



Synod Youth Respond to ELCA Malaria Initiative



\$58,000 was pledged toward the ELCA Malaria Initiative at the Rocky Mountain Synod Senior High Youth Gathering (SHYG) in Estes Park in November. 250 individuals and 30 congregational youth groups pledged to support the ELCA's work to stop the devastating effects of Malaria. The challenge was initiated by the synod's Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO).

Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, a keynote speaker at the synod's gathering,

inspired participants to support the initiative through the stories of the many places he has traveled and people he has met, representing the ELCA. The LYO sent participants down the mountain with the message, "This event does not end on Sunday morning, but continues as we go home and work individually and as youth groups to raise what we have pledged."

The amount individuals and youth groups collect towards their pledge needs to be reported to each congregation's young person serving as the Malaria Initiative coordinator. The funds should be given to the congregation's treasurer who should in turn forward the money to the Rocky Mountain Synod, noting its designation for the Malaria Initiative. Ideas of how to raise the money and reports of what has been raised will be posted at www.rmslyo.org. Youth and congregations who did not participate in the SHYG are encouraged to join in pledging and raising money for Malaria.

2010 Assembly will focus on the Book of Faith

The 2010 Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly will take place May 27-29 at the downtown Denver Hyatt Regency. Voting members and visitors will be invited to "open scripture and join the conversation" as we rally around the ELCA's Book of Faith initiative. Special guest will be Dr. Diane Jacobson, Book of Faith director.

Participants will have the opportunity to experience how God's Word and our story intersect through workshops, excursions, presentations, and discussions.



Rocky Mountain Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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Loaves and fishes are still being multiplied

Keep stumbling over that statistic. It's haunting and it doesn't ever seem to improve. Nineteen percent—that's one in five—of those under age 18 in this country "live in poverty." Children are 25% of our total population, but 35% of the poor population. The percentages leap among Hispanic and African-American groups, with over 30% of children living in poverty.

These numbers come from the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan. I'm sure the statistics vary a bit, depending on which expert or institution is doing the research. But if you are one of those statistics who "live in poverty," it means you probably go to school without breakfast, and maybe have little or nothing for supper. In those circumstances, it's difficult to concentrate on any subject, including statistics.



Synod Council proposes constitution revision

On November 30, 2009, the Rocky Mountain Synod Council announced a series of proposed revisions to the RMS constitution for the purpose of clarifying our mission and aligning our constitution with our priorities and purpose.

The proposal will be brought before the voting members of the 2010 Synod Assembly in Denver, May 27-29, 2010.

A summary and the proposed revisions may be downloaded and viewed at rmselca.org/assembly

The ELCA World Hunger Program provides nearly 400 grants to support domestic anti-hunger programs and supports programs in more than 60 countries through ELCA Global Mission. ELCA Global Mission distributes grants to companion churches and partner organizations such as the Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, and Lutheran World Relief, Baltimore.

Personally, I contribute regularly to the World Hunger Program because I don't think any child anywhere should be hungry. And because I believe the way you change statistics is one child at a time. Loaves and fishes are still being multiplied...as biblical statistics go.

— Bishop Allan Bjornberg

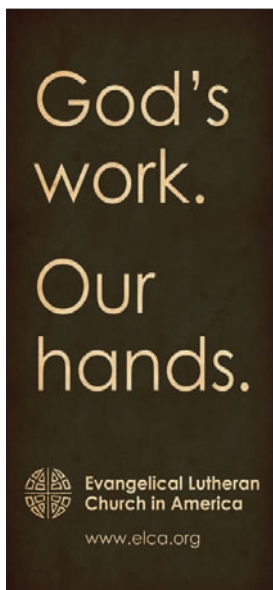
Believe that we are agents of hope!

ELCA World Hunger has the tools to alleviate hunger with your offerings

While watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, I was struck by the single word emblazoned across the department store: **Believe.**

This Macy's campaign anchored on the word "believe" got me thinking: What helps us believe? How do we keep a sense of faithful anticipation in this year when doubt and uncertainty seem ever at the surface? For me, the answer is the church and its witness.

I believe because of our history. Thirty-five years ago, in times with challenges not unlike these, Lutherans joined together to birth what is now ELCA World Hunger. Since then the proportion of the world's population who live with insufficient food has decreased dramatically. Current reports that hunger and poverty are on the rise remind us that there is still much to accomplish. But, working with the hunger appeal's trusted



partners, we know how to be God's agents of hope in the midst of this challenge.

I believe because of the future.

Ashley, who is in seventh-grade, was in church when she heard about the increase of hunger in the world. In

response she collected quarters, over 20,000! I know many youth in the Rocky Mountain Synod have responded in similar generous ways.

I believe because of those who are near. Walk into any ELCA congregation and you will find activities focused on sharing food and assistance with people in need. Rocky Mountain Synod congregations generously support local food banks and community programs AND continue their commitment to the hunger appeal. Domestic Hunger Grants are supporting relief and development work in every state of the synod.

I believe because of those who are far away. A year ago hunger and cholera threatened the lives of tens of thousands in Zimbabwe. Thanks to the generosity of congregations and individuals who contribute to ELCA World Hunger, we were able to respond in word

and deed. Check out the brief video of the results at www.elca.org/hunger.

ELCA World Hunger has the tools to bring hope and comfort, but our ability to do so depends entirely on the financial response of congregations and members.

The commitment of the Rocky Mountain Synod to the World Hunger Appeal is one of the strongest of any synod in the ELCA. Your faithfulness has inspired many in the church to act. But most importantly, you have brought the good news of hope and help in a time when it has been sorely needed. Your dollars make it clear that you

believe in the light that has come and continues to shine.

I cherish with anticipation what great ministries will take shape in the coming year. Acting together, responding generously to the promptings of the Spirit, we are the witnesses who bring that message of light shining in the darkness, encouraging the world to believe.

Macy's may be able to create an impressive graphic, but it is the church, hands down, that has the substance in which we can all believe.

*The Rev. Daniel Rift, Director
ELCA World Hunger Appeal*

RMS Hunger Network Core Team exists to help YOU!

The Rocky Mountain Synod's Hunger Network Core Team works with congregations and other groups in the synod to raise awareness about the reality of poverty and hunger around the world and around the corner and, quite simply, to raise money for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

If you want to be part of the network of congregations or you want to request someone to consult, teach, or preach, contact Carol McDivitt at mcdivitt@mindspring.com or 970.669.4090.

RMS Roster Changes

OCTOBER 2009

The Rev. Richard W. Bachman from North/West Lower Michigan Synod to Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Fort Morgan, Colorado 10/1/2009.

The Rev. Kenneth M. Vogler, from Pastor, Valley Lutheran Church, Los Lunas, NM to Retired 10/1/2009.

Sandra Templeton, AIM from On Leave From Call to Retired 10/1/2009.

The Rev. Larry Foreman, Pastor retired from Minneapolis Area Synod to Rocky Mountain Synod 10/6/2009.

Elisabeth Smotherman, AIM On Leave From Call to removed from roster 10/8/2009.

The Rev. James Rasmussen, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Fort Collins, Colorado, Deceased 10/16/2009.

The Rev. Annemarie Burke, Pastor, from Mount

Tabor Lutheran Church, Salt Lake City, UT to Associate Pastor Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Louisville, CO 10/25/2009.

NOVEMBER 2009

The Rev. Sue Svanoe from pastor All Saints Lutheran Church, Aurora, CO to Retired, 11/1/2009.

The Rev. Seokhwan Jeong from Candidate to Pastor, Korean Lutheran Church, Colorado Springs, CO 11/1/2009.

The Rev. Michael Bastian, Pastor, from New England Synod to Community of Joy Lutheran Church, Rio Rancho, NM 11/16/2009.

The Rev. Paul Schairer, Pastor retired, from Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod to Rocky Mountain Synod 11/19/2009.

The Rev. Elena Liliana Stahlberg, from Candidate to Pastor, Highlands Lutheran Church, Denver, CO 11/22/2009.

The Rev. Robert DeYoung, Pastor retired. Deceased 11/26/09

Calendar

JANUARY 11-13

Youth Workers' Retreat
Rainbow Trail

JANUARY 14

Director of Preschools Gathering
Denver, CO

JANUARY 15-17

Middle/Jr. High School Youth Gathering
Colorado Springs, CO

JANUARY 25-28

Theological Conference
Colorado Springs, CO
www.rmselca.org/tc