



# Reformation Reporter



The Monthly Newsletter of Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

www.reformation-lutheran.net

**JANUARY 2010**

## The Christ Bell

### THE BELL

#### I KNOW WHO I AM

I am God's child. (John 1:12)

I am Christ's friend. (John 15:15)

I am united with the Lord. (1 Cor 6:17)

I am bought with a price. (1 Cor 6:19-20)

I am a saint (set apart for God). (Eph 1:1)

I am a personal witness of Christ. (Acts 1:8)

I am the salt & light of the earth. (Matt 5:13-14)

I am a member of the body of Christ. (1 Cor 12:27)

I am free forever from condemnation. (Rom 8:1-2)

I am a citizen of Heaven. I am significant. (Phil 3:20)

I am free from any charge against me. (Rom 8:31-34)

I am a minister of reconciliation for God. (2 Cor 5:17-21)

I have access to God through the Holy Spirit. (Eph 2:18)

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. (Eph 2:6)

I cannot be separated from the love of God. (Rom 8:35-39)

I am established, anointed, sealed by God. (2 Cor 1:21-22)

I am assured all things work together for good. (Rom 8:28)

I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit. (John 15:16)

I may approach God with freedom and confidence. (Eph 3:12)

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (Phil 4:13)

I am the branch of the true vine, a channel of His life. (John 15:1-5)

I am God's temple (1 Cor 3:16). I am complete in Christ. (Col 2:10)

I am hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). I have been justified. (Romans 5:1)

I am God's co-worker (1 Cor 3:9; 2 Cor 6:1). I am God's workmanship. (Eph 2:10)

I am confident that the good works God has begun in me will be perfected. (Phil 1:5)

I have been redeemed and forgiven (Col 1:14). I have been adopted as God's child. (Eph 1:5)

### I BELONG TO GOD.

*Do you know  
Who you are?*

*The Epiphany of Our Lord  
Matthew 2:1-12*



*The Baptism of Our Lord  
Luke 3:21-22*



## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual congregational Meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup>** following the **11:00am** service. There will only be **one** worship service on this Sunday. The worship service and congregational meeting will be led by a pastoral representative from the Maryland-Delaware Synod. All members are encouraged to attend this important meeting.

## CALL COMMITTEE BACK IN ACTION

The Call Committee has been given multiple candidates to review from the Synod office. The Committee is in the process of conducting candidate interviews during the month of January. The Call Committee is excited to be back at work in the search for our next pastoral shepherd. The Committee will provide a progress report at the January 31<sup>st</sup> congregational meeting. Please hold the committee in your prayers.



## **SYNOD BISHOP TO BE ELECTED IN JUNE 2010**

The Rev. Mark Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in consultation with the Delaware-Maryland Synod Council, has canceled the special meeting of the Synod Assembly, scheduled for January 2010, at which a new bishop was to have been elected. Instead, the election will take place at the regular Synod Assembly, set for June 10-12, 2010. The reason for the cancellation boils down to a single concern: who will be able to vote in the election for bishop.

This is the first time in the history of the Delaware-Maryland Synod ELCA, formed in 1988, that the process for a special assembly has been put into place. The process was examined thoroughly as outlined in the synod Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, and appropriate people from the ELCA churchwide staff were consulted. All parties were satisfied that the constitutional requirements would be met by the synod's initial plan to allow voting by substitutes and by rostered leaders\* and congregations which had not attended the May 2009 assembly.

In mid-November, however, it was determined conclusively that previously undiscovered provisions in the synod's Articles of Incorporation prohibited anyone from voting at the special assembly unless that person had been present as a voting member at the last regular assembly in May 2009. Not even substitutes would be allowed if voting members from May were unable to be present in January at the special assembly. Rostered leaders new to the synod since May would not be able to vote, and congregations which had not sent voting members in May would not be allowed to send voting members to the special assembly.

Registrations for the special assembly were still arriving at the synod office when the restrictions were discovered. At that point, one-fifth of those who had registered for the special assembly would have been prohibited from voting in the election for bishop. Of those, 22 were clergy and two were lay rostered leaders. Additional registrations were expected to come in, some of which probably would not be allowable either.

### ***Extensive discussions followed.***

Synod Council Vice President Yolanda Tanner (St. Philip's Church, Baltimore), members of the Synod Council Executive Committee, Interim Bishop Ted Schneider, various synod staff members and members of the Special Assembly Planning Team began urgent discussions among themselves and with ELCA churchwide staff and lawyers from the Office of the Secretary and the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The discovery of the restrictions had coincided with the Synod Council's annual November retreat, so council members had discussed the situation as well.

Throughout the discussions, the goal was always to allow all rostered leaders and all congregations to participate fully in the election for bishop. Various legal avenues of dealing with the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation were explored at length, but, eventually, it was determined that the only option that would allow all rostered leaders and all congregations to participate was canceling the special assembly and moving the election to the regular assembly in June, at which time a new voting body would be constituted without any restrictions as to attendance at previous assemblies.

Questions have been raised about the cost to the synod of canceling the assembly. The synod signed a contract in early September with the Inn & Conference Center in College Park, Md. As stipulated in that

contract, the synod will forfeit between \$37,000 and \$38,000 for the cancellation. However, canceling also results in a savings of between \$60,000 and \$70,000 for synod congregations whose registration fees will be refunded completely or maintained as a deposit for registration fees for the June assembly.

More to the point, canceling the special assembly (with its newly discovered restrictions on participation) and moving the election to the regular assembly in June will result in a bishop elected by the broadest possible representation of the synod's rostered leaders and congregations. After carefully considering the financial ramifications of canceling the assembly, the Synod Council, synod staff, and ELCA staff concluded that broadening the base of voting members for the election far outweighed other considerations.

### ***Should the transition period be lengthened?***

Another area of concern was the lengthening of the transition period. From the very beginning of the process put in motion by Bishop Jerry Knoche's retirement announcement, the synod was advised by the ELCA to keep the transition period short so as to minimize the disruption to the synod's ongoing mission and ministry. That's why the special assembly was called for January by Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, in consultation with the Synod Council, so that the new bishop could take office in March, with the transition period lasting about five months.

That factor, too, was given lengthy consideration before the special assembly was canceled. Again, it was a question of balance. Would the synod's mission be better served by a shorter transition and a bishop elected by a limited group, or by a lengthier transition and a bishop elected by a more representative group? The answer, arrived at after extensive discussions and much prayer, was that the synod's mission would be strengthened more by an election process involving all rostered leaders and all congregations.

Bishop Schneider has agreed to continue as interim bishop until the new bishop begins September 1st.

## **A LETTER FROM SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT YOLANDA TANNER**

*December 9, 2009*

*Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:*

During this season of Advent we are reminded that we live always in expectant hope. For those of us in the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, much of that expectant hope has been rooted in the anticipation of a new bishop and a renewed focus on our mutual mission and ministry. However, after much prayerful consideration, our Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, in consultation with the Synod Council, has elected to cancel the special meeting of the Synod Assembly scheduled for January 15-16, 2010. We will continue with our existing transitional ministry through our regularly scheduled Synod Assembly in June 2010, at which time the election of a new bishop will occur. The new bishop will start Sept. 1st, as determined by our constitution (S8.52), with the existing transitional ministry continuing until then.

One of the Synod Council's priorities in this time of transition has been the inclusion of the widest possible voting representation at the assembly where, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a new bishop will be lifted up for this synod. When we first announced our plan for a special meeting of the Synod Assembly, we acted in good faith upon the belief that we could, in fact, include voting members from each congregation within the synod. A plan was in place with a set of rules of procedure to accommodate our goals.

# Birthdays & Anniversaries

Recently, however, we discovered that our plan is specifically prohibited by the synod's Articles of Incorporation. To be in compliance with the synod's governing documents, only those persons who were seated at the regular meeting of the assembly earlier this year could be allowed to vote at the special meeting. Thus, of those who had registered already for the assembly, one-fifth would be ineligible to vote, including 22 members of the clergy and two rostered lay leaders who had not attended the regular assembly. In addition, some congregations, whose voting members had been present in May but were unable to attend the special assembly, asked to send substitute voting members but would not have been allowed to do so. Some congregations which had failed to participate in the assembly in May wished to send voting members to the special assembly but would not have been allowed to do so.

The Synod Council has prayerfully concluded that our synod would be best served by providing opportunities for the fullest possible participation in the important selection of a bishop. This situation also points out to us that every meeting of the Synod Assembly is valuable, not just the ones where we elect a bishop. Knowing this, we pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire each member of the clergy, each lay rostered leader, and lay voting members from each congregation within the synod to be seated at each assembly we hold.

Although each member of the Synod Council is aware that this decision extends the time of transition, we trust that the Spirit of God continues to be at work in and among our people. In expectant hope, we await the Spirit's revelation of our new bishop. The Synod Council and I wish you and your congregation a blessed Advent.

Your sister in Christ,  
Yolanda Tanner

<b>HAPPY BIRTHDAY</b>		15	Ian Smith
		16	Dixie Johnson
1	Bobby Capece	16	Donna Johnson
2	Neal Richard	18	Charles Johnson
4	Daniel Haggerty	18	Marty Carlino
4	Matthew Schlegel	19	Robert Van Gorder
4	Richard Hascup	21	Nicklas Capece
7	Andrew Ranney	21	Sandra Wachter-Myers
7	Gail Steward		
7	Jan Barbier	23	Stephanie Kehler
8	Richard Hayward	24	Nancy Raihall
8	Cynthia Peterson	25	Jennifer Miller
9	Diane Fleming	25	Peg Steele
9	Kim Short	25	Pete Hutter
9	Melinda Dingess	26	Jacob Miller
9	Melyssa Ryan	26	Pat Batchelor
10	James Fleming	27	Richard Luiken
11	Daniel McPherson	29	Laura Hobbs
12	Brooke McKenzie	29	Wendy Sue Weimer
12	Meghan Hayward	30	Bret Fleming
13	Carole Warrington	30	Simon Mumford
13	Kristin Smith	31	Kenneth Bock
13	Pamela Ferguson		
13	Scott Allen Fleming		
14	James Bahder	18	Mr. & Mrs. Terry Sohn
14	Scott Steele		

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

## WOMEN'S DEVEOTIONAL GROUP

The Women's Deveotional Group will meet on the second Tuesday in January. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 12th. We will meet at the church from 6:30pm - 7:30pm.

## TEEN BIBLE STUDY

The youth group continues to sponsor a Bible Study for those ages 14 - 18. It is held on every WEDNESDAY from 7:00pm - 8:00pm at the home of Neal Richard, 628 Beechwood Ave., Milford, DE.

## KNIT & PRAY

The Knit n' Pray group continues to meet on Tuesdays at 11:00am. You are welcome to join them or pick up a pattern for the various projects and work on your own as your schedule allows.

## Women of the ELCA

### WELCA NEWS

Afternoon meetings on the first Thursday of each month at 1:00pm. September - June luncheon meetings are held at 12 Noon.

#### 2009-2010 Officers:

President - Joan Van Gorder  
Vice President - Alice Daino  
Secretary - Connie Howell  
Treasurer - Dot Willis  
Devotions - Maggie Haggerty  
Program - Helene Reed

#### 2009 - 2010 Meeting Hostesses (Revised):

January 7th - Joan Van Gorder  
302 South DuPont Blvd.

February 4th - Marge Reichhold, 909 West Lane  
Wed., March 3rd - Provide Soup for Lenten Soup Supper, meeting follows, Renate McKenzie provides refreshments for the meeting

April 1st - Alice Daino, 24 Fairway Street

May 6th - Birthday Luncheon at Noon, Location TBA  
June 3rd - Dottie Lofland, Covered Dish Luncheon at Noon, 9147 Shore Drive, Prime Hook Beach

Cut and Save

## Reformation's Email Prayer Chain

is a group of people who have agreed to set aside prayer time for specific people as requested. These people are not necessarily on the public worship prayer list and remain on the network list for one month. If you wish to include someone on the prayer list or if you would like to be part of this vital ministry, please e-mail Sharon Trotman, our church administrative assistant, at [rlcsecr19963@aol.com](mailto:rlcsecr19963@aol.com) or call her at the church office at 422-9117. If you wish to participate in the prayer chain, you may contact coordinator Trish Boyer at [2trish@comcast.net](mailto:2trish@comcast.net) or phone her at 422-3483.

The following list is used for public worship on Sunday Mornings. If you would like to add someone or there is someone on the current list whose condition indicates that we could remove his or her name, please call the church office.

David Snyder	Jim Reed	Joe Myers
Voshell Hutchins	Bill Loderhose	Donna Thurston
Susie Bennett	Ronnie Gibson	Joyce Emory Perry
Linda Plummer	Bea Strahle	Joe Ouge
Barbara Houser	David Blackwelder	Bonnie Russell
Harry Benham	Madi Dodge	Karen Oldland
Jo DuBois	Kim Smith	Jackie Kates
Mike Pearson	Joan Fetterman	Corinne Cresson
George Sharp	Sue Burkett	Todd Hannah
Vera Gregg	Leo Grove	Helene Reed
Marybrook Brown	Marty Martell	Doris Bryant
Mary Belding	Bill Emory	Sam Brewer
Bill Warren	David	Arlene
Charles Johnson	Kim	Sherry
Ted Ressler	Peachie Wachter	Lisa Thomas
Melissa	Maggie Haggerty	Robert Stout
Steven	Nick	Alex Sammak
Gil Faber	Jo Lee Callaway	Sally Brown
Debbie	The Call Committee	

Into this shadowed world light shines and joyous voices sing. Glad tidings cheer the heart and liberate hope. "A child has been born for us, a son given to us" (Isaiah 9:6). God our Savior has appeared! God's saving goodness and loving kindness have arrived in Jesus, the Word made flesh. Though hidden in the humility of a manger, and later in the scandal of the cross, God's promise is being made good in plain sight for all to see, in a life of generous mercy, richly poured out for all. "See, your salvation comes," the prophet wrote (Isaiah 62:11). God's faithfulness to God's promises calls us to a new hope, for the hope of eternal life is an inheritance that we can enjoy today in lives of generosity and compassion, joy and peace.

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson  
Presiding Bishop

"But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us . . ." (Titus 3:4-5a)



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

# The Reporter

The Monthly Newsletter of  
Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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Church Office: PH (302) 422-9117; FAX (302) 422-9184  
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## GOD'S MISSION FOR US

Through God's grace, we commit ourselves as disciples  
to heal hurts, to teach God's word,  
to discover God's joys, and share the light,  
love, and peace of Jesus Christ.

### JANUARY 2010

#### OUR CHURCH LEADERS

Head of the Church: *Jesus, the Christ*

President: Neal Richard 265-2115

Vice President: Collins Batchelor 242-9955

Secretary: Susan Emory 422-3115

Treasurer: Lisa Mallard 422-2844

#### Council Members:

Gary Johnson 398-4744

Dale Leyden 856-6404

Lezlie Eustis 422-3742

Theda Blackwelder 945-2775

Jill Racz 645-0969

Todd Hannah 284-0335

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