



The **St. John Eagle**

“Celebrating more than 100 years, 1904 - 2009”

Member Congregation of the ELCA and LCMC



Volume 11 Number 1

September 2009

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor's Pen Macintosh

Many of you may be aware that one of our parent bodies, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, met in Minneapolis in convention during the week of August 16th. Several important matters were on the convention's agenda, but one issue in particular captured headlines around the country. This issue is admittedly divisive, and is one that will no doubt have long-term ramifications in the life of the church. Therefore, I feel that we all need to be aware of it.

Not wishing to add to the divisiveness, but wanting to report the action taken at the convention, I have perused a number of major news publications for a fair and accurate reporting of the convention's actions. Of these, I have selected *The Washington Post* as the most objective and informative in its reporting. I hope you find the article that follows to be so as well.

‘Monogamous’ Gays Can Serve in ELCA

Largest Lutheran Denomination Still Split on Divisive Issue

By Jacqueline L. Salmon, Washington Post Staff Writer

Saturday, August 22, 2009

Leaders of the nation's biggest Lutheran denomination voted Friday to allow gays in committed relationships to serve as clergy in the church – making it one of the largest Christian denominations in the country to significantly open the pulpit to gays.

Previously, only celibate gays were permitted to serve as clergy in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a denomination of 4.8 million members. But delegates to a church assembly voted 559-451 to allow gays in “life-long, monogamous” relationships to serve as clergy and professional lay leaders in the church.

The vote is the culmination of a years-long process in the ELCA, and was accompanied by plenty of emotion at the convention in Minneapolis. After standing in long lines to reach microphones during debates that extended all day, some delegates shook and others cried as they expressed their opposition or support of the measure.

Quoting the Bible and denomination founder Martin Luther, delegates sought to place the decision within their interpretation of their Lutheran faith.

“We live today with an understanding of homosexuality that did not exist in Jesus' time and culture,” Tim Mumm, a lay delegate from Wisconsin and supporter of Lutherans Concerned, an ELCA gay-rights organization, said during the debate. “We are responding to something that the writers of Scripture could not have understood.”

But others said the recommendations weaken the Biblical standards of the church.

“As Luther taught us, Scripture does not have a wax nose,” said the Rev. Ryan Mills, a delegate representing Texas and Louisiana. “It cannot be twisted into anything we want it to say. But that's just what we're doing with these following recommendations.”

Conservatives tried to derail the vote, losing a ballot that would have required a supermajority of two-thirds to approve the proposal. They lost a similar vote earlier in the week.

Some critics of the proposal predicted its passage could cause individual congregations to leave the ELCA, which is what occurred to the 2 million-member Episcopal Church when it consecrated an openly gay bishop in 2003. Last month, Episcopalians voted to make gays eligible for any ordained ministry.

Most mainline Protestant churches are struggling to balance what many view as Biblical injunctions against the practice of homosexuality with the country's burgeoning gay-rights movement. But none has gone as far as the Episcopalians and, now, the Lutherans. Among the major mainline denominations, leaders of the Presbyterian Church (USA) recently defeated a proposal to ordain openly gay pastors, but with a much narrower margin than in previous votes. And United Methodist church leaders faced an emotional debate last year when they upheld their ban on openly gay clergy.

“I really believe . . . what we are about to do will split the church,” said ELCA delegate John Sang of Ohio during the debate.

Delegate Terri Stagner-Collier wept as she predicted that opponents would be “ripped away” from the church if the measure were approved. “I urge you not to do this – not to do this at all,” she said, “[for] these people in the pews and in my family.”

In essence, the vote puts gays under the same set of rules that have governed heterosexual clergy. They are required to be monogamous if married and to abstain from sexual relations if they are single. Individual congregations would not be compelled to take on pastors who are in same-sex relationships.

The ELCA was formed in 1988 by the merger of three Lutheran organizations, and it has 10,500 churches in the United States, including 80 in the Washington area. It is generally considered the least conservative of the three major present-day Lutheran denominations, although it has a sizable conservative minority.

Budgetary Notes

This is an indication, as a percentage, of how our offering income compares to where we need to be for our budget to balance at the end of the year. Through July 31st, we have income amounts that are 10.25% below our anticipated budgeted amounts. If you have a specific budget question, please feel free to talk to Fred Faust or Steve Gemma.

Haven from Hunger

Ever wonder what the cardboard box in the undercroft marked “Haven from Hunger” is for? Throughout the year the Haven from Hunger is in need of canned goods and non-perishable food items (pasta, baby food, etc.). We deliver the contents of this collection box to Haven when we serve our meal there. If you would like to donate food to the Haven from Hunger, please bring the food items to service with you and place them into the box.

Serving St. John with our Time and Talents

During September

Ushers

Karin Caves
Tim Caves
John Caves

Lay Assistant

9/6 Angie Cornwell
9/13 Steve Gemma
9/20 Linda Phyles
9/27 Fred Faust

Custodial

9/6 Faust
9/13 Dancewicz
9/20 Bott
9/27 Reed

Lector

9/6 Fred Faust
9/13 Fred Faust
9/20 Susan Dancewicz
9/27 Susan Dancewicz

Childcare

9/6 Chip & Shannon
9/13 Kristin Phyles
9/20 Rick & Cheryl
9/27 Kira Dancewicz

Coffee Hour

9/6 Judy & Cheryl
9/13 Linda & Susan
9/20 Carole & Raunda
9/27 Shannon & Angie

During October

Ushers

Carole Grayson
Melissa Gustafson

Lay Assistant

10/4 Sue Reed
10/11 Angie Cornwell
10/18 Steve Gemma
10/25 Linda Phyles

Custodial

10/4 Phyles
10/11 Berg/Grayson/Othote
10/18 Gemma
10/25 Faust

Lector

10/4 Linda Phyles
10/11 Linda Phyles
10/18 Phil/Sue Reed
10/25 Phil/Sue Reed

Childcare

10/4 Chip & Shannon
10/11 Kristin Phyles
10/18 Rick & Cheryl
10/25 Kira Dancewicz

Coffee Hour

10/4 Lydia
10/11 Linda & Becky
10/18 Mary & Bert
10/25 Karin, Tim, & John Caves

During November

Ushers

Ralph Comeau
Becky Comeau

Lay Assistant

11/1 Fred Faust
11/8 Sue Reed
11/15 Angie Cornwell
11/22 Steve Gemma
11/29 Linda Phyles

Custodial

11/1 Dancewicz
11/8 Bott
11/15 Reed
11/22 Phyles
11/29 Berg/Grayson/Othote

Lector

11/1 Tom Knowlton
11/8 Tom Knowlton
11/15 Judy Othote
11/22 Judy Othote
11/29 Susan Dancewicz

Childcare

11/1 Chip & Shannon
11/8 Kristin Phyles
11/15 Rick & Cheryl
11/22 Kira Dancewicz
11/29 Chip & Shannon

Coffee Hour

11/1 Mary & Jack Plumb
11/8 Judy & Cheryl
11/15 Linda & Susan
11/22 Linda & Melissa Gustafson
11/29 Carole & Raudna

Please ask someone to fill in for you if you are unable to make it when you are scheduled. Phone numbers can be found in the church directory.

Please Recycle

In an effort to do our part to help with the environment, we ask those that do not take home their weekly church bulletins to recycle them in the recycle bin located downstairs. In addition to used bulletins, any clean paper at the church should be recycled. Every little bit helps toward a greener environment.

In Memory

We join with those who mourn in remembering before God and one another those who have departed this life in the sign of the faith. Sylvia Liimatainen Moynihan (mother of Karen Moynihan).

St. John News and Notes

We ask for your prayer and concern for these members and friends of St. John:

Ellen Hepburn
Dorothy Fender

Anna Snow
Patricia Fleury

David Fredrickson
Carol White

Our volunteer lists need more volunteers! Please consider serving your church as lay assistant, lector, or a member of the choir. There are also other opportunities to serve as a cleaner, coffee hour host, usher and nursery volunteer! If you have any questions, suggestions or ideas in this regard, please speak with Pastor, Linda Phyles or Steve Gemma.

We are seeking more young people to serve as acolytes during our worship services. The role they play is important and is a form of service in the chancel. If you or anyone you know is interested, please speak with Lisa Winsor.

We will continue to use Setting I of the liturgy for the Pentecost season. On November 29th (the first Sunday of Advent) we will switch to Setting III of the liturgy.

Congratulations

We extend our congratulations to Heather Phyles (daughter of Pastor and Linda Phyles) and Shannon Gemma (daughter of Steven Gemma) on their high school graduation. Heather will be continuing her education at Framingham State College, while Shannon will be continuing at Montserrat College of Art.

Sue Reed had one of her designs, Crossing the Spectrum, nominated and selected to be used as the poster that will be viewed throughout the greater Milwaukee area advertising the 2009 American Needlepoint Guild (ANG) Seminar. Proceeds from additional poster sales will be used as an educational fundraiser for ANG.



The runners are (front row, kneeling) Luke Bott, Julia Bott, Kathryn Bott, Angie Cornwell, and Dawn (Angie's dog); (back row) Chip Bott, Shannon Bott, Susan Dancewicz, and Kyle Dancewicz.

On August 21st a few of our members ran the 5th Annual Derby Street Mile road race in Salem, MA. The race started on Fort Avenue and finished at Pickering Wharf. This year there was a choice of family or competitive runs. Our members choose the family run and their times were 9:49 (Julia), 10:30 (Kyle), 11:42 (Kathryn), 11:44 (Susan), 11:59 (Shannon), 12:04 (Luke), 12:05 (Chip), and 12:07 (Angie & Dawn). All runners in the family run received medals and post race refreshments were enjoyed. If you or your family would be interested in participating next year, please contact the Salem Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department.

Past Happenings

Our annual Church Picnic was held Sunday, June 10th, at Camp Naumkeag in Salem. An informal worship service was held at 10:30 a.m. followed by wonderful food, fellowship and group games. Thank you to all who made this day enjoyable.

We extend a sincere thank you to Tom Knowlton and Steve Gemma for filling in for Pastor while he was away. A lot of preparation goes into providing the message. Thank you for your contributions to our ministry; your leadership is genuinely appreciated.

We also thank Angie Cornwell and Susan Dancewicz for their organ accompaniment while Margaret Knowlton was on vacation and resting her wrist this summer. We appreciate the musical talent they bring to our ministry.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, September 13th, will be the start of Sunday School classes. Sunday School classes will run from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Please remember to bring your completed registration forms to the first class. We remind members and friends of the congregation to conclude the coffee hour accordingly so that classes can begin and end on time. As always we thank you for your consideration and understanding in this matter.

The 26th Annual Peabody International Festival will be held on Sunday, September 13th, running from 11:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. The rain date for this event is October 4th. Please plan to attend and show your support.

The next meals St. John will serve at Haven From Hunger are Tuesday, September 11th and Tuesday, November 10th. Please help supply the menu to be posted downstairs and/or serve the meal as you are able.

Our Sunday School teachers will be installed on Sunday, September 20th. Please plan to attend.

The Annual Fall Kick-off will be held Saturday, September 26th, at 6:00 p.m. The evening will begin with a pot-luck supper followed by a fun program that will be announced. The Annual Fall Clean-up Day will also be held Saturday, September 26th, at 9:00 a.m. The shrubbery needs to be trimmed and other areas cleaned. The more the hands, the lighter the work.

The Annual Fall Fair will be Saturday, November 7th, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Please bring all goods to be sold to the church no later than Sunday, October 25th. Please be aware, a \$10 deposit will be required for large items. Contributions will be taken for the fruit baskets.

Our Annual Advent Workshop will be held on Sunday, November 29th, at 2:00 p.m.