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### Our Logo

The Lutherans Concerned logo unifies visual symbols of our Christianity and our sexuality into a single image. It has two parts: the fish and the pink triangle. The IX-Thus, or fish symbol, originated as a secret recognition symbol for the early Christian community. The pink triangle was used by the Nazis to identify the European homosexuals who perished in the concentration camps of the Third Reich. Both symbols are now used by their respective communities as honored signs of recognition and support.

### Statement of Sanctuary

The ministry of Lutherans Concerned, its meetings and its mailing lists are protected by our understanding of sanctuary. No participants need fear exposure or abuse in subscribing, joining or attending chapter functions.

All information that individuals may reveal of themselves is to be honored by others with total confidentiality. Mutual trust and respect, in the spirit of Jesus Christ, is offered to all who may elsewhere experience alienation, distrust or rejection. For the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we welcome you.

### Diversity and Anti-Racism

An equal-opportunity employer, LC/NA welcomes candidates for paid or volunteer positions who share our commitments to full participation for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities and anti-racist accountability to communities of color.

# Come to Reconciling Works 2012

Reconciling Works 2012 is not just a routine LC/NA biennial assembly and RIC convention. Uniquely, at this gathering you will hear presentations from national church leaders participating for the first time. Bishop Mark Hanson,

Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, will deliver the keynote address at this gathering dedicated to the theme of reconciliation. And, at this gathering you can learn to tell your story and then visit national legislators, to influence their thinking and help them understand more about their constituents.

From July 6-10, 2012, we will gather in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, for workshops, trainings, fellowship, worship, Bible study and unique opportunities for movement building, scriptural learning, advocacy, and personal growth.



## Pre Events

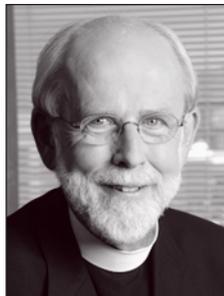
Movement-building pre-events will occur from 1:00 pm on July 6 until noon on July 7. These events will provide opportunities to go deeper into particular aspects of the LGBTQ movement. Many of the events are for a specific population. More information to come.

## Day on Capitol Hill

On Tuesday, July 10, we will visit the offices of the elected U.S. Representatives and Senators of those gathered at Reconciling Works 2012. Prior to that, you will learn how to tell your personal story to enhance your message of advocacy for full inclusion in the church and society. This is an opportunity to speak out as your faith calls you to do. It's an opportunity for you to visit your U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative to tell them your story, your commitment to full inclusion in the church and society, and that you are a constituent and a voter.

## Keynote Address

Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson will deliver the keynote address to this gathering dedicated to the theme of reconciliation, in his first participation in an LC/NA assembly. Bp. Hanson is renowned for his ability to speak of scripture and



Lutheranism in the context of redemption, the church, and the society in which we all live and work. Mark Hanson has been the presiding bishop of the ELCA since 2001.

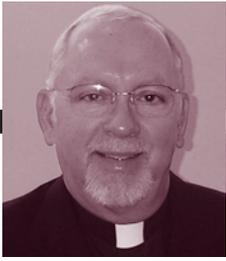
## Bible Study

Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber is the founding pastor of House for All Sinners and Saints, an ELCA mission church in Denver, Colorado. She's a leading voice in the emerging church movement and her writing can be found in *The Christian Century* and Jim Wallis' *God's Politics* blog. She is

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# The Editor

DALE TRUSCOTT



<sup>11</sup>The gifts [Christ] gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup>to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup>until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the [God's Child], to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. <sup>14</sup>We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup>But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into [the One] who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup>from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. —EPHESIANS 4-16 *NRSV emended*

In her article in this issue, Emily Eastwood writes of moving into the next phase of our journey toward a collective vision of full participation. She envisions

that we will learn to use our new status in the church to attain greater justice. And she expresses concern that we may, at times, participate in restraining the gospel.

In this selection from the letter to the Ephesians, the writer envisions that we will come "to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of God's child

friend, a pastor in the ELCA who came to his calling with some encouragement from me 35 years ago. He was lamenting the tensions in the synod in which he serves. A number of large "town square" Lutheran churches have withdrawn from the ELCA in his state. He counted several of the withdrawing pastors as

**We Lutherans often have a hard time accepting the fact that this journey necessarily involves change.**

Jesus, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ." In order to get to this goal Ephesians cautions us not to be blown around by "winds of doctrine, trickery and deceitful scheming." It seems to me that LC/NA is negotiating these storms very well by "speaking the truth in love," and growing into Christ.

I had dinner with a dear

personal friends of his. While he expressed support for me and for the goals of LC/NA, though he is not a member and his parish is not RIC, he also waffled in that support at the point of wishing that we could enjoy the "good old days" of the church he thought he knew as a young pastor.

Do you hear the ambiguity in his position, in his lament?

There comes a point in our life in the gospel that we must come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of Christ, to maturity. We Lutherans often have a hard time accepting the fact that this journey necessarily involves change. And change involves saying good-bye to loved ones and loved, comfortable, but unjust positions of the past. My friend may have enjoyed the good old days of his friends in ministry and the political stability of the institution of the church in his life. But the reality was that that church was unjust when it came to ministry among gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender persons as well as other minorities and differently gifted people. My friend is having to learn to let go of an unjust past however painful and no matter what personal losses might come.

Sometimes I fear that we Lutherans want to "have our cake and eat it too," as my mother used to say. We want the changes that we achieved in 2009; we want the church to support efforts to prevent bullying; we want to move into the next goals of our ministry. But we wish we could do it all without any changes in the church we have known and loved. It won't happen that way. Our scripture selection recognizes that fact. St. Paul and his successors recognized that and called upon the early Christian community to be willing to accept, endure and celebrate the changes that Jesus of Nazareth brought to their traditions.

Last year I came across the email address of one of my colleagues in ministry whom I went to college with and with whom I sang in the chapel choir, whom I met with in workshops and assemblies through that portion of my career that was in Ohio. He recently had led his large congregation out of the Northeastern Ohio Synod. I emailed him with a respectful

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## Publication Information

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# Executive Director



EMILY EASTWOOD

Finally have a new (to me) mobile phone. The learning curve has been quite steep and not without significant user error.

Last week, the texting and voice command functions began responding with gibberish including accents over letters in the display. The phone seemed to have wandered all by itself into an Italian deli. I finally confessed to Brett, our technoguru, that my new phone was acting a little like Hal, the *2001: A Space Odyssey* computer, and that I suspected its favorite dish was lasagna. Fortunately, for me, Brett had experienced the same phenomenon, though in Spanish. Evidently, I had unintentionally brushed over the language button on the screen changing it not once, or twice, but three times, (I said it was touchy), from English to Spanish, to German, and finally to Italian. Amazing, simply amazing.

And now a **new year** will unfold, perhaps faster and in **different ways** than any of us can imagine.

The phone didn't come with an instruction manual, just a quick-start guide. I can probably download some version of "droids for dummies," but as my father has always said, "When all else fails, read the directions." I'm learning as I go, which seems to be a metaphor for the movement toward full participation within those denominations which have adopted recent changes toward a bigger tent of meeting, where the Gospel is indeed for all, and where "all" means all (at least by policy).

In late November, LC/NA hosted a gathering of judicatory and welcoming program leaders from five denominations to discuss full inclusion and the evolution of the mainline denominations in the 21st Century. The conversations, held in a retreat style

environment, ran the gamut from anti-bullying to marriage, landing repeatedly on the challenges facing the Church (big C) as budgets have declined and denominational programming has decentralized. Instead of framing the current context as the inevitable consequence of divisive votes regarding homosexuality or a crisis of scriptural authority,

these leaders embraced the present as a gift of the Gospel, full of potential. The whole convening was refreshing in its positive outlook toward real partnership in shared ministry which recognizes its own privilege and seeks justice and full participation for all.

Just a week before, Bishop Mark Hanson accepted our invitation to give the keynote address for our biennial assembly this coming July in Washington, D.C. This email I read on my new smart phone in the Denver airport in the middle of a busy food court, the email brief and to the point, using an economy of language which moved quickly to logistics. I stood, involuntarily, and raised my phone above my head as if to wave in the planes -- smiling, deeply, down to my toes. I called all the people I could get to in the time before my plane left. Reconciliation is always a work in progress, but it is now moving in ways I could not have imagined even six months ago. I wanted to share the news with so many who helped make that remarkable notice of acceptance possible. I still smile every time I think of it.

And now a new year will unfold, perhaps faster and in different ways than any of us can imagine only a few days in. With a new strategic plan in place, the staff and board are in motion towards a level of action and ministry we have not seen since the run up to churchwide assembly 2009.

In January alone, Operations Manager Brett Bowman represented LC/NA at the Gay Christian Network Conference; Board members Jamie Ann Meyers and Nicole Garcia presented workshops at Creating Change in Baltimore as Brett and Phil Soucy staffed our display; Pastor Troy Plummer, Rachel Harvey, Vicki Wunsch and I team taught a J-term course at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and I went to South Carolina for RIC weekend events including a one-day Building an Inclusive Church Training in Columbia. At the same time, a William Randall Beard play commissioned by LC/NA on marriage matters premiered in the Twin Cities during the annual RIC festival.

It's going to be quite a ride to Reconciling Works 2012 in July and beyond. I wish there were a manual we could download to guide the way. I suspect this new thing we are doing together will have a steep learning curve. How I wish it was as easy as brushing over a button to speak in another language, because we need to become fluent in new ways of speaking. We are becoming mindful of whatever position or status we may now enjoy in church in society, as well as what has not changed since 2009. This year I hope that we will learn to use that position to enact greater justice. I hope we may recognize the ways in which we participate in suppressing and restraining the Gospel, as if somehow it belongs only to us. I know we will make mistakes; user error is always possible. Fortunately, so is the saving Grace of God.

As we move into this next phase of our journey towards a collective vision of full participation, I

*continued on page 11*

## RIC Settings

*Added to the Roster since last issue*

Lutheran Mission of Seguin, Seguin, Texas

Nokomis Heights Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

St. Mark Lutheran Church, Salem, Oregon

For the complete list of RIC congregations, synods, and organizations, go to our website at [www.lcna.org](http://www.lcna.org)

# St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh

By **Carol M. Dunn**

**W**hat makes congregation members decide to form an LC/NA chapter, or study the R.I.C. program? Since the CWA 2009 decisions, perhaps there is some “safety” in doing so, but more than 20 years ago, it was a far more controversial choice. In Pittsburgh, Pa., the first stirrings toward a chapter were felt one Valentine’s Day, when a group met in the living room of the pastor, the Rev. Janet Grill. At that time, even more strongly than today, HIV/AIDS was considered a gay disease, and St. Andrew was on the edge of a significant gay community.

Formerly a Missouri Synod congregation, St. Andrew for years had worked to be of service to the local community. It was instrumental in the founding of the Lutheran University Center, and remodeled parts of the church to be accessible to residents of a nearby facility serving physically handicapped people.

But the changes were not painless: leaving the Missouri Synod, for example, cost some members, required constitution changes, new definitions of the congregation and a new mission statement. The self-study led to the motto “Love everyone, exclude no one.” During the 1990s, the congregation refocused and undertook the study of Journey Together

**The self-study led to the motto “Love everyone, exclude no one.”**

Faithfully. It led to a seven year study of human sexuality, gay and lesbian issues and the bigger concept of welcoming as a Christian value. This led to the RIC decision. Even those convinced that being L or G (B and T were not yet on the alphabet list) was sinful, acknowledged that in baptism and in Scriptural studies, accepting *all* was a core principle. The congregation is the only RIC congregation in all of western Pennsylvania.

Jimmi and Timothy Kocher-Hillmer, members at St. Andrew (Jimmi for over 30 years, Timothy about 20; they are described by Pr. Grill as “holy, loving men”) were key to the discussions and the study. They were willing not only to be “out,” but to be the sources of information for study and discussion groups in many congregations in their synod. They would have liked to have moved faster, but agreed with leaders that it was crucial to have the congregation’s support before calling for a vote.

And that went well. The few rough patches at St.



Andrew came when same-sex couples were first blessed in the sanctuary, long after the successful vote to become RIC. But counterpoint to the rough patches were the joys of welcoming people who had been marginalized by society and the church. They have come to St. Andrew, have served in many leadership positions, and according to Pr. Grill, have provided stable leadership.

Citing the Marty Haugen hymn line “where love can dwell and all can safely live,” parishioner Ken Neundorf explained why he is at St. Andrew. His former congregation “unwelcomed” him when he came out, making it clear he was not wanted there. At first at St. Andrew he tried being a quiet pew sitter, but over time he became more active, serving on the council and currently as Financial Secretary. He says if not “for the Welcoming Spirit of St. Andrew, I do not know if I would be attending a church today. It is difficult to put into words the great feeling I have knowing that ‘All are welcome in this place.’”

Experiences like this have made St. Andrew a growing place. Pastor Janet on a regular basis talks about LGBT people and other minority groups in a positive fashion. A few families travel more than 50 miles to attend. The congregation serves its community by making the church available for groups such as AA, OA, SLAA, and housing two counseling offices and one group of those recovering from sexual addiction. St. Andrew offers dinner at the local men’s shelter once a month, hosts an LC/NA chapter, has a knitting and quilting group called Hearts & Hands which makes things for members and people in the wider community—and the list goes on.

Increasing numbers of younger families attend, and the congregation has grown, not to become a gay church, but to become an inclusive one, what Timothy called a more “living” congregation, embracing families of many configurations. ▼

*St. Andrew member Sherri Williams and a youngster from the community.*

# Different folks; different strokes:

## RIC Sunday Observances

Some RIC congregations sang a special hymn or offered a special prayer to recognize RIC Sunday. In South Carolina, two workshops led into a party and exciting Sunday worship.

In the Twin Cities, a play commissioned by LC/NA followed Saturday afternoon worship and a meal for multiple congregations from the Twin Cities and surrounding area.

In the Minneapolis area, the celebration is rotated among the many RIC congregations each year, and in January 2012 the honor went to Gustavus Adolphus. The guest preacher was the Rev. Justin Lind-Ayres from Bethany Lutheran Church. The 4:30 p.m. Saturday worship ended with a light meal and the first performance of the drama.

The program was extremely timely, since Minnesota is facing a vote on a proposed constitutional amendment designed to limit marriage to one man, one woman. The play dramatized why marriage matters, especially for members of the gay community.

## LGBT young people cannot be abandoned to fend for themselves

Currently the only RIC congregation in South Carolina, Reformation Lutheran, Columbia, marked the RIC anniversary with a varied menu of events. This was the second year of activities recognizing the building of an inclusive church.

The weekend opened Friday, January 26, with a public showing of “Bullied: A Student, A School, and a Case That Made History.” This Southern Poverty Law Center film tells of a Wisconsin student, bullied and harassed by other students and not protected by officials. Instead of just hoping the problem would go away, the young man and his parents filed a federal lawsuit against his school district, and the case wound its way to triumph. A landmark decision held that school officials can be held accountable for not stopping the harassment and abuse: a recognition that LGBT young people cannot be abandoned to fend for themselves, nor should they simply accept bullying under the irresponsible umbrella excuse that “kids pick on kids; it’s part of growing up.”

The next day featured two challenging workshops. The first was for pastors, about preaching on public issues, and led by Union Theological Seminary’s Rev. Barbara Lundblad, who also preached at both Sunday services. The Rev. Shauna Hannan of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, directed “Building an Inclusive Church,” intended for members and lay leaders. Facilitated by LC/NA and the Institute for Welcoming Resources, this is a tested and successful training.

Emily Eastwood, LC/NA Executive Director joined a Saturday evening gathering of LC/NA members and friends. After Sunday worship, Reformation, in true Lutheran fashion, had a pot-luck.

Several congregations participated, both by hosting events and by having pastors and lay people in the trainings. Reformation publicized the event through its synod and through Facebook, the website, mailings and other notices. ▼

*Information thanks to Dot Jeffcoat of Reformation Lutheran and Betty Schreuder, Chair, Twin Cities LC/NA Chapter.*

## From the Editor

*continued from page 2*

but clear call for him to consider our own relationship as well as the impact of his unjust assessment of the church’s actions. The answer I got was bitter, angry and rejecting of me and of LC/NA and of the ELCA. And I had to say to myself, “Get over it, Dale.” God has not promised us God’s Reign of Love but no change.

What will you and the churches and the organizations of which you are a part have to “get over” in order for you and them to “get over” to God’s vision of justice and love? Those are questions that face LC/NA and each of us as we move forward in this ministry. Nevertheless we “take hold of what is new,” as Emily has said, with some fear and trembling to be sure, but confident that our newness is not in vain because it is in Christ. ▼

## MOVING?

Filling out a change of address form ensures the delivery of your *Concord*. If you are moving, take a minute to complete this form. It will save you time and LC/NA money. In the end, that’s just plain good stewardship!

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Mail completed form to Lutherans Concerned/North America, Inc., **Attn: Database Updates**, PO Box 4707, St. Paul, MN 55104-0707, or email to [database@lcna.org](mailto:database@lcna.org).

# RIC Training, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

By **Peter Keyel**

“Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’”  
(Matthew 9:36–37)

**W**e held Pittsburgh’s first Building an Inclusive Church training on October 14-16, 2011, at St. John’s Lutheran Church in North Versailles, Pennsylvania. This was a very sorely needed training, since there are currently only two RIC congregations in all of western and central Pennsylvania. Emily Eastwood and David Weiss came to train us and send us out. Nineteen people from nine congregations in four Christian denominations attended the training. Immediately prior to the training, we gathered at a local sandwich shop called Primanti Brothers to give Emily and David a taste of Pittsburgh. At Primanti’s, the sandwich is started with one large piece of Italian bread. On that bread goes the meat (or eggs) cooked to order, followed by cheese, tomatoes, fries, coleslaw, (onions by request) and topped by a second piece of Italian bread. Emily stuck solely to ham and cheese, without the fries and coleslaw, while David went for everything, including the onions. Emily and David followed this approach throughout the

training, enriching what the other had said, providing different perspectives as they shared stories and strategies with the participants.

All of the participants identified their congregations as being open to full inclusion to one degree or another. One blessing of sharing the training with other denominations is that we could share our experiences with each other, and coordinate the work of encouraging multiple denominations to be more intentionally welcoming. There is a lot of common ground between our denominations, even as we recognize we are in different stages of becoming fully inclusive. Presbyterians face issues arising from deciding as a denomination to ordain those in same-gender relationships. We Lutherans can share our stories about how we worked through the issues leading to the decisions of 2009, and are working through the issues we face as a result of those decisions. Bringing multiple denominations together also demonstrates that there is a wider community dedicated to fostering full inclusion in Pennsylvania.

St. John’s provided hospitality for the training, with spacious rooms for meeting, and a bounty of great food expertly coordinated and served by members of the church. We shared a wonderful worship with them Sunday morning, and collected money to help St. John’s building fund. What made St. John’s welcome to us especially significant is that they welcomed us while they were in a time of discernment. Pastor Krug recently came out to his congregation, and the congregation is in the midst of coming to terms with this development. We thank St. John’s for the welcome and the hospitality they provided to us. We lift them up in prayer as they

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## RIC NEWS

### News from Region 9

The Central Florida chapter of Lutherans Concerned brought theologian David Weiss to Florida for the Synodical Women’s Organization fall meeting at Lake Yale, Florida. In a workshop, five LC/CF members offered personal stories which Weiss then used as springboards to Scriptural messages on welcoming. The presentations included coming out stories, the emotions of experiences at CWA 2009, decisions to become involved, a former pastor’s story, and the anguish of years outside the church and the struggle to find a way to return. In a hymn-sing the previous evening, Weiss also shared six of his hymn texts telling the Biblical story of inclusion in song. One of them was a world premiere, sung with joy by the nearly 300 attendees.

Last spring, the chapter held an open-to-

the-public panel discussion on anti-bullying, especially at the middle school level. Panelists included a school social worker (who is also a local city council member), an ACLU lawyer, and a Lutheran pastor. The chapter promoted resources such as the “It Gets Better” campaign, along with printed materials and contact addresses.

—*Wayne Morris, Region 9 Coordinator*

### News from Region 7

Region 7 (New England, both upstate and metro New York, New Jersey, and NE and SE Pennsylvania synods) has six geographical synods (and Slovak Zion, which is non-geographic) and the six geographical synods are RIC. Each LGBT advocacy group functions within its own synod and provides services such as

support for LC/NA legislative actions, educational displays, workshops and speakers for appropriate events. They visit “fertile ground” congregations in support of the RIC and Reconciling Lutherans programs. One group supports summer camp programs for LGBT youth.

The ELCA Region 7 Coordinator and the LCNA Coordinators are working to plan a joint meeting of the leaders of the various synod groups. This LGBT Round Table has not met for the past 6 years. The purpose of this meeting is to share ideas, resources and synergy, “and to build a foundation for collaborative efforts in the future.” The total number of RIC congregations in the region is 93, an exciting sign of congregational inclusivity.

—*Ken Miller and Jim Mapstone, Region 7 LCNA Co-coordinators*

FROM THE DESK OF THE  
Development Vice-  
Chair



JEANNINE JANSON

**Who Supports LC/NA— and Why**

My favorite thing to do as Vice Chair of Development is thank people for their support—for their faithful contributions of time, talent, energy, and/or treasure that make the work of LC/NA possible. Lately, I started asking folks *why* they contribute.

The first time a member described their passion for supporting LC/NA in an e-mail to me, I asked if I could share their message with our staff—the folks whose “job” it is to implement our mission and ministries. I wanted to let them know what doing their job means to people, the difference it makes. Then I realized that *everyone* who works to

You have *made* and continue to make *a difference*.

implement our mission and ministries needs to know why folks continue to support LC/NA and the work we do together.

By *everyone*, I mean every person (volunteer and paid), foundation and other organization that has contributed time, talent, energy and/or treasure to LC/NA since it was founded in 1974. Over these many years, you have made and continue to make a difference, not only in the church, but in people’s lives.

And what better way to share the difference you’ve made than in the *Concord*?

So whatever I write about in the future, my articles will always include space for *Who Supports LC/NA... and Why*. And these messages will be for you, the afore-described *everyone*.

**A Family Affair... Charlette, Kirsten and Phil Beckler, Spring, Texas**

Charlette (Youth and Young Adult Representative on the LC/NA

**A Bit of History and a Reminder... from Jeannine Janson**

LC/NA was founded (as Lutherans Concerned for Gay People) in 1974... well before computers were commonplace, let alone conference call services, the internet and e-mail. The newsletter, brochures, early resources and correspondence were all “input” on typewriters and, thus, labor intensive... requiring a special kind of dedication and commitment by the founders, early leaders and members. Among those in this group that I have had the pleasure and privilege of meeting or speaking with over the years are: Diane Fraser and Allen Blaich (founders), Bill Host, David Kieschnick, Jack Strouss, Anita Hill, Leo Treadway, John Ballew, Jo Chadwick, Chuck Lewis, Frank Loulan, Dan Hooper, and Ron Ruopp. I also knew and worked with founders Jim Lokken, Marie Kent and Howard Erickson, now deceased. Because of the faithful efforts of these folks (and many others I don’t know), Lutherans Concerned was founded, remained viable and grew-- no small accomplishment for a new organization whose leadership was spread across the country, communicating via typewriter and telephone. Thanks be to God for them!

Board of Directors)... I felt called to serve because I had a lot of difficulty being young and queer. At first, it was very difficult for me to reconcile my faith with my sexuality. I didn’t want anyone else to have to go through that, and hope that my work with LC/NA can help make this a more accepting, inclusive world.

**Charlette’s Parents, Kirsten and Phil...** We are quite passionate about the issue of inclusion of the LGBT community within the ELCA and within the full community of believers. Our viewpoint can be distilled into one simple question: Why can two of our three daughters walk down the aisle of the church that we have belonged to and supported for 20 years and get to take their vows in a religious ceremony while one cannot, simply because of her sexual orientation? We have committed ourselves to do everything and anything in our power to change that scenario. We will continue to support LC/NA in its efforts, and we appreciate all of the hard work and dedication of the people in this organization.

**Sharon Bost, Canton, Georgia...** I continue to contribute to LC/NA because... I have seen how hard LC/NA has worked over the past decade to promote full inclusion in the church and how supportive they have been to parents, friends and allies of GLTB persons. I have personally benefited from the educational opportunities offered in a variety of ways, from conferences attended, to materials to study, to networking and making new friendships. Thus, I have become more vocal in my own environment, more supportive of LGBT causes, and hope and pray that this important work will continue on until such time as there is no discrimination in this world.

**Cheryl Stuart and Steve Kunst, Tallahassee, Florida...** We support LC/NA because the work is not over. While ELCA policy change to provide intentional inclusion of an excluded group of God’s children was a galvanizing moment, there are still hearts and minds within the church who struggle to live into this welcoming event. LC/NA’s practice of “graceful engagement” will continue to be needed to walk with our still-questioning brothers and sisters.

In addition, as the media shines a light on young people being bullied for many reasons—even to the point of suicide—it is imperative that *every* congregation become a safe place, a place where every child can know and feel that God loves him/her, just as they are. LC/NA’s help in developing faith-based anti-bullying resources is a big step in that direction.

We know that teaching, training, advocating, listening, and accompanying take time, talent *and* treasure. Supporting LC/NA is one way we can put our faith into action, for the sake of the Gospel.

**Karen Krause, Toledo, Ohio...** Because you make a difference. ▼

## Reconciling Works 2012

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author of *Salvation on the Small Screen? 24 Hours of Christian Television* (Seabury 2008) and the *Sarcastic Lutheran* blog. Of her, it has been said that “the passion behind her words is as deeply pastoral as it is God-drenched and liberating... thus the affection as well as the respect that attend her and her work wherever she goes.” (*The Great Emergence* by Phyllis Tickle)



### Chaplains

#### The Rev. Jim Boline

Jim Boline was called to serve St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Santa Monica, California, in 2000. Ordained in 1989 and a third generation Lutheran pastor, he has served four congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in southern Minnesota and Los Angeles. Married in June 2008 to his spouse of 11 years, Christopher Ma, Pr. Jim came out nationally as a partnered gay pastor during the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Orlando and, in 2007, participated in the coming-out of nearly 100 ELCA rostered leaders during the Churchwide Assembly in Chicago. A graduate of Yale University Divinity School's Institute of Sacred Music where he studied liturgy, music, and the arts, Pastor Jim serves on the Worship Committee of the ELCA's Southwest California Synod and sings with the Choir of St. James Episcopal Church in Los Angeles, choir-in-residence during the summers of 1999 and 2006 at Westminster Abbey, London, and is a frequent contributor to *Sundays and Seasons*, the annual liturgical resource of ELCA Publishers Augsburg Fortress.



#### The Rev. Dr. Hector Carrasquillo

Rev. Dr. Hector Carrasquillo is the Director for Latino Ministries, Congregational and Synodical Mission unit, at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, and holds a Master in Divinity from Union Theological Seminary in New York City, is an ordained Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and served for four years at Trinity Lutheran Church as an Interim Pastor for the Latino congregation and at Faith Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Arizona. His Ph.D from Syracuse



University is in the field of Family Studies and Child Development. His work in the community over the past 30 years has been mostly in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, concentrating his efforts on the welfare of children and youth-at-risk and their families. He is a founder and former chairperson of the Hispanic Young People's Alternative.

#### The Rev. Dr. Katrina Foster

Katrina Foster is the pastor of Incarnation Lutheran Church, Bridgehampton, and St. Michael Lutheran Church, Amagansett, both on Long Island, New York. She served Fordham Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bronx, New York, for 16 years prior to her current call. She earned her Master of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, South Carolina, and her Doctor of Ministry, Stewardship and Luther's Theology of the Cross, from Lutheran Theological Seminary Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Pastor Foster and her family were featured in the 2009 Goodsoil documentary, "One Baptism, Many Gifts: the story of three Lutherans called to ministry." Pastor Foster, her wife and daughter live in Water Mill, New York, and go to the beach as often as possible.



### Affinity Gatherings

Affinity Gatherings will meet at 12:30 p.m. on July 8 for two hours. Affinity gatherings entail no additional cost and are an opportunity for communities who share a common identity to gather and form relationships before the Assembly begins. There is no formal registration for Affinity Groups. Meeting locations will be noted at registration. The following affinity groups are suggested. To propose another group, email [assembly@lcna.org](mailto:assembly@lcna.org).

- Preacher's Kids
- Progressive Clergy
- I Love to Tell the Story
- Queer Gathering
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- First Timers
- Church Musicians
- Seminarians
- People of Color
- Assembly Choir



### Workshops

Assembly participants will be able to deepen their knowledge, expand their skill sets, or just enjoy some conversation with the variety of workshops being offered. Workshops are 75 minutes.. Learn about ways to enhance your congregation's welcome. Sharpen your tools to work for justice in the wider world. Dive into deeper conversation with our presenters. This is the time to learn!



## Worship

Reconciling Works 2012, like all our assemblies, is framed in worship. We start with a celebration of the God who binds us together, and we end with a festival of sending. In between, from each morning's beginning with Bible Study to the keynote presentation and workshops through to our evening worship, we are doing the work of the people. The worship experiences throughout the assembly are designed to empower us for work that extends well beyond the city of Washington, D.C., through our homes into the Church and the world.

Assembly worship services will draw from a rich variety of traditions of our Lutheran liturgy, while highlighting some of the gifts and talents of our own membership. From the deep roots of liturgical Lutheran services, to voices and music of our global family, the worship offerings will suit a variety of musical and liturgical tastes. The worship will be in a style that you will find comfortable, but will also push you to new experiences that may broaden your understanding of worship. The worship planning team is committed to using inclusive language. We embrace with humility and awe our ability to call upon God, in all God's fullness, in our own finite language. It is our hope that you will have an encounter with God through one or more of the worship styles represented.



## LC/NA Business

The Business Sessions are your opportunity to shape the future and direction of Lutherans Concerned / North America. During Reconciling Works 2012, there will be business sessions held throughout the Assembly. These sessions will be lively, informative, and interactive. During these sessions, we will hear

from our leadership, elect the Board of Directors for the next Biennium, and hear the priorities for the next two years. As we get closer, more of the business items to be considered will be posted to the assembly website. However, in the meantime, there are a few items about which you should know.

### Who Can Participate

To participate in the business sessions of Lutherans Concerned / North America, one must be a member. However, Lutherans Concerned / North America is granting one-year gift memberships to assembly registrants who are not already members of LC/NA. That means that if you come to Reconciling Works 2012, you will be able to participate in the business of LC/NA.

### Election of the Board of Directors

At assembly, the Board of Directors for the 2012–14 biennium will be elected. Specific information about the process, board composition, job descriptions, nominations, and deadlines will be directly communicated to the membership during January. Additionally, if you want to nominate yourself or others for positions on the board, information about this election and the process of nomination can be found at <http://lcna.org/rw-lcna-business>.

### Deadline for Resolutions

Proposed resolutions in proper format (Whereas... Therefore be it resolved... careful and limited language) should be sent to the Secretary of LC/NA, [secretary@lcna.org](mailto:secretary@lcna.org), by July 1, 2012. In addition to emailed submissions, there will be a Resolutions Box at the assembly site into which submissions can be dropped no later than 7:00 pm, Friday, July 6, 2012.

Resolutions will be reviewed by a reference and council committee, with possible consultation with the author, prior to submission at one of the LC/NA

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## Nominations for 2012–14 Board of Directors

At Reconciling Works 2012, LC/NA's biennial Assembly, the Board of Directors for the 2012–2014 biennium will be selected by the assembly. Unlike the rest of the business presented to the assembly, the election of the board of directors slate is by simple majority vote, not consensus.

The Leadership Development Committee (LDC) of LC/NA is responsible for conducting the process by which the slate(s) of candidate board are presented to the assembly for consideration. The LDC will consider all candidates for the positions on the board and present a slate to the assembly. Additionally, any member of LC/NA can submit a slate of board members to the LDC for presentation to the assembly. All slates proposed for consideration must be complete (every position filled) and have the permission of the individuals for their names to appear on the slate.

The positions and job descriptions for the 2012–2014 board are mailed to the membership in January, along with a letter explaining the process that

the LDC, current board, assembly, and LC/NA will follow in carrying out this important activity. The Chaplain to the Board is appointed to that position by the current board. The Chaplain's name and bio appear on the slate for the purposes of information only.

### Member-submitted nominations for positions on the LDC slate

Nominations for any of the positions on the LDC slate can be submitted by any member, about another person or self-nominating. If the nomination is about another person, that person's agreement must accompany the nomination (can be an email received by the nominator).

The preferred means of submitting nominations is by email to [nominations@lcna.org](mailto:nominations@lcna.org). All members of the LDC automatically receive any communications sent to that address. Nominations can also be sent by mail to the LC/NA main office in St. Paul: LC/NA, Attention: Board Nominations, P.O. Box 4707, St. Paul, MN 55104-

0707. However sent, nominations for the LDC slate must be received by April 30, 2012.

### Member-submitted alternate slate

Any member can also propose a complete slate of board of directors for 2012–2014. Alternate slates will be presented to the assembly at the same time as the LDC slate. Member-submitted alternate slates must be complete: all positions for the proposed board must be filled. Persons from the LDC board slate can be included. But, as is the case with the slate proposed by the LDC, every person on the member-submitted slate must have given permission for their name to be on this slate. Ideally, any member-submitted complete slate would be received by April 30, 2012, so that it could be included in the mailing of the LDC-recommended slate to the membership. Regardless, any complete, alternate slate presented to the LDC prior to the time of the election during assembly will be presented to the assembly.

## Reconciling Works 2012

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Business Sessions held during Reconciling Works 2012.



### Saturday Evening Celebration

#### Auction, Banquet, Program, Dance

We will cross the street to the Westin Hotel to continue our celebration. We will celebrate with a silent auction to benefit the ministry of Lutherans Concerned/North America. A variety of items are up for auction, from businesses, arts and crafts, books and multi-media, to vacation destinations. Appetizers and a cash bar will help to enhance the auction atmosphere. If you have an item you would like to donate to the silent auction, please email [lissam@lcna.org](mailto:lissam@lcna.org).

Upon the conclusion of bidding, we will begin our banquet, followed by a program that will honor where we have come and where we are going. We will present the Jim Siefkes Justice Maker Award and the Jeannine Janson Distinguished Service Award. Finally, a DJ will invite us to dance the night away (or at least until midnight).



### Jim Siefkes Justice Maker Award

The Jim Siefkes Justice-Maker Award was established by Lutherans Concerned / North America in 1992 to recognize superior and tireless efforts of straight allies on behalf of LGBT Lutherans.

The criteria for the Jim Siefkes Justice-Maker Award reflect the contributions of its namesake: the recipient must be a non-LGBT Lutheran who has made significant contributions to advancing justice for LGBT Lutherans; their actions should have had a broad impact and not be limited to a particular locale or region.

Nominees for the Siefkes Award are evaluated and selection is by the LC/NA Board of Directors. The award is presented at the LC/NA Biennial Assembly. A nomination form is available by email from the main office ([admin@lcna.org](mailto:admin@lcna.org)) or online at <http://lcna.org/lcna/programs-and-committees/jim-siefkes-award>.

The Rev. Jim Siefkes obtained funding for and convened the initial meeting in Minneapolis in June of 1974 that resulted in the formation of Lutherans Concerned for Gay People (our original name). Pastor Siefkes also wrote the Affirmation of Welcome, which is the heart of the Reconciling in Christ Program. Even in retirement, Pastor Siefkes



continues to advocate for the full inclusion and participation of LGBT Lutherans in the Lutheran Church.

#### Past recipients of the Siefkes Award:

- The Rev. Stanley E. Olson, Bishop Emeritus
- Joanne Chadwick
- Dr. Paul Jersild
- The Rev. Paul Tidemann
- The Rev. James DeLange
- The Rev. Reinie Heydemann
- The Rev. Paul Egertson, Bishop Emeritus, and Shirley Egertson
- Dr. Margaret Moreland
- The Rev. Lowell Erdahl, Bishop Emeritus
- Bennett Falk
- The Rev. Jayne Thompson
- The Rev. Herbert Chilstrom, Bishop Emeritus, and the Rev. Corinne Chilstrom
- June Kjome



### Jeannine Janson Distinguished Service Award

Jeannine Janson served on the LC/NA Board of directors, first as the West/Northwest Regional Director followed by a six-year term as Co-Chair. She managed the ONE VOICE Campaign, the successful first major donor campaign conducted jointly between Lutherans Concerned/North America, Wingspan Ministry of St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church, and Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries (now Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries). Her tireless attention to details and her dedication to Lutherans Concerned were instrumental in creating the professional organization that Lutherans Concerned is today. In 2008, the Distinguished Service award was named in honor of Jeannine Janson. ▼

### Save the Dates!

July 6-10, 2012 | Washington, D.C.  
Lutherans Concerned/North America biennial assembly

#### Reconciling Works 2012

Registration opens online in January at [www.lcna.org](http://www.lcna.org)  
Early bird discounts through March

# Tim Feiertag Hired as Grassroots Organizing & Training Coordinator

Lutherans Concerned has hired Tim Feiertag as Grassroots Organizing and Training Coordinator at the LC/NA headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota. Tim will take up his

position as of February 15, working throughout LC/NA.

Tim is a 2009 MDiv. Graduate of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, and a graduate of Valparaiso University with a degree in Social Work. Tim has more than a dozen years experience helping people and groups to find solutions in direct service, supervisory, pastoral and administrative support positions he has held. He comes to LC/NA and St. Paul from his employ in Kansas City with the Missouri



1995 as the Regional Director for the Central Region. In 1998, he was elected co-chair of LC/NA, a position he held until 2002. Across time he has participated in and conducted various trainings, from I-Wheel to RIC and Building an Inclusive Church.

Emily Eastwood, Executive Director, said, "I am so very pleased that Tim has accepted our invitation to join the staff of LC/NA. He has demonstrated his commitment to our organization through many years of service in a number of different volunteer positions. His easy smile, pastoral presence, quirky humor, and abiding faith will bring welcome additions to our ministry. We confirm his call from God and his passion for our reconciling programs. We thank him for his willingness to relocate to St. Paul to take this position."

Tim said, "As a gay man, I have been blessed by the welcome I received in my home congregation and in my seminary, both of which are Reconciling In Christ organizations. I am excited to work through LC/NA in helping others to broaden and deepen our Christian vocations of hospitality and reconciliation."

After February 15, Tim can be reached by phone (651-665-0861) or email [grassroots@lcna.org](mailto:grassroots@lcna.org). We ask you all to join us in welcoming

**"I am excited to work helping others to broaden and deepen our Christian vocations of hospitality and reconciliation."**

Children's Division as a case worker for abused and neglected children and their families.

Tim has a long history of involvement in Lutherans Concerned in leadership, training, and organizing at the local, regional and national level. Beginning in the early 1990s, Tim started as the co-chair of the Kansas City/Lawrence Chapter. He joined the national board of directors of LC/NA in

Tim to our staff as he takes on the exciting and important work that lies before him. ▼

## Executive Director

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hope we can take a clue from the judicatory leaders in retreat, embracing the present as a Gospel gift, full of potential. May we take hold of what is new, shiny, and perhaps even touchy, and try it out, even if the old ways seem safer and more predictable. We are only limited by our capacity to imagine, our will to act, and our faith in the God who has redeemed us and given us this ministry of reconciliation. May God grant us the courage we need to imagine, to act, and to believe...boldly. ▼

## Upcoming Trainings on Building an Inclusive Church

**March 10, 2012**  
**Washburn, Wisconsin**  
**Messiah Lutheran Church**

See [www.welcomingresources.org/communityorg.htm](http://www.welcomingresources.org/communityorg.htm) for more information on upcoming trainings. If you would like to host a training in your area, please contact Emily Hamilton at 651-665-0861 or [emilyh@lcna.org](mailto:emilyh@lcna.org).

## RIC Training

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continue their discernment.

The local chapter, Lutherans Concerned/ Pittsburgh, graciously provided financial support to offset some of the costs of the training for participants. East Liberty Presbyterian provided similar support for their members receiving this training. We are thankful to these groups for facilitating the work of welcome we have before us and for the organizational work done by Lutherans Concerned/Pittsburgh and the Institute for Welcoming Resources. ▼

# LC/NA's Marriage Matters Website Is Born

Lutherans Concerned/North America believes that marriage matters. That's why we have dedicated a new section of our website to the issue of marriage. The website can be found at <http://lcna.org/mm>. The website will feature updates on marriage-equality news from Minnesota, North Carolina, Washington, Oregon, and elsewhere. LC/NA advocates for the social and legal changes necessary to ensure that all people may participate in creating and sustaining strong families as a foundation and source of trust for the whole community. As Lutherans, we also advocate for the ecclesial changes necessary to ensure full participation in all rites, sacraments, and ministries of the Church, inviting all people into Gospel lives of authenticity, integrity and wholeness. See the website for how you may be able to get involved.



## Statements from Synods and Bishops about Marriage

Since the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* was adopted by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 2009, several bishops and synod councils have issued guidance about ELCA pastors performing marriages between same-gender couples in states where such marriages are legally recognized.

The Synod Council of the New England Synod writes: "Since ordained ministers desiring to live in publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous relationships are told that both church and

any requirement on any pastor or congregation to act against conscience."

About the synod council's decision, New England Synod Bishop Margaret Payne writes: "This decision was not taken lightly, nor with a sense that it should be a direction for the entire ELCA, but as a practical and pastoral guideline for the unique mission context in this synod.



Please remember that it is merely guidance; not all pastors will want to avail themselves of it. We continue to live together with a variety of viewpoints on issues of sexuality with mutual respect and without condemnation for differing interpretations of scripture.

"I am aware that this [guidance] document pushes against our ELCA understanding of marriage as a union of one man and one woman. My own prayer journey for the last two years as this step has been considered by our synod council has been one of questioning: How do we fully support same-gender couples in faithful relationships? How shall I shepherd this process? How do I participate in this decision as a bishop of the ELCA committed to seeking unity in the church when I know that this decision will cause pain and division? How do I feel that God's revelation in Jesus Christ informs this decision?

"This step was not taken self-righteously, but with a love for the church that regards this kind of welcome in our setting as necessary for evangelism and consistent with God's will for inclusion. So finally I chose to give my support to this document in the belief that my role and leadership as bishop must combine adherence to traditional understandings with occasional reverent resistance."

Rev. Robert Rimbo, bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod, writes: "Lutherans are always caught in the middle, living with ambiguity and paradox, seeking to be faithful to God and to others. It is part of our character, even our vocation: we are both catholic and evangelical, proclaiming both law and gospel, always saints and sinners. Because Lutherans do not hold marriage to be a sacrament, though there are, certainly, sacramental overtones, in thirty-five years of officiating at marriages, I have understood my role as a pastor to be, principally, an agent of the state. I believe it could be argued from liturgical history that Luther himself would agree: marriages at which Luther officiated were more often than not held outside of the church building and then celebrated in a service blessing God inside the church building."



## The New England Synod Council Recommends that pastors may... serve as solemnizer for same-gender marriages.

community are part of the public within which he or she is accountable, and that public accountability for an ordained minister includes compliance with state law recognizing such relationships if available in the state where he or she resides, it seems to us that we should also expect and support the same compliance from lay couples, and allow their congregations to host their marriages and permit their pastors to serve as solemnizers on behalf of the state. Recognizing that faithful people can and will come to different conclusions about what constitutes responsible action in such circumstances... the New England Synod Council recommends that pastors who choose to do so may, in accordance with the laws of their state, serve as solemnizer for same-gender marriages. Since any pastor may already decline to solemnize any marriage, this guidance does not place

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# Methodists to Marry LGBT Couples

On October 17, 2011, 896 members of the United Methodist Church (UMC) from congregations in New York State and southern Connecticut announced that they intend to make



weddings available to same-gender couples who meet the legal requirements for marriage. In their announcement, they said marriage will be available to all, gay or straight, despite the discrimination present in the current policy against gay marriage within the United Methodist denomination.

These 900 include 164 members of the clergy and 732 members of the laity, representing 74 congregations of the UMC. Among this number are the complete memberships of six congregations, unanimous in their commitment. This action is part of "We Do! Methodists Living Marriage Equality," which lets all Methodists know who and where are clergy and congregations willing to marry same-gender couples. Since its beginning in 2010, this movement has spread to 19 states and the District of

## This action is part of "We Do! Methodists Living Marriage Equality"

Columbia, and now numbers more than 1000 of the 44,000 clergy worldwide who publicly refuse to discriminate against any of God's children any longer. Thirty-six retired Methodist bishops have called for an end to the ban on ordaining gay clergy in committed relationships.

Following the public announcement on October 17, more than 2500 other Methodist clergy were joined by 11,000 of their laity in signing petitions urging the Council of Bishops to uphold the gay marriage ban.

On November 10, the United Methodist Council of Bishops said in a letter to all 7.8 million members of the United Methodist Church that they will uphold the current Book of Discipline ban on blessing same-gender unions, even in states where such unions are legally supported.

UMC churches are banned from allowing such ceremonies in their facilities, and UMC clergy are banned from officiating. The UMC Book of Discipline says: "Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches." It also refers to homosexuality as "incompatible with Christian teaching."

In their letter, the bishops' council called upon the unity of the church, while acknowledging "deep disagreements and divisions within the church" on this subject.

Efforts to rescind the current policy ban against gay marriage are expected to come up at the General Conference of the United Methodist Church in April 2012, as they have for the last 40 years.

Lutherans Concerned/North America asked in October that its members keep these committed brothers and sisters lifted up in prayer. Their cause is just and right, their organized disobedience bold and risky. Most important, their actions are faithful to the Great Commandment, the message of the Gospel and the injunction to spread that word among all people. We ask that you continue to hold them in your prayers. ▼

## Marriage Matters

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Taking care to note that his statement represents neither an official policy nor set of synod guidelines, Bishop Rimbo said, "I believe that pastors who are invited to officiate at the marriages of same-gender couples in the State of New York should do so. I also believe that pastors who cannot, following their bound conscience, officiate at same-gender marriages should not in any way be forced to do so..."

"Our worship books do not offer a rite specifically worded for a same-gender marriage; in fact, the language is very much that of husband and wife, man and woman. However, because of our Lutheran freedom to adapt liturgical resources and the fact that our worship books are recommended for our congregations as opposed to being imposed, I believe it is rather easy to make

necessary adjustments."

Rev. Marie Jerge, bishop of the Upstate New York Synod, writes: "Nowhere does the social statement authorize ELCA pastors to perform same-gender marriages, but it does say that there can be recognition of same-gender unions (which New York State now calls marriage). It was agreed that this is a matter of pastoral care and authority in the local congregation.... I take local pastoral authority seriously and therefore encourage pastors to act on the basis of their convictions (or bound conscience). I am not planning to discipline any pastor who chooses to preside or congregation that chooses to host when



recognizing a same-gender marriage. I will likewise not discipline any pastor or congregation who refuses to consider it. As we continue to live in a time where there remains disagreement, I would hope that we can be in dialogue across congregational lines and that we will be both tolerant and forgiving of one another.... Pastors have the same rights and responsibilities in regard to same-gender unions as they would with any heterosexual marriage. They can say yes or no."

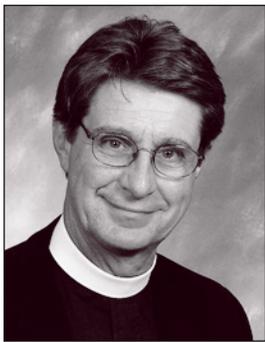
The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) is governed by its own set of documents. In July 2011, delegates of the 13th Biennial ELCIC National Convention approved the following policy statement: "It is the policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada that rostered ministers may, according to the dictates of their consciences as informed by the Gospels, the

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# Reconciling Enmity: Paul, Carl Lee Hailey, and Us

By the Rev. **John Stendahl**

Sometimes disappointment precedes gratitude. So it was that at first I wished we Lutherans had done better than the names given to both the organization *Lutherans Concerned* and its



*Reconciled* (later *Reconciling*) in Christ initiative for congregations. Others had claimed clear, strong names: *Dignity, Integrity, Open, Affirming*; ours seemed by comparison a bit vague and timid, safe and unobtrusive. I experienced a bit of nomenclatural envy.

But in time I appreciated the subtler wisdom of our language. “Lutherans Concerned” had a double meaning. First, it bespoke an identity as people *concerned*, i.e., who cared, indeed worried, about matters worthy of such concern. It did not begin by staking out a position but by declaring both a belonging and a caring. Secondly, understanding the adjective as a passive participle, it bore the reminder that words and policies were not abstractions without cost but concerned—i.e., were actually about and affected—real persons.

Similarly, this theme of reconciliation eventually appeared to me just the right emphasis in describing both motive and process for greater inclusion in our churches. It recognized the task as a concern for the wholeness and healing of the community rather than simply as advocacy for one group against another. More than just rhetorically laying hold of resonant language from St. Paul—itself a smart move among us Lutherans—it signified the grounding of our work in that apostle’s vision.

Paul wrote that “in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself... We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God... We entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. (2 COR. 5:19–6:1) Paul entreated those who *had been reconciled to be reconciled*. Reconciliation in Christ remains a task unfolding, an urgency. Paul had deployed that theme in a struggle for the unity of the cantankerous and fractious Corinthians, and now his words answered those who mistook the passionate raising of concern for a spirit of division. I have witnessed a Pauline *diakonia tes katallages*—ministry of reconciliation—enabling reform in this church

But now we come to a problem, one not caused by the language of reconciliation but coincidentally reflected in it. In the wake of a struggle where some perceive themselves as having lost, or in the face of a present some cannot approve, the word *reconciled* shows up in the phrase *reconciled to*; it becomes not

even so much as acceptance but only resignation. There can be a kind of passive-aggressive peace in relation to adversaries with whom one is forced to coexist. Metaphorical arms folded across the chest, one holds oneself apart. A handshake becomes only necessary politeness rather than any sign of solidarity. There are divides across which there is seen glaring resentment, or, more commonly, simply a studious refusal to look back. If we are not ourselves thus glaring or ignoring, it may nonetheless be we do not perceive how those distanced others perceive or imagine enmity in us. This divide persists, this unreconciled version of reconciliation.

In the pain of this division, we need to recall that the future takes time to arrive. Just humanly, there has to be time for the tending to wounds, time to grieve, time to heal. (And time also, by the way, for celebrations and thanksgivings in which we know others are unable to share.) These realities necessitate degrees of withdrawal and periods or occasions of retreat. Even as we rightly recognize that Christ calls us away from self-absorption, we should resist describing such pulling back in language that is impatient and judgmental. They who feel themselves defeated or bereft may get described as licking their wounds or nursing their bitterness, and they in turn may speak of those who prevailed over them as gloating or smugly resting on supposed spoils or laurels. Such pejorative language may be intended incisively but it more insults than inspires and contributes more to the problem than to the solution. Some may still need time before leaving the incurved places where they shelter, so let us not be too harsh in describing the pace of reconciliation in other lives.

Beyond that caveat, however, there may also be something worth partial affirmation in this frustrating resistance to being or becoming more fully reconciled. Not that there is any excuse for the avoidance of that apostolic mandate, but rather that here, in this difficulty, is a reminder that for such “reconciliation” to be real it must address and stand up to the deeply rooted reality of our alienations. Not just the superficial or easy ones, the ones where practically everybody knows what Jesus would do and what God would want, but the great ruptures that divide us from both God and others.

We have all watched countless melodramas where it was so obvious what was right and good and worthy. The villains in the stories didn’t see it, of course, but their villainy or error made us in the audience all the more united in doing so. We were together in our virtue, we understood and felt alike, we had what our old language calls concord, one heart together.

Cynical jokes about everybody singing *Kumbayah* aside, such concord can be a true intimation and reminder of the unity we share. But the truth to which our present alienations point is that as a definition of reconciliation such concord is at once too little and much. So perhaps we can be grateful for

the present reminder that the mind cannot simply be commanded to understand what it has not understood or the heart to feel what it has not felt. Reconciliation is not just a word for the improved relations of sympathetic friends after a quarrel. It is a word for the peace that is most needed, the difficult peace that is not between those who are already friends but between those who are still estranged. Paul said it was while we were enemies that our reconciliation came (ROMANS 5:10). The saying is both wise and urgent: You don't make peace with your friends; you make peace with your enemies.

I once heard the ethicist Larry Rasmussen speak on the urgency of environmental issues and quote strikingly from the movie version of John Grisham's *A Time to Kill*. The scene he cited was one in which Jake Brigance, a progressive white attorney in Mississippi, is meeting with Carl Lee Hailey, a black man whom Jake is going to defend in the vigilante killing of the men who had raped Hailey's daughter.

Carl Lee says, "See Jake, you think just like them, that's why I picked you; you are one of them, don't you see? Oh, you think you ain't . . . but the fact is you are just like all the rest of them. When you look at me, you don't see a man, you see a black man."

Jake objects, "Carl Lee, I'm your friend."

Carl Lee answers: "We ain't no friends, Jake. . . . Our daughters, Jake; they ain't never gonna play together. . . . America is a wall and you are on the other side. How's a black man ever going to get a fair trial with the enemy on the bench and in the jury box? My life in white hands? You Jake, that's how. You are my secret weapon because you are one of the bad guys. You don't mean to be but you are. It's how you was raised. . . . No matter how you see me, you see me different, you see me like that jury sees me, you are them. . . . If you was on that jury, what would it take to convince you to set me free? That's how you save my ass. That's how you save us both."

(The end of the film suggests a future better than the reality Carl Lee describes, a future in which the two men's daughters will play together, but that's at the end of the film. For all the power of proleptic hope, life is lived in the *not-yetness* of the present.)

If we believe that the reconciliation of which Paul wrote is of saving power, then it must be more than an affirmation of sweet fellowship. It must be peace made with enemies, among those still at odds. We speak of our communion in Christ as a "reconciled diversity" a fine and helpful term, but "diversity" is also too attractive a word for what needs reconciling, altogether too safe a word for what Christ has reconciled. What we need, what we both have in Christ and need to have as his people, is not merely diversity but *reconciled enmity*.

Of course I am not suggesting that we should inflate disagreements with the rhetoric and imagery of war or imagine greater hostility than already exists in the church or the world. There's been all too much of that. But the point in this apparent oxymoron of

"reconciled enmity" is to hear St. Paul's urgent beseeching not merely as a challenge to our alienations but as a call that does not depend first upon their disappearance.

As I have looked at this scriptural word, reconciliation, I've been struck that while in English and most other languages the term develops to suggest forgiveness and emotional healing, the Greek verb involved—*katallasso*—is first drawn from the world of currency and commerce. It has to do with making change so that business can be done. It concerns being able to interact and transact by different currencies or by a common currency. That image of connection in a practical economic community may be helpful to us.

Carl Lee knows he needs Jake and he also knows that ultimately Jake needs him. "*That's how you save*

**What we need is not merely diversity but reconciled enmity.**

*us both.*" This is about doing business together, not about being friends. There's too much at stake—indeed matters of life and death—to wait until after we achieve concord. Like members of opposed communities forced to cooperate to keep their children from killing each other, we've got work to do. "Reconciled" means first just reconciled enough to start doing it. The principle of respect for "bound conscience" was and is meant for *enabling* such engagement, not for evading it.

And then this: if part of the Gospel *business* we need to do is to show, already in our enmities, this reconciliation to an unreconciled world in need of it, we'd better put that on our agenda too. Let's join Paul in beseeching the church. Call it out across the divides, across all our divisions, despite our enmities, and also because of them.

There's business to be done. Carl Lee understood that. ▼

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*John Stendahl is pastor of Lutheran Church of the Newtons in Newton, Massachusetts.*

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## Marriage Matters

*continued from page 13*

Scriptures, the ecumenical creeds and the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, preside at or bless legal marriages according to the laws of the province within which they serve. All rostered ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada are encouraged to exercise due diligence in preparing couples for marriage. All rostered ministers serving congregations are encouraged at all times to conduct their ministry in consultation with the lay leaders in the congregation and with sensitivity to the culture within which the congregation serves." ▼

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*For more on what the ELCA and other Lutheran churches say about marriage, see <http://lcna.org/mm/what-do-lutheran-churches-say>.*



# The Regional Coordinators Meeting, November 2011

Reported by **Wayne Morris**, RC, Region 9

**R**egional Coordinators (RC), staff members and several board members gathered the first weekend of November in Seguin, Texas. Meeting space was graciously offered by Texas

Lutheran University (TLU). This historic invitation was especially amazing to several alumni present who believed they would never see the day when LC/NA would be made welcome at TLU. The Spirit is working miracles each day! The San Antonio chapter people, warm and welcoming, said we brought the first cool spell after months of temperatures over 100.

*Though you were a **minority voice** in another church, you took a **stand** in the name of **Jesus**.*

Our extremely full agenda began with devotions by Kenny Callahan (RC, Region 2). Kenny told of a man who tried repeatedly to rescue a yellow spider he thought was drowning only to be bitten each time by the spider. The spider finally told the man it was his nature to bite, and the man replied his nature was to rescue those in need, no matter the cost. Kenny compared that to the work of the RCs. No matter how often we are hurt, rebuffed, suffer setbacks, we need to continue to work at our tasks moving towards full inclusion.

*LC/NA Regional Coordinators, staff, and board members meet at Texas Lutheran University.*

Taking time only for chapel and meals, we spent a grueling 12 hours in Friday meetings. Emily Eastwood provided us with heartening updates. Co-Chair Nicole García gave us additional training and resources on bisexuality, and transexuality as well as training on privilege (intersection of oppressions). Saturday was almost as intense. One of the most helpful presentations was by Paul Jolly (RC, Region 1) on doing effective congregational presentations. We also practiced story-telling, because telling an effective story is the best way of establishing relationships.

It was very helpful that representatives of the board were present because we reviewed the available resources that work well, others that need to be developed, and still others we felt were useful but not yet available through LC/NA. Since increasing RIC congregations is the focus of LC/NA, the RCs asked for a budget to offset our expenses. Who knew that it would cost so much when we volunteered to do the work we feel called to do?

The highlight of the weekend was Sunday worship at the Lutheran Mission of Seguin. This vibrant mission was formed as a result of congregations withdrawing from the ELCA. Emily Eastwood preached the All Saints Day sermon, and concluded with these words: “Blest are you when people lie about you, slander you, threaten you, and persecute you on account of Jesus. Though you were a minority voice in another church, you took a stand in the name of Jesus. Those who disagreed with you lied, slandered, threatened, and dogged you until it was clear that to stay was simply unhealthy for you, your families and your faith. For those of us who are LGBT, we have known this very pain. Our people leave churches in droves when they come out, but they don’t usually land with a band of prophets in the Silver Center where worship is lively, free, inclusive and welcoming. Most often they lose their faith, seeing church as the enemy rather than a blessing. You have said otherwise. You have made a place where the phrase ‘all are welcome’ really does mean all. You may have thought you were powerless, but a trio of voices, Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, called you out of that place of pain to new life. Your courage and persistence to answer that call and to declare with all the saints God’s extravagant welcome have given a gift of countless measure. We thank you. We will pray for you. The road will not be easy, but you have everything you need; with God all things are possible. Here in this place, blest are you, holy are you. Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kin-dom of God. Right now. Amen.”

René García then presented the RIC certificate to the congregation remarking that he never expected to be out as a gay man in a crowd of so many men in cowboy boots! ▼

PHOTO BY PHIL SOUCY

# Compass to Compassion

By **Philip W Moeller**, PhD., Director of  
International Programs, LC/NA

**T**he theme for the 2011 Fundraising Tour for Bishop Christopher Senyonjo in the United States was “Compass to Compassion.” The tour lasted three months and included

stopovers in fourteen cities. *[Editor's note: Bishop Christopher Senyonjo is the former Anglican Bishop of Uganda. Bp. Senyonjo established St. Paul's Reconciliation and Equity Center in Kampala. See <http://stpaulsfoundation.com>. St. Paul's helps those suffering from poverty, spousal abuse, and HIV/AIDS]* The bishop spoke of compassion as a series of steps in which one opens mind/heart, listens, feels, and acts. Action is key; one does not stand by on the side. Compassion applied to LGBT issues, the bishop admonishes should be done in a holistic way. This is

The **discussions** provided a **rich opportunity** for learning about Uganda.

the model for his St. Paul's Reconciliation and Equality Center in Uganda. It is a model which resonates well with the LC/NA lens of working at the intersection of oppressions domestically and internationally.

Financially, the tour met its goals, although these goals were modest compared to the needs for program expansion. LC/NA was instrumental in supporting the fundraising, and the bishop presented an award to LC/NA at the Annual Banquet of the Metropolitan Washington DC Chapter in September. The Center has also gained international recognition through the work of the St. Paul's Foundation for International Reconciliation, and, as



*The Earth, missing the portions where homosexuality is a crime punishable by imprisonment or execution.*

a result of these efforts, a substantial grant was offered by Elton John.

This was the third tour for the bishop sponsored by the Foundation. All tours have included visits and dialogue with members of the U.S. Government as well as speaking engagements at the United Nations. The particularly noteworthy conclusion of this tour was a two-day conference held at Union Theological Seminary in New York, using the theme of the tour as the focus for discussions. The Executive Director, Director of Communications, and the Director of International Programs of LC/NA were all in attendance at the conference. Also in attendance were representatives of both faith-based and secular groups, including the U.S. Department of State.

The discussions provided a rich opportunity for learning about the particularities in Uganda and other African countries, as well as obtaining an update of where action is required and how to do it. Jeff Scarlett provided a pithy overview of how fundamentalist support is flooding into Africa and the distorted message they are providing to a generally under-educated and ill-informed population in Africa. The State Department presented the Obama Administration's strong support of LGBT issues as an essential aspect of human rights. Various concerns and approaches were voiced by international organizations. Personal testimonies were provided, including that from a young woman in the first week of her asylum in the United States. Strategic issues and practical paths were outlined. [see [www.compasstocompassion.org](http://www.compasstocompassion.org), for more text and videos]

The stimulating and poignant discussion resulted in the formation of an action-oriented group, the COMPASS Coalition (Coalition Offering Minorities Protection Against Sexual Stigma). The working group that organized the New York conference will continue to provide leadership to the Compass Coalition. Its members come from all over the country, but can readily link electronically. It is hoped that this mechanism will enable greater integration and readiness for faith-based and secular responses to the “intersection of oppressions.”

Sadly, within the same time frame that this coalition was being announced, there was another gay-beating in Uganda. The young man, on the staff of RADO (Rainbow and Diversity Organization Uganda), survived the beating but is still under observation. Additionally, we have seen efforts to bring the Bahati Bill back on the floor of parliament in Uganda. There is a lot of work for this new coalition. Uganda is but one of many countries, including often even the United States, where oppression continues to bare its teeth. In Nigeria, at the federal level, the Senate just approved an anti-gay marriage bill, and “populist groups” called for harsher actions. LC/NA can proudly stand with the Compass Coalition, but we, as an organization, will need to consider how we can use our scarce resources to best assist. This story will continue. ▼

# Rostering a Varied Story Since CWA2009

RIC article by **Carol M. Dunn**

**T**he tales of re-rostered or first-time-rostered pastors since the 2009 Churchwide decisions are long and varied, but a look at the experiences of three pastors begins to sketch the picture.

These clergy members are in Chicago, the Twin Cities area, and Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. They are all men, with two now in calls with Lutheran congregations, and one awaiting a call to part-time ministry. No single story is just like any other story, and even the processes are not the same.

**John Roberts** tells of graduating in 1976 from what became Seminex, struggling to find a congregation (like the other 150 graduates, he received no denominational assistance in the search). He received a call to minister in the Missouri Synod, ordination in the AELC, and then served as an LCA assistant pastor while working a secular job. He then was on the clergy roster with an ELCA church in Michigan until, nearly 20 years ago, he came out and was told to leave



immediately and resign from the roster. During the following years, he attended the Episcopal Church but came back to the ELCA as a member and began the return to the roster after 2009. He has been approved for reinstatement and is seeking a call. His hope is for part-time service now and eventually wants to do supply work.

Starting in 1979, **Bill Knott** was pastor at congregations in the Washington, D.C., area and in West Virginia. He and his partner of 15 years have been in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida for nearly 10 years. Abiding Savior Lutheran Church leaders and membership chose to keep him as their pastor in spite of the censure imposed by ELCA rules. He worked for the county school system during the time he was off the roster, while the congregation remained as active in the Florida-Bahamas Synod as possible. In October of 2011, they worshipped with joy as the synod bishop, Rev. Edward Benoway, installed as their called pastor Bill Knott, the man who has been with them for a decade. (For a more complete look at his story, check the Fall 2011 *Concord*.)



“Living in the gray,” is how **Brad Froslee** describes years of his experiences. After seminary at Harvard Divinity School and an internship in an ELCA congregation in California, he served a progressive Presbyterian congregation. During



## Notes from the International Program Committee (IPC)

**Internationally, things are moving up and down for LGBT issues. Alarm bells and garlands intermix, but it is not a time to be asleep.**

**“Mesoamerica:”** Human rights defenders, including LGBT advocates, in Mexico, Honduras and El Salvador reported on increased attacks and threats against defenders in the Mesoamerican region, during a hearing, “Risk And Vulnerability Of Human Rights Defenders In The Region Of Mesoamerica” at the 143th Session of the Inter American Commission on Human Rights. Such actions are on the increase, with some of increase perhaps due to better reporting

**Malaysia:** The Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam wants to amend Shariah law to prosecute gay men and lesbians despite existing laws. Meanwhile, in neighboring Singapore, things look like a ping-pong game for LGBT acceptance. There, however, the financial impact of “LGBT” money is seen as an undercover “pressure” for acceptance.

**Nepal:** Almost four years after Nepal’s Supreme Court recognized the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, the south Asian country may get a new constitution that secures their rights.

**Uganda:** Hope for reconciliation in Uganda was recently marred by the beating of a local advocate and efforts to bring the Bahati Bill back onto the floor of parliament. The IPC has been in communication with the U.S. State Department on these developments.

**The Philippines:** Despite its Roman Catholic culture, a flexible view of sexuality has allowed gays to find a place in the community in the Philippines, the issue of sexuality being seen as family business. Some

of this acceptance can be attributed to the positive portrayal of gays and lesbians on popular television programs — the power of the media, indeed.

**Access to Services and Risk of Death for Transgender people:** The reality faced by transgender people, the experience of identity, sexuality and ways of living life are a constant challenge for universal access to HIV/AIDS services. Fortunately, there is an increasing call to an ethical duty to respect and exercise human rights for an historically stigmatized and discriminated group. Note that transgender issues abound globally. Transgender Europe’s Trans Murder Monitoring project reveals 221 killings of transgender people in the last 12 months. In total, since January 2008 the murders of 755 transgender people have been reported in Europe.

**Things to Do - Decriminalization:** One of the key concerns is the existence of legislation in more than 70 countries defining homosexuality as a criminal act. The task of decriminalization is certainly a key element of the Compass to Compassion Strategy (see companion article). Efforts are underway to organize an international conference in Washington, D.C. either before or after the Reconciling Works assembly of LC/NA (July 6–10, 2012). Be sure to look for the IPC-sponsored workshops at the assembly. On HIV/AIDS: Also this summer the International HIV/AIDS Conference will take place in Washington, D.C. (July 22–27). In Europe: the European Forum is meeting in May in Amsterdam. Combine your vacation with attending this event.

—Philip Moeller, Director, IPC

this time, both the ELCA and the Presbyterian Church struggled with ordination issues. Five years into the Presbyterian call, Brad was invited to submit mobility papers to Calvary Lutheran in Minneapolis and called as pastor. But, because he was in a partnered relationship, Calvary's pulpit was declared vacant and he was placed on leave from call. In 2009, he was present in Minneapolis with friends and colleagues as the policy vote occurred at the churchwide assembly. He says this was a time of "great celebration, of amazement, of delayed grief. It was powerful to sense the Spirit's presence at the assembly and to look at the faces of people—many now wonderful friends—who, over the years, have

been sojourners and witnesses for welcome and hope." Now, his congregation at Calvary grows and rejoices with its called pastor, his partner, and their newly baptized son. According to Froslee, the growth has been mostly straight families who want an inclusive and welcoming place to worship, and are finding it at Calvary.

If you would like to have your story of first-time or re-rostering considered for a future Concord, email [concordRIC@lcna.org](mailto:concordRIC@lcna.org). ▼

## "In Honor of..."

In Honor of...		Honored by...
Rev. Kirk Anderson & Sheri Brown	In honor of the witness and ministry of Rev. Kirk Anderson & Sheri Brown	Allen & Marie Harper
Anna & Jennifer	In honor of our daughter, Anna, and her partner of ten years, Jennifer.	Marcia L. Lindseth
Charlette Beckler	In honor of Charlette Beckler	Rebecca Fike
Adam Bost	In honor of Adam Bost, a great son and friend	Sharon & John Bost
Sheri Brown	To God's Spirit moving within Sheri Brown	Rev. Kirk E. Anderson
Joe Brown	In memory of Joe Brown	Mike Crandall
Diane Nelson DeLange	In memory of Diane Nelson DeLange	Jeannine M. Janson
Dennis Douglas	In honor of the work of Dennis Douglas, Director of Music Ministries, St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Monona, WI	Members of the Sanctuary Choir at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Monona, Wis.
Emily Eastwood	In honor of Emily Eastwood	David Moen
Emily Eastwood	In honor of Emily Eastwood's commitment and hard work on behalf of LCNA's mission	Rev. Vicki L. Pedersen & Rev. Martha Lang
Robert Matthew Eastwood	In memory of Robert Matthew Eastwood	Bob & Martha Eastwood, Deanna Eichler & Leslee Froehlich; Deborah Wilson
Paul W. Egertson	In memory of Paul W. Egertson	Greg Egertson
ELCA in Idaho Falls	In honor of the ELCA community in Idaho Falls, Idaho	Wayne & Cherie Stevens
Joanne Engquist & Kari Lipke	In honor of the wedding of Joanne Engquist & Kari Lipke	Chris Pollari & Ann Fereatz; and 14 anonymous
First Lutheran Church, St. Peter, Minn.	In honor of the people of First Lutheran Church, St. Peter, Minn., a Reconciling in Christ congregation.	Joanne Engquist & Kari Lipke
Roberto Flores	In honor of Father Roberto Flores	Kenneth E. Rozek
Daniel Fujimoto	In memory of Daniel Fujimoto	Deanna, Bennie, Kevin, and Kathie Badgett
René García	In honor of René García, friend of the family	Rev. Kirk E. Anderson & Sheri Brown
Rev. Ginger Georgulas	In memory of Rev. Ginger Georgulas	Bob & Martha Eastwood, Fred & A.M. Krueger
Rev. Anita Hill	In honor of Rev. Anita Hill's 60th birthday	Dan Ranum
James C. Hill	In memory of my brother, James C. Hill, 1945–2010.	Rev. Anita C. Hill
Johnny & Kenn	In honor of Johnny & Kenn	Kenneth W. Anderson
Jonathan and Mike	For Jonathan and Mike	Allen G. Holcomb
Marie Kent	In memory of Marie Kent, one of the founders of Lutherans Concerned	Rev. Barbara Lundblad & Nicole Johnson
Kathe King & Dave Eitland	In honor of Kathe King and Dave Eitland	John Stoltenberg & Joseph Hamilton
Lutherans Concerned Board	In honor of the Lutherans Concerned Board	Mary Farmer
Michelle Miller & Julie Sevig	In honor of the Holy Union of Michelle Miller & Julie Sevig	Thad Fisher
Doyle Morris	In memory of Doyle Morris	Wayne Morris
Vaughn Roste & Erica Roste Dolamr	In honor of my grown kids, Vaughn Roste and Erica Roste Dolmar who are both great supporters of LCNA and whom I love dearly.	Rita Roste
Thomas	In honor of my partner, Thomas	Adam K. Krueger
Dale Truscott and Kin Xuxa	In recognition of the work of Dale Truscott and Kin Xuxa	The Jennifer M. Lee and Jeffrey S. Chapski Family Fund of the Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund

# Anti-Bullying Work Continues

In August 2011, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted overwhelmingly to “encourage new partnerships among the churchwide organization, synods, congregations, campus and

outdoor ministries, Lutheran School Associations, Lutherans Concerned/North America, Lutheran Social Services organizations, public schools, counseling centers, and other governmental organizations in order to support the prevention of bullying, harassment, and other related violence.” Below are short reports of some of the anti-bullying work being done in Lutheran contexts.

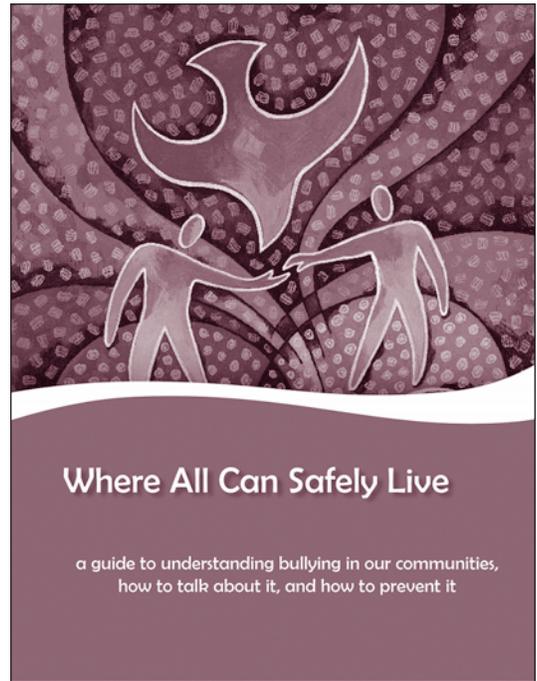
The **Central Florida Chapter** of Lutherans Concerned sponsored a community forum on bullying, especially anti-gay bullying in middle schools. A panel discussion was led by three professionals who have worked with young victims of gay bullying: Shelbi Day, a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union, Tampa branch; Steve Kornell, a St. Petersburg City Council member and Pinellas schools social worker and the first openly gay person elected to office in St. Petersburg; and the Rev. Buz

**Gay-straight alliances** in schools have helped strengthen **self-esteem** and diminish bullying.

Van Horne, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Petersburg. Participants discussed laws and policies already in place to help prevent bullying and to guide responses to it—but the law is not enough on its own. What is also crucial, Kornell noted, is to enforce the law, which doesn't always happen, especially when parents aren't supportive of their LGBT children. However, he also noted points of hope, including the establishment of gay-straight alliances in schools, which have helped strengthen the self-esteem of gay youths and diminish bullying. The alliances, which are initiated by students, provide a safe and supportive environment for LGBT youth.

The Rev. **Dr. Pam Challis**, pastor of Living Faith Lutheran Church (Santa Clarita, California), used LC/NA's *Where All Can Safely Live* anti-bullying curriculum for a presentation at California Lutheran University.

Kenny Callahan, LC/NA Co-Regional Coordinator for Region 2, used *Where All Can Safely Live* in a workshop at St. Matthew Lutheran Church (North Hollywood, California) with a group of high school students who attend a transitional school program for kids involved in gangs or who have other legal problems. Kenny reports that “It was easy to engage the students and help them discuss when they have bullied and felt bullied.” Kenny will also use the curriculum at a workshop at Los Angeles



Children's Hospital at their drop-in program for LGBT youth who are HIV+ and have been kicked out of their family homes.

The **South Texas Chapter** held an anti-bullying workshop and evening prayer service for congregation members and leaders at Christ Lutheran Church (Alamo Heights, Texas) in November. Chapter member Lu Behr, writing for the San Antonio Express-News, said “As people of faith, we should be at the forefront of the process of healing for the hurting among us. We must be willing to listen to the pain of youth — the bullied and the bully. We must be willing to hear the hard facts of harassment people receive because of their sexual orientation or other differences, all of which single them out for victimization. Whether formally or informally, congregations should teach and model empathy, respect, cooperation, and negotiation skills in dealing with this issue. The families involved need our outreach, too. And this can only work if we're ready and willing to intervene. And like other moral issues championed by the church, our advocacy must extend into political arenas. We must advocate for non-bullying policies in our churches, schools, and youth sports leagues.”

The **LGBTQ Task Force of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod** held an anti-bullying educational event and will likely be sponsoring a second event focusing on creating safe spaces. The anti-bullying resolution in that synod included encouragement for congregations to adopt their own anti-bullying policies.

The **Greater Milwaukee Synod** hosted a half-day, synod-wide anti-bullying training workshop in September at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church (Wauwatosa, Wisconsin). ▼

*Where All Can Safely Live* is available as a free download at [www.lcna.org/resources/anti-bullying-resources-menu](http://www.lcna.org/resources/anti-bullying-resources-menu).