



Northwestern Minnesota Synod

Connections



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

2007 Northwestern Minnesota
Synod Junior High Youth Gathering:
Marked with the Cross of Christ Forever!



BRANDED

Conferences 2,3,4,5,6

Friday and Saturday,
November 16 and 17, 2007

Conferences 7,8,9,10,11

Saturday and Sunday,
November 17 and 18, 2007

Northern Inn and Bemidji High School, Bemidji,
Minn.

New Print Resource for Youth Now Available

A print resource for senior high youth from the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality will be released in September. "Free in Christ to Care for the Neighbor: Lutheran Youth Talk about Human Sexuality" will be mailed to all ELCA congregations in September and will be available for download at www.elca.org/faithfuljourney. The deadline for youth response forms is December 15, 2007.

Youth Ministry Resources on the ELCA Website

<http://www.elca.org/youth.html>

Studies and discussions on movies:

<http://www.elca.org/youth/reelworld/>

Current issues--Faith Lens:

<http://www.elca.org/youth/faithlens/index.html>

Resource for teaching youth centering prayer, "Prayer Stool Project": <http://www.elca.org/youth/prayerstool.html>

Opportunities for training, continuing education, and certification in youth ministry:

<http://www.elca.org/youth/training.html>

Help for congregational leaders: <http://www.elca.org/youth/helpsheets/index.html>

Ways your congregation can become a Safe Haven for Kids:

<http://www.elca.org/init/safehaven/create.html>

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

Saved to be Sent

By Bishop Lawrence R. Wohlrabe

Just go ahead with what you've been given. You received Christ Jesus, the Master; now live him. You're deeply rooted in him. You're well constructed upon him. You know your way around the faith. Now do what you've been taught....And let your living spill over into thanksgiving. Colossians 2:6ff, from *The Message* by Eugene Peterson.

There is a wonderful rhythm in these words. Can you hear it? It's the rhythm between *receiving* and *living*, being *saved* and being *sent*. It is the rhythm of the precious life we share in Christ Jesus.

First, we receive God's grace through Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Before we ever get into the act, God steps out and rescues us in our waywardness, redeems our lostness, undoes our sickness-unto-death.

When we have Christ, we have God in all God's glory. There's nothing more—there's no one else whom we need to wait for. In Christ we have the fullness of God on our doorsteps. We have all that we will ever need for this life and for the life of the world to come.

First, we receive Christ and are saved. Thank you for calling me to announce this fabulous news as your regional pastor, your bishop. As I take up this new calling I'm very mindful, in the words of Martin Luther, that "*the first and only duty of all bishops is to see that the people learn about the gospel and love of Christ*" (Luther's Works, Vol. 48, p. 47).

We receive Christ and are saved. And then, we *live* on the basis of what we've received. We walk the walk. Or, better yet, we "dance the dance," the two-step of the Christian life. Receiving is the first step; living in Christ the second.

At the core of my vision for us in the Northwestern Minnesota Synod is this: *we are saved to be sent*. That's two-step dance to which God in Christ invites us.

Over the next six years I invite us to enter more deeply into this daring dance. Rooted and grounded in God's overflowing grace and goodness, let us scope out fresh ways to respond to it, live in it, and walk the walk together (*synod* means "walking together").