



THE SYNOD'S NEWSLETTER

SOUTHWESTERN TEXAS SYNOD
1090 OESTREICH DR.
SEGUIN, TX 78155-3403

COLLEAGUES

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2008

FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

Reflections on Funding the Mission...

Choosing the Right Development Executive

Ok, as a parish pastor I have been there many times. A first unit for a mission congregation, a new sanctuary to accommodate a growing parish, remodeling and expanding the fellowship hall: all facts of life in congregational ministry. Then there are the less exciting challenges, like re-financing the mortgage or raising enough money to repair a flooded basement.

Regardless, I'm always amazed at how 'un-informed' congregational leadership is when it comes to choosing the right development firm to assist them through the fund raising process. Indeed, many congregations make the worst mistake when they decide they can do it on their own and 'save' the expense of hiring a professional. This, to say the least, is a very, very bad idea.

You may never have heard of them, but we in the Lutheran church are blessed to have a professional organization of Development Executives who are knowledgeable and trustworthy. And did I mention . . . they are also Lutheran! No time wasted trying to wade through some exotic theology that is neither Evangelical or faintly familiar with our traditions.

This professional organization is called the Association of Lutheran Development Executives (ALDE). I invite you to go to their web site, which is alde.org and spend some time learning about this group. Ripped from the pages of their web site, here is what they have to say about themselves:

First, why outside counsel:

- Accountability to a third party (Nothing like paying for professional advice to take someone seriously)
- Staying on track, maintaining timeline (just because it's Lent is no excuse to let up!)
- Asking hard questions (Is this really the best course of action? Do you really have the financial horsepower to pull it off?)
- Sharing experience of other successful appeals (There might actually be some experience from other campaigns that you can use in yours!)
- Maintaining process, without taking shortcuts (Ask Herb Miller about this one. In his book *The New Consecration Sunday* he insists on having an outside leader to oversee the process. One of many reasons . . . so the leadership won't take Short Cuts!)

Secondly, questions to ask potential consultants:

- Where have you conducted campaigns in the past, and what has been the result? (It's really nice to see a successful track record!)
- Tell us about a client whom you advised not to move forward in a campaign. (This will make any consultant sweat. It's a tough call to tell a congregation their not ready, but it shows integrity in the process.)
- Privacy concerns (Sure hope the givers don't end up on other 'lists' of potential donors. Whoops . . . your members start getting calls from all sorts of worthy organizations!)
- Fee structure? Time commitment? (Rule # 1 Use a flat fee. NO PERCENTAGES of the financial goal. And by the way, how much time are they going to spend in your congregation and working with the leadership?)
- Professional resources for unique gift opportunities (Would they know what to do with 30 acres of land or a donated silo of corn?)
- Campaign materials (This is important. If materials look as though they are done on the cheap it will reflect on your entire campaign. This is a time to look your best!)

And finally, avoid the Fund Raising myths, even if they are spoken by some of your most faithful members:

- We don't need to hire a Development Consultant (See above!!)
- We need to raise \$25,000? Then we just need to find 50 people to give us \$500 each. (Reality check . . . probably 80% of your goal will be met by 20% of your membership!)
- We don't need to thank our members - their reward is in heaven! (Go to <http://www.elca.org/stewardship/stewardshops/index.html> and look at our resource called StewardShops). One of them is called, *Thanking Six Times: Donor Appreciation*. Main point: *It goes without saying that donors and congregations benefit from heartfelt expressions of gratitude. Unfortunately, our gratitude sometimes does go without saying, and donors are left with a feeling that their congregation does not appreciate their generosity* (StewardShop 103/ELCA Stewardship Resource).

UPCOMING CHURCHWIDE AND SYNOD EVENTS:

- Jan 25 - Synod Staff Retreat, Synod office closed
- Jan 28 - 30—Tri Synodical Theological Conference, Galveston
- Feb. 6 - Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 8 - 10 Synod Council Meeting, San John, San Juan
- Feb. 16 - Lutheran Men in Mission Event, Zion, Fredericksburg
- Feb. 23 - Senior Fest, Bethany, LCMS, Austin
- Feb 29-Mar. 1 - Stewardship Academy Session #2
- March 29 - Lutheran Educators' Day, TLU, Seguin
- April 21-22 - Pre-Retirement Seminar, T BAR M Ranch, New Braunfels
- April 26 - Rio Grande Valley Pre-Assembly Conference, Our Savior, McAllen
- April 27 - Coastal Bend Pre-Assembly Conference, Holy Cross, Rockport
- May 4 - Pre-Assembly Conferences
Austin Conf. - Salem, Austin
Hill Country Conference-Grace, Bandera
San Antonio Conference - Hope, San Antonio

INSTALLATION & ORDINATIONS OF THE SYNOD:

Transfers Out

Rev. Ernie Hinojosa to North Carolina Synod

Transfer In

Rev. Daryl Knox from Greater Milwaukee Synod

Installations

**Mar. 2nd—Lord of Life, Austin
Rev. David Seddelmeyer**

**SOUTHWESTERN TEXAS SYNOD
1090 OESTREICH DR.
SEGUN, TX 78155-3403**

**Phone: 830-379-9900
Fax: 830-379-9990**

COLLEAGUES NEWSLETTER
ON THE WEB!
WWW.SWTSYNOD.ORG/
PUBLICATIONS & NEWSLETTERS/
COLLEAGUES-ISSUES

CHECK WAS IT NEW ON THE WEBSITE!

WE HAVE 'ONLINE' REGISTRATION GOING ON NOW FOR
OUR LUTHERAN EDUCATORS' DAY EVENT, MARCH
29TH. SIGN UP NOW!

SEE THE NEWEST PICTORAL DIRECTORY OF OUR ROS-
TERED LEADERS. IF YOU DO NOT FIND YOUR PICTURE
PLEASE SEND ONE FOR THE FILE! CONTACT CARRIE
BLANK, DATABASE MANAGER, CBLANK@STSYNOD.ORG
THANK YOU!

AS YOU REVIEW OUR NEW SYNOD WEBSITE, PLEASE FEEL
FREE TO COMMENT.

SEND ANY AND ALL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO
INFO@SWTSYNOD.ORG
THANK YOU!

CHECK FOR THE LATEST EVENTS OF THE SYNOD ON THE

**2008 Southwestern Texas
Synod Assembly
May 31 - June 1st
Texas Lutheran University
Seguin, Texas**

Please note that the mileage rate set by the IRS for 2008 is 50.5 cents per mile.

New benefit option for pastors specializing in called interim ministry

Starting Jan. 1, 2008, pastors serving this church through called interim ministry will have the option to continue disability coverage at their own expense while between assignments

Forms to elect continuing disability coverage will be available later this year. Eligible interim pastors who are between assignments when this new benefit becomes available must apply by **March 1, 2008**. For more information, [contact the Board of Pensions Service Center](#).

SEMINARIES OFFER VARIOUS PROGRAMS

Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia will host a weekend for young adults (18-30) who are exploring a call to ministry. Dates are February 22-24, 2008. Seminary covers housing and meals. Assistance with transportation is available by request. Info contact www.ltsp.edu, admissions@ltsp.edu, or 800-286.4616. Please spread the word about this opportunity. Note also that many of our other seminaries have similar weekend visitations.

Wartburg Theological Seminary has a CONFERENCE ON MINISTRY: "CONSIDERING YOUR CALL" March 8th-10th, 2008. call 1.800.CALL-WTS or admissions@wartburgseminary.edu.

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago will host a program for "Youth in Mission" *Serving Christ in the World* June 14th—July 6th, 2008. The program includes one and a half weeks at LSTC, one week at the Lutheran Center in Mexico City, and a newly added 3 days of immersion in Texas with the Lutheran Seminary Program of the Southwest. Applications for this program can be found on our website at www.lstc.edu/yim/. The application deadline is February 20, 2008.

ELCA World Hunger CD-ROM

The popular CD offers six PowerPoint presentations ranging in length from two to 12 minutes. Call ELCA Resource Information Service (RIS) at 800.638.3522 to request a free copy. Download the presentations by visiting www.elca.org/hunger/basics.

UPDATE ON THE MEGAHANS!

The Rev. Michael Megahan, and his wife Jo Ann, are currently serving as Bible translators in Botswana, Africa. **They will in Texas through mid-April.** If you would like to have them come and share their ministry, please contact them at mand-jmegahan@botsnet.bw or call Michael at 612.481.8503 or Joann at 612.481.8516. They would appreciate your support in prayer and gifts.

2008 "Vision Projects" Grant Applications received:

The purpose of the "Vision Project" funding is for all partners in the synod to participate in Forming Faithfulness. Sixteen (16) grant applications were received by the deadline, January 15, 2008. The applicants are as follows:

Lutheran Social Services of the South, Inc.
Messiah Lutheran Church
Texas Impact
Southwestern Texas Synod (2)
St. Andrew Lutheran Church (2)
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Trinity Lutheran Church
Rev. Kristine Franke Hill

The Guadalupe Valley Christian Counseling Center
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Lutheran Campus Ministry of San Antonio
Lutheran Seminary Program of the Southwest
Rita Carlson & Dorothy Chesley
Austin Conference Beltway Churches

BISHOP'S CALENDAR

Jan 25 - Synod Staff Retreat, Synod Office Closed
Jan 28-30 Tri Synod Theological Conference, Galveston
Jan. 30-Feb. 1— Rev. Ann Svennungsen inauguration and installation, TLU, Seguin
Feb. 3 - Preach & Preside, Our Savior, Three Rivers
Feb. 8-10 - Synod Council Meeting, St. John, San Juan
Feb. 18-20 - Candidacy Assignments, Chicago
Feb. 21 - 3 Bishops Meeting with Adm. Asst., TLGC, Houston
Feb. 23 - Senior Fest, Bethany LC, LCMS, Austin
Mar. 2 - Preach & Preside, First, Orange Grove