynod.org/assembly2018). Here are some highlights:

- 1) Information on Potential Nominees for Bishop will be available March 31. Please read through this information, and note that it will not be available online after April 27 so the assembly can begin with an open, ecclesiastical ballot. The Elections Committee is providing the resources found on [www.swtsynod.org/bishopelection](http://www.swtsynod.org/bishopelection) to help members of the SWT Synod prayerfully reflect on our life together, our hopes for the future, and our upcoming election of a new bishop. This is a strategic moment in which we can act on our new Purpose Statement: "God's grace transforms and connects us to learn, to love, to lead". Use the page to inform and prepare yourself for the deliberations of the assembly.
- 2) The assembly offering this year will go toward the synod's account in Fund for Leaders to support seminarians. For more info see [www.swtsynod.org/programoffering](http://www.swtsynod.org/programoffering)
- 3) All are welcome to participate in worship, and visitors may attend plenary sessions after signing-in as observers. Seating is limited. We also plan to livestream the synod assembly, so stay tuned for details.
- 4) The Bulletin of Reports will initially be available online beginning April 5 with documents added as they are available. The Guidebook App will provide access after that date.

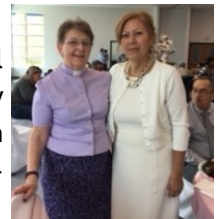
Questions? Contact [info@swtsynod.org](mailto:info@swtsynod.org)

**BUILDING AS COMMUNITY OUTREACH—THREE OPPORTUNITIES**

- 1) Looking to do more community outreach and service this fall in San Antonio? Work together in the Lutheran Cluster for Habitat for Humanity that builds a home together every fall. Last year 6 or 7 congregations raised enough money and volunteers to build half of a house, we are hoping for a whole house! [Contact Trisch Moy from Habitat.](#)
- 2) [The Mission Builder Program of the ELCA](#) helps ELCA congregations and institutions make improvements on their buildings or others to save money on building programs. They need contributions and volunteers. [Contact Director Don Graves.](#)
- 3) Help ELCA youth and adult volunteers build walls for homes for three families in Houston at the ELCA Youth Gathering. The LuMin Network (ELCA Campus Ministry Network) is coordinating the project, asking youth, young adult and adult volunteers to help build and/or donate to the project for supplies and transport. [Contact Jaime Bouzard.](#)

**NEW LATINO MINISTRY IN THE VALLEY**

The Rio Grande Valley is home to a million people, 85 percent of whom are Latino. The Synod Council has approved a proposal by the Synod's DEM, Pastor Judith Spindt, that creates the Rio Grande Valley as a Latino Mission Field. Funding for this project to have a missionary in the Valley will happen with Synod Council support, an ELCA grant and restricted synod funds for Latino ministry. Pastor Alma Morales was called and began her ministry February 1.



The goal is to establish 10 faith formation groups throughout the Valley, some in colonias and others around existing Lutheran congregations, such as Our Savior, McAllen; First, Edinburg; Good Shepherd, Elsa and Trinity, Mission. Pastor Alma is creating outreach curriculum to train leaders for mission outreach. [Contact Pastor Judith](#) to see how your congregation can be a part of this exciting effort.

**APRIL HAPPENINGS**

April 3-5	Pathways to Generosity Conference	Dallas
April 4	Lutheran World Relief Ingathering	Texas Lutheran University
April 21	Healthy Congregations Workshop 1	St John's, San Antonio