



Northwestern Minnesota Synod

# Connections

Connecting the Congregational, Synodical, and Churchwide Expressions of the ELCA



## What makes a rural pastor?

By Bishop Rolf Wangberg

Who are rural pastors? What makes them tick? Why does Johnny go back to the farm after having been to the city?

While serving in Roseau, Pastor John was waist deep in water trying to save his collection of unique musical instruments during the flood of 2001. Now, more than five years later, John shared some pearls of wisdom: "These are holy things we do....The more we do the more energy we create....We experience God through people....Laity has to be involved with both the authorship and ownership of ministry....God doesn't mind if you tap your foot a little – he enjoys a good beat."

Kelly Loy is leaving Our Savior's in East Grand Forks to begin a hospital chaplaincy in Boise, Idaho. During the time she was in EGF, Pastor Loy experienced even more deeply the call to chaplaincy. But it wasn't because she was unhappy with congregational ministry. Indeed, she developed a deep love for Our Savior's and its people. And that congregational ministry helped her to realize even more the gifts God had given her for chaplaincy. She will become a chaplain knowing deep in her soul how chaplains can work with congregational pastors and the importance of connecting with patients' congregations.

I tell their stories in a synod where all pastors, all congregations, and all ministries are rural. For many of us, it is the only ministry we know; it is a passionate blending of people living in sparsely populated areas, who have been raised in faith passed from one heart to another, infused with a spirit so holy that they are moved to serve their Lord with all of their heart and soul and mind. Thanks to all pastors called rural who serve with passion and all congregations called rural who work passionately and collegially with such leaders.

## About Our Synod

The Northwestern Minnesota Synod is a geographical designation and a Church arrangement for carrying out the Church's mission. We are part of Region 3 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

*Connections* is a publication of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA designed for congregational use. For more information, contact the synod office:

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[www.nwmnsynod.org](http://www.nwmnsynod.org)

## Celebrating 100 years of Lutheran Campus Ministry

The college years are critical and unusual years. It is in these years of extraordinary growth in knowledge and understanding that meaning, values, commitments and life style are being discovered, tested and molded. It is in this time of self-discovery that one's remaining life is being shaped.



For 100 years, the church in its wisdom has sought to be present with students during this journey. Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota is your congregation on campus. You cannot be there by yourself, so you help provide for campus ministry to be there. And what do you provide **through your prayers and financial gifts?**

- **You** provide a safe, trustworthy community of meaning and faith for students and faculty that is centered in Word and Sacraments.
- **You** provide a mission outpost so that questioning un-churched students, struggling de-churched students, or students simply away from their home congregation might be invited into this community of faith.
- **You** provide resources that assist students in discerning and growing their vocational identity at this crossroad of faith and life.
- **You** provide an environment where students can question, challenge and dig deep for answers that help them shape who they are and are to become as baptized daughters and sons of God.
- **You** provide opportunity for students to discover a call to service, using new found and developed gifts to serve their neighbor, their society, and their world.
- **You** provide opportunity for students to discover a call to leadership, developing able and responsible leaders for church and society, whether serving as lay leaders or pastors and lay professionals.
- **You** keep Christ present in these critical and unique college years and college environments.

LCM has a staffed presence at ten campuses of the U of M and Minnesota State College and University systems. Through your continued prayers and generous financial support, LCMM will remain a vibrant ministry to and with students, faculty and institutions across the state. *At this 100th anniversary of Lutheran Campus Ministry, we thank you for your extra support!*