



Rocky Mountain Synod Events

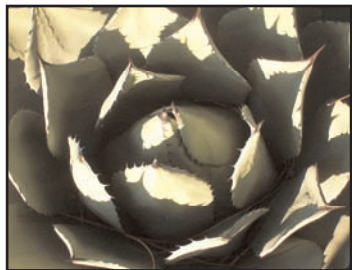
Assembly in El Paso, Texas: April 30 – May 2

Milagro de la Frontera is the *Miracle of the Border*.

Registration for the El Paso Assembly, April 30 to May 2, 2009, is underway. In order to secure appropriate travel arrangements, every congregation should be identifying their voting members as soon as possible.

Register now by visiting www.rmselca.org/elpaso.

The synod office has secured some group reservation opportunities departing from Denver on United Airlines (the only nonstop flights). You may secure those reservations on the assembly online registration form. This will be a “different kind of assembly.”



Senior High Youth Gathering: November 21–23

The High School Gathering theme is “Fear Not” and will take place at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, November 21-23. Be sure to begin the process of obtaining background checks for adults who are attending.

Middle / Junior High School Youth Gathering: January 16–18

The Middle School/ Junior High School Youth Gathering will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Colorado Springs January 16 - 18, 2009. “Eyewitness” will be returning to provide the music and Mike Carlson, an ELCA pastor and member of the Youth and Family Institute will be the speaker. In addition, the Planning Team is adding Saturday classes for the Rocky Mountain Synod adults.

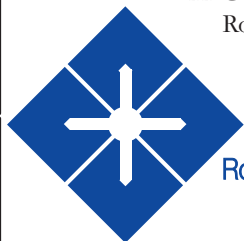
2009 Theological Conference: January 26 – 29

The registration deadline for the 2009 Rocky Mountain Synod Theological Conference is December 29. The conference will take place in Colorado Springs at the Embassy Suites and nearby Episcopal church. Information is at www.rmselca.org/tc. Our presenters this year are:

Larry L. Rasmussen, emeritus, Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY

Ann Graham Brock, Iliff School of Theology, Denver, CO

Roland Martinson, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN



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Let us joyfully live here in the West

We are grateful for the beauty of creation and concerned about justice

Let us joyfully live here in the West. We are blessed to live in a synod where the mountainous spine of the continent runs majestically from northern Wyoming to El Paso. The great Colorado River flows from alpine meadow west through the deserts of Utah and joins the Green River in its march to the sea. The Rio Grande and the North Platte water the lowlands.

The great high plains slowly and gently rise to greet the mountains. The high deserts of Utah and New Mexico harbor an enduring and often harsh beauty. All these places are full of life. In this wonderful geography, we are blessed to live and called to be stewards of these great gifts.

But even this geography, these lands, can be abused and used up. Our ecological footprint can be heavy. People of faith in many places are reclaiming a ministry of creation care based out of the biblical idea that the Earth is the Lord's, not ours and that we are stewards, not only for ourselves, but for our great grandchildren and for all which God has made.

Why care? Why act? There are three foci to our creation care: the world is a gift to be received, not a possession. Two, we are part of the web of all life, i.e. our appropriate response to this beautiful world is humility. Humility is simply the admission that we have been made from the earth and to the earth we shall return. Three, we called to have compassion for all that is, even as we have been shown compassion. The fate of the earth and its creatures and its people is our fate. We are bound together.

So let us joyfully live here in the West—from the windswept plains of Wyoming to deserts and arroyos of Texas and New Mexico, from the top of Colorado fourteeners to the Great Salt Lake—as baptized people, grateful for the world's beauty and concerned about justice for all of God's creation.

—Pastor Jeffrey Loudon, Rocky Mountain Synod Creation Care Chair

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“Zero Waste”

Trinity Lutheran Church, Boulder, CO, discovers it's not impossible



Michelle Hamernik
Youth and adults at Trinity Lutheran Church, Boulder, CO, enjoy a “Zero Waste” Halloween Carnival.

A “Zero Waste” event is one at which nothing or as little as possible is thrown in the trash and ends up in a landfill, but rather everything is either recycled or composted.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Boulder, CO, is one of several congregations in Boulder County which recently hosted a Zero Waste fellowship event as part of a promotional campaign aimed at

helping congregations be more faithful creation stewards through the practices they use when holding such events.

Trinity’s annual Halloween Carnival, as well as fellowship events in several other area congregations, was turned into a Zero Waste event with the assistance of Colorado Interfaith Power and Light (COIPL) and the Boulder County Division of Resource Conservation.

Meal service supplies, including plates, bowls, cups, napkins, and flatware, were provided from Eco-cycle, a nonprofit organization which helps Boulder County residents recycle everything from electronics to tennis shoes and bicycle tires. The meal service supplies are made from non-tree vegetable sources and can be returned after use to Eco-cycle for composting. Unlike your backyard compost heap, all food scraps including dairy, meat, and even bones can be composted through this method.

“This was a great event for our congregation, especially since the Carnival is hosted by our Youth Group for families with younger children. The Youth assisted in explaining where everything went and how the Zero Waste program works,” said Melanie Nehls Burow, youth sponsor at Trinity. “They were helping to educate both the children and their parents about how we can better live out our faith and help save the environment.”

Colorado Interfaith Power and Light received a grant from the Division of Resource Conservation to coordinate the events. The Rev. Nelson Bock, an ELCA pastor and COIPL Program Director, coordinated the congregational Zero Waste fellowship promotion. COIPL is part of a national movement of IPL affiliates dedicated to engendering a religious response to global warming. Learn more at www.coipl.org.

Green Grants provide seed money for creation care

Ten Rocky Mountain Synod congregations submitted 11 proposals for green ministries. The recipients and their designated projects are:

Lutheran Campus Ministry, UNM, \$150 for a green garden
Four Winds/House for All Sinners and Saints, Denver, \$300 for an eco audit
St. Luke's, Albuquerque, \$300 for an Environmental Conference
Immanuel Lutheran, Greeley, \$300 for an eco audit
Our Savior's, Casper, \$150 food ministry containers
Good Shepherd, Glenwood Springs, \$170, refitting light fixtures
Mt. Tabor, Salt Lake City, \$300 for an eco audit
St. Paul, Albuquerque, \$170 xeriscaping
St. Matthew, Aurora, \$300 for an eco audit

The grants were received by large and small congregations in four states, and they support a wide variety of projects. All the congregations are asked to give the synod stories of their ministries after their projects are completed. Thank you to the people of the Rocky Mountain Synod for the offerings collected at the assembly which made these green grants possible.

First RMS video conference reveals new potential

While 100 participants gathered together at Bethany Lutheran Church, Cherry Hills, Village, CO, others in El Paso, TX, and Albuquerque, NM, joined with them on October 11 by way of live video conference.

Joanne Kendrick, who participated in El Paso, wrote, “What a great way for those of us not in Denver to share in the day. We so often feel left out! The future potential of video conferencing is great. I really think the use of this medium will help

bridge the gap that exists between Denver and 'everywhere else' in the synod.” In addition to El Paso and Albuquerque, we are now working on a connection in Salt Lake City, UT, in Casper, WY, and a site in western Colorado.



Dale Horky
While Pastor Jim Gonia, Atonement, Denver, speaks at the Hunger Summit in Denver, he is viewed in a live video conference simultaneously in El Paso and Albuquerque.