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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.

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream"

—Amos 5:24

The words of the prophet Amos ring in our ears. God is not calling for solemn festivals. God does not want to hear our whining about our own hang-ups. Instead, God calls forth justice to flow over each and every one of us. Let the

rushing waters of justice flow from God, through us, and out to the ends of the earth.

This edition of *Concord* is gathered round the upcoming assembly, and is an exhortation to attend.

You are invited to participate in *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters*, the biennial assembly of Lutherans Concerned/North America and Reconciling in Christ conference. The assembly will be held at



Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 7-11, 2010.

Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters is more than a conference. It is an opportunity to explore and live out the work of reconciliation that we are called to do. Justice requires reconciliation, and reconciliation takes effort. Throughout our time together, we will work on justice issues from the intersection of oppressions (racism, sexism,

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Reflections on the Church Council Actions in April

On April 10-11, the ELCA Church Council meeting in Chicago moved the decision of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly into policy by replacing the language in church documents that excluded ministers in committed same-gender relationships with a policy that allows congregations and organizations to call a fully-qualified minister in a committed, same-gender relationship. And, the Council also approved the way to reinstate ministers who have been removed from the roster because of the previous policy and to receive ELM pastors onto the roster of the ELCA. The Council also made the benefits of the ELCA pension plan available to clergy and employees in committed, same-gender relationships.

There were no votes on the Council opposing the adoption of the revised documents, the

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The Editor

DALE TRUSCOTT



In Ross Murray's excellent Interim Executive Director's article in this issue, he writes of a new "master frame" that is emerging in our society, "We are sure it is going to include a sense of common humanity and interdependence. No longer will we be focusing on only me and what is good for me alone. We are starting to understand that our lives and our salvations are wrapped up with one another."

In various places in the Old Testament, the people of Israel are referred to as the *liqhal* (liqhal), the community, the assembly, from the Hebrew verb *liqhal*, to assemble, to congregate.

I believe that the unrest and protest we are experiencing in our nation over health care legislation and other moves in the current executive and

our population already know: that this group is now a statistical minority in America. The sum total of northern Euro-American descent folks no longer adds up to more than 50% of the population. And that higher percentage will never return. Beyond that, the Enlightenment and modern philosophical model and value system is transitioning right along with the population. Commentators are already noting that, while we are recovering from the ongoing Great Recession, the work force in America, yes, the society in America, will look quite different than it did before. While they

We represent the return of humanity as the People of God.

congressional administrations and the parallel protests by ELCA church members and congregations, and some congregational departures from the denomination, can be viewed as the gasps of the last generation of the Enlightenment and "modern" periods in Western civilization. These folks seem to be trying hard to hold on to the notion that white, straight, northern Euro-Americans are the caretakers and leaders of society over the peoples of the second and third worlds as well as over the minorities of our own nation.

Surely the new census will confirm what the calculators of

will talk about the export of manufacturing jobs and the growing dependence on the technology and service sectors, I see behind it the shift that Ross sees, from rugged individualism to interdependence and networks. We are becoming a "Facebook world."

Today on CNN, Pr. Joel Hunter of *Northland: A Church Distributed*, here in Orlando was boasting about his new Facebook church format and that he counts President Obama as one who seems to be meeting his spiritual needs with his Blackberry instead of joining a "physical" church. General consensus of the commentators on CNN was

that this is indicative of the direction of our society, but that online community also leads to real time face-to-face community.

As the Patriarch Jacob was dying, Joseph came to him with his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, and received his father's blessing. Jacob said, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and he blessed me, and said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers; I will make of you a company *liqhal* of peoples...'"

(GEN. 48:4 NRSV)

While we continue to work for full inclusion of LGBT people into the life of the Lutheran churches of North America and beyond, we are part of a broader and deeper movement, which, I believe, reflects that ancient Hebrew notion of a community of peoples, a *liqhal*. Yes, we are counter-cultural in contrast to the screaming and yelling of those "tea party" folks and their congressional allies. But, we represent the return of an ancient understanding of humanity as the *people of God* now transformed by technology and the post-modern environment.

Let Justice Roll expresses this new society in many ways. When I joined LC/NA in the late 1980s, assemblies were gatherings of the weary for fun and fellowship. We celebrated within a monoculture of our own creation and it was good. We are a much different people today. Our acronyms get longer because we represent a broader, more inclusive movement. We use phrases like "full inclusion" that speak clearly of the company of peoples that we, the people of God, are. Our agenda celebrates diversity and inclusion at the same time. We are people who celebrate the newness that God is bringing in the 21st century, a newness encapsulated by a very ancient word, *liqhal*, the assembly of the people of God. ▼

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Interim Executive Director



ROSS MURRAY

[Note: Ross Murray is the Interim Executive Director during the period of Emily Eastwood's requested temporary medical leave of absence to regain her health.]

We are certainly in a *kairos* time! Opportunities have presented themselves every day since last August. For such a time as this, Lutherans Concerned/North America needs to move forward boldly, moving with the church towards full inclusion, the advancement of social justice and spreading the Gospel.

I've been learning about movements lately, and that is informing the strategy that LC/NA is taking. As a North American culture, we are moving away from a master frame that thinks primarily in terms of individualism. Our understanding of individualism still has strong resonance in our culture, but there is a new, more progressive frame that is rising up in our collective consciousness. We

Our lives and our *salvations* are wrapped up with one another.

don't totally know what this new frame is going to look like, but we are sure it is going to include a sense of common humanity and interdependence. No longer will we be focusing only on me and what is good for me alone. We are starting to understand that our lives and our salvations are wrapped up with one another. Christ and Scripture are quite clear on this: we are all of us keepers of our brothers and sisters – all of them.

The 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly was a watershed moment that moved us from the edge to an integral part of the ongoing ministry and witness of the Lutheran Church. With the implementation of the ministry policies, clergy who have been shut out from ministry and service to the church will be brought back into the full life of the ELCA. Congregations have the freedom to strengthen the relationship between same-gender couples by publicly supporting them within their faith community. As we start to live into this new policy of full participation together, we will find

new challenges and opportunities that we will have to face...not individually, but as the body of Christ together. It will not be the decisions or actions of a one or two people, but all of us together, that will move the Lutheran Church into a fuller embrace of its LGBT members.

This summer, as we gather at *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters*, the LC/NA Biennial Assembly and RIC Conference, we will be exploring LC/NA's strategy at this *kairos* time. Miguel de la Torre is going to help us see how the LGBT movement and the immigration movement are really one and the same. Mary Lowe is going to help us understand the growing study of queer theory and what relationship it has with Lutheran theology. Jeremy Posadas is going to lead us through a bible study that is going to guide our vision beyond our own lives to understand our role in God's great creation. We are going to talk significantly about the next steps that are going to move the Lutheran church ever closer to the vision of full participation. We are going to find out how we are all swept up in God's flood of justice, a flood that will impact you and me and people that we haven't even met.

Of particular note, Saturday night is going to be a time of celebration. We are going to commemorate the gains made in the ELCA by returning to the scene of the vote. Our worship at Central Lutheran Church is open to the public. If you have friends and family in the Twin Cities area, please invite them to join us for worship. We won't plan on a tornado this time, but we will include a Celebration of Shared Ministry that recognizes and affirms the ministry that has been done across the Lutheran communion by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, and the straight allies that have worked so hard and effectively alongside them for so many years. We will hold our banquet and awards in the Minneapolis Convention Center, even getting to return to the hall to offer the cheer that has been stuck in our throats for nearly a year. We will celebrate, not only for us, but for all those who are blessed by the Church's vote for full participation. Who is blessed? All are blessed, even those who don't think they are.

Our time together will be vital to knowing how we take advantage of this moment. Lutherans Concerned/North America will continue to work until the policy of inclusion turns into a practice that allows pastors to be called in according to their gifts and talents, and not by identity features. We will cultivate new RIC congregations, freed by the new policy of the ELCA to welcome people of all sexual orientations and gender identities into the full life of the congregation. We will continue to organize and advocate for full participation in all the Lutheran denominations, and in the wider world. To continue to do this work takes considerable resources. We will work hard, but we need your help to do it.

For such a time as this, we need dedicated people who will reach out to cultivate new RIC congregations willing to welcome people of all sexual orientations

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RIC Settings

Added to the Roster since last issue

First Immanuel Lutheran Church, Portland, Oregon

McMinnville Cooperative Ministries, McMinnville, Oregon

Messiah Community Church, Denver, Colorado

Saint Ansgar Lutheran Church, Portland, Maine

Soul Café, Hood River, Oregon

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, McMinnville, Oregon

Southeast Minnesota Synod

For the complete list of RIC congregations, synods, and organizations, go to our website at www.lcna.org

Church Council Actions

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pension plan inclusion, and the rite of reception for those Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries pastors who were ordained *extra ordinem*. There were abstentions based on conscience but no nay votes.

The ELCA has reached two milestones long sought by the movement for full inclusion. Prohibitions against qualified people in a same-gender relationship

...a pathway that frees the gifts of ELCA members to pursue ministry and mission with new vigor.

serving on the ELCA's roster of ministers have been eliminated. And that created a pathway that frees the gifts of ELCA members to pursue ministry and mission with new vigor. Each of these steps is crucial for both continued healing and the church's bold walk into a more just future.

These actions are important, because they are a major milestone along the journey of full inclusion.

Ross Murray, Interim Executive Director of LC/NA, looking back on the weekend, said, "As those of us gathered at the ELCA churchwide headquarters in Chicago reflected on the importance of what was to take place, we were struck by how far we had come. We recalled how the former policy prohibiting 'practicing homosexuals from the ministry of this church' was hastily crafted while the ELCA was still forming. We lived with that policy for the entire history of the ELCA—until today. Along the way, we responded to the call to 'live together faithfully,' continuing as one church even after the rejection of the first rostering recommendations. At the churchwide assembly in Chicago 2007, we, the church, agreed to live with a recommendation that bishops and synods 'refrain and restrain' from harsh punishments for ministers and congregations, even though the exclusionary policy still remained. But now, at long last, the church has a policy that recognizes the

gifts of its members to spread the good news of God in Christ Jesus and that will allow the return of those who have been removed or alienated from rostered leadership solely on the basis of the old policy."

Bishop Mark Hanson said that one of the results of the Council's actions would be new life in the church through new leaders. Bishop Hanson also thanked the Church Council for shepherding this task in a most thoughtful way. He lifted the Conference of Bishops' participation up as key to the process.

It is appropriate that this policy change was formally enacted in the Easter season. Just as the women found that the stone was rolled away from the empty tomb, we now find that the policy that had blocked so many people from fulfilling their calling has been removed. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will live into this policy, just as the church lives into the news of the Resurrection, until that Pentecost day when the Holy Spirit descends on us all, performing signs and miracles!

Pastor Chris Berry, Convener of the LC/NA Legislative Team, said, "Along with the votes taken at the churchwide assembly last August, the actions taken by the church council have given us cause to rejoice with all the saints of the church in this season of resurrection and new life. Now, as we rejoice, it is time to rededicate our lives to the continuing work of building up the realm of God in our congregations, communities, synods, the nation and the world. In the fourth verse to the hymn, Have No Fear, Little Flock, we find fitting words, 'Thankful hearts raise to God; Thankful hearts raise to God; for God stays close beside you, in all things works with you; Thankful hearts raise to God.'"

As we reflected on the great amount work and effort it took, we observed a paradox. On one hand, in order to follow God's call for justice, the former policy forced us, as a community, to restrict how we could use our gifts. Many of us spent considerable time and effort working to make the ELCA a more inclusive church. However, even within a relatively narrow focus on the policy concerning LGBT people's role within the church, we have lifted up crucial questions for the church. What is the relationship of sexuality to salvation in Christ? What is the diversity in God's wondrous creation? What is sinful? How do Lutherans read and interpret

scripture? Who continues to face barriers to ministry and mission? How do we journey together faithfully, in spite of so many differences?

What some people have dismissed as a narrow issue has both opened up and profoundly deepened our moral and theological life. God, indeed, works in mysterious ways.

Pastor Berry continued, "A new line has been drawn by the ELCA. A line that no longer excludes people who are in committed, same-gender relationships, a line that welcomes the gifts, ministries and lives of these faithful stewards of God's gifts into full participation in the rostered ministry of this church."

Although full-participation is more a reality than we thought it would be two years ago, there is still much to do, much to pray about. The work of reconciliation and renewal lies in front of all of us. No simple task. The work of Reconciling in Christ as a mark that Cornelius indeed has met Peter will continue, with more vigor.

The ELCA continues to be heavily involved in a myriad of issues as it reaches out in Christ's name and mission. We pray that our well-earned celebration as a community of reconciliation will renew us, will energize us to go yet another mile with even more joy and less fear, together with the whole people of God, as we follow Christ in love, healing, and abundant life. The church is indeed one; the body of Christ is one.

Since the August decision to change policy, we have heard from many of you that it feels as though celebration is "stuck in our throats." Verily, the time has come to clear our throats. Currently, censures are being lifted from congregations, for which we can celebrate. Soon, we will start to see pastors received and reinstated across the whole church. By the time we gather together in Minneapolis at *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters*, we will be ready to shout out for joy! We hope that you can join us in July to add your voice to the chorus of people singing praise and thanksgiving to God.

Finally, there are acknowledgements to make. There are so many people who have worked to right the wrong policy of the ELCA for so long. Among them, we offer thanks to God for the past and present service of the Goodsoil Legislative Team, the Regional Coordinators, Board, and staff of LC/NA, countless volunteers in congregations and synods, and the working group of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries. ▼

Upcoming Trainings on Building an Inclusive Church

Visit www.lcna.org for more information on upcoming trainings. If you would like to host a training in your area, please contact Ross Murray at 651-665-0861 or rossm@lcna.org.

FROM THE DESK OF THE Development Vice- Chair



RICHARD ANDERSEN

Leaving a Legacy

Most of us consider our personal finances to be a private matter and yet discussions of money can't be avoided. Have you defined your own values about money? Most of the time we relate to money as something separate from ourselves - a "thing" to be managed, lost, spent, or saved - but rarely do we appreciate the use of money, as a representation of our values (that which we care about).

Consider how your core values regarding money influence the choices you will make about end of life gifts. No matter what a person's age the discussion of what happens to your possessions at the end of life should not be put off. One outcome of your

Consider how your **core values** regarding **money** influence the **choices** you will make about end of **life** gifts.

discussion might be a decision to leave a legacy gift. For a Reconciling Lutheran, a decision to designate LC/NA as the recipient of a gift seems to be a logical outcome.

As you work through your personal finances consider where leaving a legacy might come into play. Have you spoken with a loved one about your money and what would happen to your possessions when you are no longer living? A discussion about values and money can help you in your decisions about what you might choose to leave as a bequest at the end of life.

Here are a few steps to consider as you talk money, values and leaving a legacy:

- Identify your values: Make a list of the people and the things you really care about.
- Talk with a friend, partner or family member about how money influences the choices you make.
- In conversation with another person distinguish money as a tool for transaction versus money as a means of interaction/transformation. Identify ways in which you use money to further a cause you care about.
- Distinguish between what you have and what you need.
- Create a budget and a net worth statement.
- Discuss a variety of ways to express values through charitable giving.

Creating personal legacies to further the work of Lutherans Concerned/North America

We will help you identify your values and create personal legacies which extend the work of Lutherans Concerned/North America. Through legacy gifts, we seek to help match our donor intentions with the mission of LC/NA. This work is helping to secure our ministry for decades to come.

Here are some ways to leave a legacy through the Endowment of LC/NA:

- In your Will: Designate a specific dollar amount or percentage of assets to LC/NA.
- Consider the use of other assets (e.g. stocks, bonds, real estate) for your charitable gift.
- Name LC/NA as a beneficiary of your IRA or pension plan.
- Purchase a new life insurance policy naming LC/NA as the beneficiary or as a partial beneficiary.
- Name LC/NA as a beneficiary of an existing life insurance policy or owner and beneficiary.
- Talk to your financial advisor/legal counsel about naming LC/NA in a charitable trust.
- Encourage family members and friends to consider leaving a legacy to LC/NA.

Becoming a Reconciling Lutheran is a life-long journey. One way to provide a life-long commitment is to create a legacy gift. We invite you to make a planned gift to support the LC/NA ministry of reconciliation. You may sign a "letter of intent" to indicate a legacy gift.

We believe faith is a lifelong journey. Your support helps promote healing and positive self-esteem for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people of faith. Thank you for your continued financial support of LC/NA and thank you for considering a life-long legacy gift. ▼

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!

Name _____

Old Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

New Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

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.

Celebrations

Begin in Reconciling in Christ Congregations

In the wake of the August 2009 Churchwide Assembly decisions, one might have thought RIC congregations- the most overtly welcoming groups within the ELCA- would have scheduled many celebrations. This has not necessarily been the case. Congregations large and small, all across the country, have held services recognizing and commending the decisions, but have respectfully refrained from actions that might be interpreted as setting up a dichotomy between those who favored and those who opposed the votes, or any sense of “we won/you lost.”

For example, some refrained entirely from celebration in order to “live in the tension” which results from differences of opinion on the Minneapolis decisions. At Prince of Peace in Clifton Park, New York, the Rev. Jeff Silvernail said, “we openly and publicly welcome and affirm all people, but to celebrate the Churchwide Assembly’s decision would endanger our journey together.”

In Chicago, Pr. David Lewis set any tension at Salem Lutheran Church to rest in a review of reactions to the CWA decisions. His remarks lifted up three emotions: “Sadness because of conflict and

Congregations have **celebrated** but have **refrained** from “we won/you lost.”

schism; Anger at church leadership for being hesitant since the 1950’s to lead, and because of their hesitancy, permitting these issues to become divisive and destructive; and Gratitude because [if] schism will happen, let schism happen because we chose to do the right thing to proclaim the love of God through Christ Jesus without hesitancy or reservation.” Pr. Lewis concluded “It is our intention to minister to those who feel broken by churchwide actions and welcome those who are restored by the same actions; for it is the welcoming of those who are restored that will heal those who are broken.”

In December in San Francisco, St. Francis Lutheran held a newly named “Feast of Hope” in recognition of Churchwide Assembly decisions. The Rev. Anita Hill, St. Paul-Reformation Church, Minneapolis, was guest preacher. For 15 years, the congregation has held a “Feast of Expulsion” marking their removal from the ELCA for policy violation concerning clergy in same-gender relationships. But now, Rev. Robert M. Goldstein, lead pastor, said the church council “thought ‘hope’



Ross Murray and Emily Eastwood address a Twin Cities cold weather celebration party.

was the most accurate name ... to accent the future, and not live in the past.”

A strong sense of welcoming those who have been excluded was present at St. Paul’s Lutheran, Clearwater, Florida. They held a “Home for Christmas” concert at which an ensemble from the area’s gay men’s chorus sang and led the church choir, congregation, and some 200 friends in traditional carols. The service began with a welcoming, including the thought that “some have never found a church that accepts us as we are, the beautiful way that God made us. Some of us are still waiting to be welcomed home.” Rev. Jon Culp, St. Paul’s pastor, read lessons and offered a blessing. (Check the LC/NA blog for the opening call to worship.) A month later, the service on RIC Sunday featured rainbow streamers modeled on those used at the Minneapolis Goodsoil worship, with hymns and sermon confirming that all are God’s children, no litmus tests allowed.

The Twin Cities chapter of Lutherans Concerned held its own event, and this one was a party. Region 3 Coordinator Joan Duke said, “Despite not so great Minnesota winter weather, we had nearly 100 people. Ross (Murray) and Emily (Eastwood) extended thanks to all, especially to the many volunteers at CWA. Reporting on implementation efforts, Emily inspired us to keep on working for full inclusion and welcome for all.”

In Raleigh, North Carolina, senior pastor Rev. Dr. Royall A. Yount, Jr. reviewed his congregation’s history with several issues of discrimination, a history that resulted in their becoming an RIC congregation. He concluded with a summary of the Churchwide Assembly, indicating that Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church was “ahead of the curve” by becoming RIC when it did.

Lisa Frenz, Music Director at Mt. Carmel Evangelical Lutheran (Mt. Carmel, California)

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R I C C O R N E R

Holy Trinity in Littleton, Colorado

A Pre-School Welcomes LGBTQ Families and All Families

Things change. Thanks be to God for that! One thing that has changed in the last years is that Mom (or Dad) is not likely to be at home during the day. Day-care sites and pre-schools in many congregations have expanded their hours beyond the old morning-only model, seeking to serve families in a way that fits adult working hours.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Littleton, Colorado (a Denver suburb), has done so. And this RIC congregation has made another even more significant change. In keeping with their stated desire to “welcome all, regardless of religious background,

The pre-school intentionally reaches out to LGBTQ, multi-ethnic families.

ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or life circumstances,” the school now extends out into the community far more widely than it used to. Pr. Julie McNitt points out that she is personally as well as theoretically aware that not all families look alike; she is the adoptive mother of two, and their “differences” are enriching and beautiful. Holy Trinity, RIC for less than a year, says in its statement that they “rejoice in the diversity of God’s creation, which enriches, nurtures, and expands our life and ministry as followers of Jesus and as servants in the world.”



Children’s imaginations are grounded in Scripture but can take flight in activities in this diverse preschool.

Thus, the pre-school now intentionally reaches out to LGBTQ, multi-ethnic, and other families that do not necessarily look like Dick and Jane, Mother, Father, Spot and Puff. The program offers spiritual grounding, educational and physical experiences, and a safe place for children, no matter who they are and no matter who their parents are. The Holy Trinity Lutheran preschool seeks to become a community reflecting God’s creation in all its diversity, and welcomes families of all shapes, sizes, and colors. ▼

Celebrations

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constructed a liturgy, which began with the brutally honest responsive lines:

What are the boundaries? Who is accepted?
Those who think like us, who look like us,
who live like us.

Then it included the reminder that we must be inclusive or exclusive (we cannot be both), and ended with the Gospel-filled lines

What are the boundaries?
God’s infinite love.
Who is accepted?
Everyone who loves God.

The liturgy was part of a service recognizing the intentionally inclusive language of the ELCA.

What marvelous variety in the ways we have responded to the decisions! Lauren Wendt said that Edina Lutheran (Minnesota) included the decisions in sermons and newsletters all fall. This congregation celebrates its 25th year of RIC status in 2010, and plans a year-long anniversary. St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Tallahassee, Florida, RIC for 11 years, used film clips of Emily Eastwood’s recent video appearance during a service focused on Reconciliation. Steve Helmreich, member of Peace Lutheran in Las Cruces, New Mexico, explained that a service at Thanksgiving was deliberately constructed to temper the celebratory

aspects with inclusion for those who were distressed by the CWA resolutions. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, the congregation of Christ Lutheran heard a reading of Bishop’s Hansen’s letter immediately after the Churchwide Assembly and resolved to be “the best RIC congregation in this place.”

RIC congregations which held special recognitions of the CWA decisions made a point of respecting and valuing those who disagreed, accepting their right to hold different views in “bound conscience,” not insisting on only one way to interpret Scripture. The broad shoulders of the ELCA were very much in evidence as believers were included and welcomed no matter what their views on these issues. ▼

R I C C O R N E R

Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chicago



The congregation did not stop with simply choosing to stay in place.

When the neighborhood evolves, a congregation has choices: pick up and leave, pretend that nothing is different, or adapt and grow because of the new

situation. In the past, Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chicago had chosen to relocate. In fact, the present location is their third in 140 years, because they had moved as the neighborhood transitioned from being "so Swedish." But

starting in 1950, the congregation changed its approach, voting to remain in place. Instead of fleeing, they chose to welcome their neighbors and offer a Christian response to white racism, local gang and riot threats. Within 5 years Salem had become half white and half black.

The congregation did not stop with simply choosing to stay in place. They reached out immediately to the community, establishing a

Applause met the *vote* announcement, and lo! it was done: the *congregation* became RIC.

neighborhood association and buying property so they could invite a satellite office of Lutheran Social Services onto the campus. That agency, still operating out of Salem, provides home health care for the aged and operates a food pantry serving 400 families.

The Salem of 2010 does not look like its Swedish founders. It is now an African-American congregation. Members include many holders of graduate and medical degrees, and are married, widowed, divorced, or single. There is no parking lot,

so most members live in the neighborhood and walk to church.

Four years ago, a number of ELCA congregations in Chicago, including Salem, came together to study the Reconciling in Christ process. The Salem group returned home energized and determined to have other members also consider the issues. Committees, council meetings, annual meetings- all were the settings for periodic discussion over a two-year period. The usual comments (heard in congregation after congregation across the country) were heard



here too: "but we *already* welcome everyone!" Last year, Salem formed study groups and used LC/NA RIC materials to deepen their understanding of what welcoming means. When they proceeded to a vote, they tallied 1 abstention and no negatives. Applause met the vote announcement, and lo! it was done: the congregation became RIC. The congregation president commented, "this should have been done years ago."

Salem's lay leaders and pastor, the Rev. David Lewis, are fully aware that voting to become RIC is the beginning of a process, not the end. The congregation has already revised its vision statement to emphasize every member's responsibility for welcoming, both inside and outside the church. As an additional way of reaching out, this small congregation now welcomes the Prison Ministry of Lutheran Social Services in addition to the pantry and home health program. They may be few in number, but Salem Lutheran is large in impact. ▼

Interim Exec. Dir.

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and gender identities into the full life of the congregation. We need to guide and support our LGBT candidates for ministry as they grow into leaders of the Church. For such a time as this, we need to know that the ministry of Lutherans Concerned is going to stay strong and vibrant for all those people who need our support and our expertise in organizing. For such a time as

this, we need people to step forward and move us from dependence on grants and foundations for our day-to-day operations to a secure line of monthly donations, such as Evergreen Giving. For such a time as this, we need visionaries who can see a world where faith, sexual orientation, and gender identity are all parts of an integrated whole, not just within an individual person, but within the body of Christ.

This moment presents an opportunity that we are prepared to grasp. We do it, not

just for ourselves, but to honor the hard work of those who have struggled for years before us. We also do it so that generations after us can grow up knowing that they are saved by faith through grace by a loving God who created them to love and be loved. We are dependent on those who came before us, and those who follow us depend on us grasping this *kairos* moment. For all of their sake, let's grasp this moment. Peace be with you. ▼

We Love to Tell the Story

A Positive Way to Engage the Church

By **Tim Fisher**, LC/NA Legislative Assistant

Lutherans love to tell the story of Jesus and his love—and it shows! On January 23, folks from Romeoville, Illinois; Brownston, Minnesota; Vancouver, British Columbia;

Clackamas, Oregon; Flint, Michigan; St. Louis, Missouri; Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota; San Marcos, Texas; Berkeley, California; and Houston, Texas, participated in LC/NA's second "webinar" event, to be trained in strategic storytelling—more than thirty trainees in all. Jeremy Posadas, a doctoral

*This **webinar** model allows for many more folks to **participate** ... yet retained the element of **face-to-face** contact.*

candidate at Emory University focusing on the intersection of liturgy and justice and a member of the Goodsoil Legislative Team, provided superb training from his home phone in Atlanta, as did Laura Bourdo, an accomplished storyteller and member of Grace Lutheran in Houston, Texas.

The basic format of the training was the same as the year before. Participants met in teams of at least three people working together face-to-face. The content of the training was provided by Jeremy and Laura on teleconference, guiding everyone through the training materials and video clips online and answering questions, while the storytelling practicing and critiquing was done in groups of three people. This webinar model allows for many more folks to participate than would have been possible otherwise and yet retained the element of face-to-face contact that is essential to good storytelling.

The January 23 webinar was a continuation of an expansive plan to train hundreds of people all over North America to tell their own stories strategically, compellingly, and efficiently, honing stories into powerful, two-minute instruments for persuasion. So far, more than 560 people have received such training. Strategic storytelling is one of the most effective methods of faith-based community organizing, providing a means to integrate one's own stories with talking points and positive frames for engaging the church. LC/NA's trainings are based on the public narrative techniques developed by Marshall Ganz of Harvard University and practiced by the Obama presidential campaign.

Even more close to home, these storytelling techniques were used to great success at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis and

formed the backbone of LC/NA's method of Graceful Engagement at that event. These trainings gave supporters of full inclusion the tools to share their stories at meals, in the evenings, and at other occasions during the assembly about why full inclusion is important to the ELCA. It provided a great way for our "Graceful Engagers" to humanize issues and to engage with others without anxiety or confrontation. Learning to tell one's story in three parts—a challenge, a choice, and an outcome—trained supportive voting members and volunteers to put faces on abstract concepts, communicate values, and build relationships, even in the relatively short time span of the churchwide assembly. Since last year, our storytelling training has been made stronger by a renewed focus on helping trainees identify personally important scriptures, grounding their stories in the Bible without falling into the trap of arguing or "proof texting." Our integration of Scripture in speeches made on the churchwide assembly floor by supportive voting members even won grudging praise from some of those who were against policy change.

LC/NA will continue to include a storytelling training component at Welcoming Church/RIC training events and at other times, including annual



webinars. Storytelling training will be one of the affinity-group workshops at LC/NA's upcoming biennial assembly in July in the Twin Cities. All are encouraged to let the LC/NA office know if there is interest for a local storytelling training in your area. We hope that hundreds more will take advantage of these opportunities and learn to tell their stories. ▼

Marie A. Kent, 1938–2009

Founding Member of Lutherans Concerned
remembered **by René García**, Co-Director
of Multicultural Relations

In mid-December Nicole García, Transgender Representative to the LC/NA Board, and I traveled to Ohio to offer our final farewells and visit the place where the life of one of LC/NA's founding members began and ended.

Marie Annette Kent was born on January 4, 1938 to the late Ernest and Iva Kent on the family farm near Bucyrus, Ohio. Marie grew up very independently and made life decisions based on personal passions and not by society's norms and roles. As a teenager she demonstrated this by being the only female trombone player in the high school band. (During the 1950s girls traditionally did not play the trombone.)

She graduated from Bucyrus High School in 1955 and remained in the area for a few years working as a secretary/receptionist at Shunt Manufacturing and exploring one of her true passions, the theater at the Bucyrus Little Theater. In the late 1950s Marie was ready to expand her horizons and moved to Columbus where she worked as a secretary for

Marie attended the meeting in Minneapolis that resulted in **Lutherans Concerned** for Gay People

WBNS - Channel 10 in Columbus. Once again, she broke the rules - moving away from home unmarried and without securing her parents' permission beforehand.

Columbus was the first place where Marie felt free enough to live authentically and become a part of the LGBT community. Along with pursuing theater, Marie truly fell in love for the first time.

When her partner accepted a position in Wisconsin, Marie went with her. Imagine trying to explain this to the family - young, unmarried women did not move out-of-state, but once again Marie followed her passions instead of societal expectations.

During her time in Wisconsin, Marie earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Social Welfare from the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh. From there she went to the Twin Cities and began graduate school.

Around this time an article appeared in the *Advocate* regarding gay and lesbian Christians and people were invited to contact Pastor Jim Siefkes. Well, Marie followed up! Soon thereafter a grant was offered by the American Lutheran Church for a group of gay and lesbian Lutherans to meet for a

gathering in Minneapolis. Marie attended and the result of the meeting was the forming of an organization named Lutherans Concerned for Gay People (LCGP).

Marie was very active with the newly-formed organization and assisted with the planning and organizing of monthly worship services for the Twin Cities chapter. Marie was one of the first people to use the concept of "graceful engagement" in the LCGP world. During this time this engagement wasn't used for people outside of the organization, but for many of the gay men within the organization who were not sensitive or even cognizant of women's issues. Using calmness and patience, Marie constantly "reminded" folks that women were also a part of the organization and that their concerns, for example inclusive language, need to be lifted up.

After a few years of faithful service, Marie began to step back somewhat from LCGP, but did not step away from the movement. She graduated with a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from the College of St. Thomas in Saint Paul.

In 1987, life brought Marie to Iowa where she began working as a Branch Clinic Director and Psychotherapist for the Plains Area Mental Health



Center in Ida Grove. Due to the fact that the 1980s were not as LGBT-friendly as today and that she had been fired from a job in St. Cloud, Minnesota, just for attending an LGBT gathering, Marie found it necessary to retreat into the closet in order to pursue a professional career.

Marie always kept a connection with Lutherans Concerned by either attending events with the Omaha chapter or by attending biennial assemblies.

During her time in Ida Grove, Marie became connected with another family of choice, the WCC (Women's Cultural Collective) in Des Moines. This was another way for Marie to remain connected with the community.

In 2002 Marie retired and soon relocated to Urbandale, a suburb of Des Moines. She may have stopped working for pay, but she certainly did not stop working with theater or social justice movements. In addition to the WCC, Marie volunteered with the Iowa Pride Network, the Big Brother/Big Sister program, and Planned Parenthood. She also traveled the state giving her services to returning Iraq and Afghanistan troops in the Iowa National Guard's Enduring Families program.

In 2004 Marie returned to her LC/NA home. She attended an RIC training in Chicago and then went to *Gather Us In*, the LC/NA Biennial Assembly in Minneapolis. There she was elected again to the Board of Directors, this time as Director of Membership and Chapter Development. She served in this capacity working with individual chapters and regional coordinators until 2006.

Marie's final years were filled in search of justice by attending LC/NA events and especially working with the Iowa chapter, which was born in her living room. She also worked tirelessly for Equality Iowa and One Iowa, organizations that helped legalize same-gender marriage in Iowa in 2009.

About the time that marriage became legal, Marie's health began to decline. Soon after the ELCA dropped the ban on rostered leaders in same-gender relationships, Marie returned to Ohio to be with her family of origin.

Her health forced her to live in a nursing facility and Marie was in need of LGBT-friendly pastoral care. Thanks to Pastor Wendy Scherer, Region 6 Coordinator, Pastor Matt Wheeler of First Lutheran Church, Galion, Ohio, was identified and he joyously



From the early '70s: Marie's brother Dale, Nancy Tobin (Dale's daughter) and Marie.

met, provided pastoral care and in the process received counseling from Marie - that's just how she worked.

On December 11 Marie passed away from this life on earth. On December 16, Pastor Matt officiated at her funeral in Bucyrus and she was laid to rest next to her parents in nearby Nevada, Ohio.

Marie always sought irony and humor in life and the day of her funeral was no different. Following the interment, her family, Nicole and I went to a luncheon at the congregation she attended early in life, St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Bucyrus. It is ironic that this church has joined the LCMC (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ) and is in the process of departing from the ELCA following the pro-LGBT votes at Churchwide Assembly 2009. Humorously, Marie insisted that Broadway musicals be played while we ate and shared stories of this true pioneer! ▼

"In Honor of... "

In Honor of...

Honored by...

Paul & Margot Andress	In honor of Paul & Margot Andress	Elizabeth Andress
Joe Brown	In memory of Joe Brown	Mike Crandall, Dorothy Klefstad
Joanie Curtin	In honor of Joanie Curtin	Lore M. Dickey, M.A.
Richard Garnett & Ross Murray	In honor of Richard Garnett & Ross Murray	Peggy Manatad
Bishop Ed Hansen	In memory of Bishop Ed Hansen (ALC) 1917-2009 — a Reconciling Lutheran in every way	Lee Anne Lack, Shirley Hansen, Linda Hansen
Robert Joppa	In honor of Robert Joppa's MBA graduation	Marti Scheel
Marie Kent	In memory of Marie Kent, one of the founders of Lutherans Concerned	Rene Garcia, Jean Huffey, Kathy & Jim Shattuck, Rev. Barbara Lundblad & Nicole Johnson, Barbra Jotzke, Gail George, Nancy Brown, Christine Brown, Sandra Gahn, Suzi Alexander, P. Schultz, Norma Coret, Betty Christensen
Steve Miller & Wayne Morris	In honor of the Blessing Service for Steve Miller & Wayne Morris	Doyle and Lucienne Morris
Dale Truscott & 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

Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters

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ablism, etc...) and through the lens of full participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in the life of the Lutheran Church.

Come! Hear of the work ongoing since the watershed decisions toward full inclusion by the Churchwide Assembly in August 2009, and work yet to be done to maintain the momentum toward a church free of discrimination, living the message and purpose of Christ.

We'll worship together, using a rich variety of traditions of the worshipping community. We'll provide a blend of the familiar and the unique,

to maintain the **momentum** toward a **church free of discrimination**

drawing on our Lutheran heritage and the wealth of liturgical practice in the area. We'll network with one another, hear stories of joy and frustration, and make decisions together about the future direction of Lutherans Concerned/North America and our Reconciling in Christ communities.

Read on...



Chaplains

Jay Wiesner

A Minnesota native, Jay grew up in New Ulm. He graduated from Concordia College, Moorhead, with a BA in Religion. He entered Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1995. While in seminary, Jay came out to his seminary and took a leave of absence. After a couple of years working in churches, Jay returned to Wartburg and became rostered with Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries. He completed his Masters of Divinity in 2002.

Following seminary graduation, Jay was called and extraordinarily ordained by Bethany Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, a congregation he served for six years. Jay is co-founder and co-director of The Naming Project, a program for LGBTQ youth to integrate sexuality and spirituality in a healthy manner. The Naming Project operates a summer camp for youth, which is in its 7th year.

Jay is currently serving as pastor of University Lutheran Church of the Incarnation in Philadelphia and is the Central Conference Dean of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA. His story as a gay pastor is featured in the book "Hate Is the Sin" by John S. Munday and in the award



winning film "Camp Out." Jay enjoys finding ways to point out God's mysterious and powerful activity in everyday lives.

Lura Groen

Lura N. Groen is a pastor with a love for preaching the Good News of God's inclusive love, and a resulting passion for social justice. She is a native of Cumberland, Maryland, and a member of the Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries Roster.

Lura attended St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, studying the Great Books Program. Prior to seminary, Lura was a two-year member of Lutheran Volunteer Corps, serving as a case manager to homeless people in Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. Lura continued her social service work as an employment coach before attending seminary at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP).

Lura finds God by embracing community life. While attending LTSP, Lura formed and led an LGBTQ support group on campus, served on Community Council, participated in the Inter-Racial Dialogue Group, was a Member of the School of the Americas Planning Committee (to educate the seminary about our country's foreign policy towards Latin America, and attended the protest in Ft. Benning, Georgia), and published numerous reflections in the student newspaper. During the 2004–2005 academic year, she served as Student Body President, presiding over the merger of two student bodies into one. Her awards included the Winters Scholarship for academic excellence and potential for ministry; the Traci L. Maul Award for leadership potential for ministry, active contribution to seminary life, and academic strength; the Atonement-Asbury Park Preaching Award, and the Deans List.



Matt James

Matt James is an approved candidate for ordained ministry with Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM). Matt received his BA from the University of Northern Colorado and an MA in Media Studies from Pennsylvania State University, where he was very active in the Lutheran Student Community. In May, Matt will graduate from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia with his Masters of Divinity.

After his undergraduate work, Matt, originally from Colorado, served for a year with the Lutheran Volunteer Corps in Washington, D.C. It was there that Matt began to claim his identity as a Lutheran.

While in graduate school, Matt began to sense a



call to ministry that combined his passions – his faith, education, and social justice – into one vocation. Matt chose to begin candidacy with ELM rather than negotiate the ELCA's policies at the time for openly LGBT rostered leaders.

Matt met his partner, John Weit, while they were both students in seminary. John has recently begun a new call as Director of Music at Trinity Lutheran Church in Worcester, Massachusetts. Together, they share a love for liturgy and look forward to building their lives together after their wedding in May.

Entertainment

Rachel Kurtz

Rachel Kurtz is a fulltime singer/songwriter originally from Cokato, Minnesota. She travels the country singing about faith, life, love and the freedom we have in Jesus. Rachel shares personal testimonies of tragedy and triumph with a vulnerability that captivates her audience. She has a strong desire to make a difference in the world through her music and a passion for global justice. Rachel sings in a variety of venues, from coffee shops to colleges, pubs to house parties, youth weekends to churches. Rachel has also sung in both ELCA and Lutheran Church Missouri Synod national gatherings, synod events and has had the pleasure of singing in India and West Africa. Her distinctive voice infuses her organic instrumentation to wash over and through the listener. Her subtle blend of style reveals folk pop sensibilities with a healthy dose of soul. Audiences across the country resonate with Rachel's music. It gets inside of people, calls them friend, and lets them know they are not alone.



LC/NA Business Sessions

The Business Sessions are your opportunity to shape the future and direction of Lutherans Concerned/North America. During *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters*, business sessions will be 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, as well as hear the priorities for those two years. Check the detail schedule onsite in July for times and venues.

Who Can Participate

To participate in the business sessions of Lutherans Concerned/North America, one must be a member. However, Lutherans Concerned/North America



PAUL NIXDORF

grants one-year gift memberships to assembly registrants who are not already members of LC/NA. That means that if you come to *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters*, you will be able to participate in the business of LC/NA.

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 by July 1, 2010. In addition to emailed submissions, there will be a Resolutions Box at the assembly site into which resolution submissions can be dropped by 7:00 pm, Friday, July 9, 2010.

Consensus Decision-Making

Lutherans Concerned/North America operates by the consensus process for decision-making. Consensus is a process of reaching a decision with a minimum, or at least reasonable, amount of disagreement among individuals. Consensus decision-making is about "listening to everyone's ideas and taking all concerns into consideration in an attempt to find the most universally acceptable decision possible at a particular time." Consensus decision-making requires that individuals participate as equals, seek out and accommodate differences of opinion, promote an atmosphere of open communication, tolerate temporary indecision and slow decision-making, and weigh alternatives to find win-win possibilities.

Consensus is NOT:

- Everybody agreeing unanimously
- A decision that represents everyone's first choice
- Allowing a person to block the whole group from coming to a decision

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Consensus IS:

- Everyone able to paraphrase the issue to demonstrate personal understanding
- Everyone having a chance to voice opinion on the issue
- Having enough people in favor of the decision to enable it to be carried out
- The willingness to try the decision, at least for a prescribed period of time, without those who doubt or disagree sabotaging it.

Consensus is about listening...and taking all concerns into **consideration**

Group conditions that support consensus:

- Unity of purpose
- Equal access to power
- Autonomy of the group from external hierarchical structures
- Ample time
- A willingness in the group to attend to process, attitudes, and to learn to practice skills for meeting participation, facilitation and communication.

Consensus is not voting. Thus, consensus is indicated by prolonged silence. LC/NA celebrates having achieved consensus with the “wave” (waving of the hands in the air).



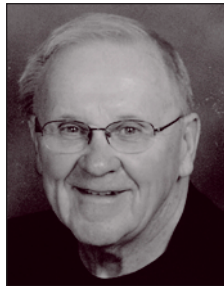
Jim Siefkes Justice-Maker Award

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 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.

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 GLBT Lutherans in the Lutheran Church.

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

Nominees for the Siefkes Award are evaluated and the recipient is selected by the LC/NA Board of



Directors, and the Award will be presented at the LC/NA Biennial Assembly.

Past recipients of the award are:

- 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 and The Rev. Lowell Erdahl, Bishop Emeritus
- Bennett Falk and The Rev. Jayne Thompson



Location

Twin Cities

The Twin Cities are a veritable cornucopia of attractions, including:

- The Mall of America
- The headquarters of Lutherans Concerned/North America
- The site of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly
- The first RIC congregation in North America
- The Mill City Museum
- The Fitzgerald, home-base theater for Garrison Keillor’s “A Prairie Home Companion”
- A smattering of “Peanuts” inspired art
- The possibility of snow any of the 12 months
- The second highest number of theater seats in the United States
- Gateway to the “Up North” vacationland of lakes, cabins, North Shore of Lake Superior, fishing, giant statues of Paul Bunyan
- The governorship of Jesse Ventura

Come early to explore all the possibilities that the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota has to offer. Stay late to enjoy the balmy summer weather.

Augsburg College [www.augsburg.edu]

Augsburg is the only college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America located in the heart of a large urban area, and considers the city to be a metropolitan classroom. Augsburg engages with the city—with its neighbors, with arts and culture, with Fortune 500 companies, and with all it can teach about its diverse, urban environment.

For Augsburg students, the Twin Cities provide boundless opportunities for service-learning, internships, research, jobs, and more. Augsburg continues to reflect the commitment and dedication of the founders who believed:

- An Augsburg education should be preparation for service in community and church;
- Education should have a solid liberal arts core with a practical dimension in order to send out productive, creative, and successful citizens;

- The city – with all its excitement, challenges, and diversity – is an unequalled learning laboratory for Augsburg students.

There are now almost 18,000 Augsburg alumni. In a world that has changed much since the first days of the College, Augsburg still sends out graduates who make a difference where they live and work.

Augsburg College is a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) institution. As such, Augsburg is welcoming and affirming of all people in regard to their gender identity and sexual orientation.

Most *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters* programs will be held in the Foss Center. Meals will be eaten in the Christensen Center. On-campus housing is available in Anderson Hall. Please refer to the campus map to see a campus layout.

Housing

To accommodate the range of budgets and housing needs, *Let Justice Roll* is pleased to offer a variety of housing options.

Augsburg College Housing – Anderson Hall

Anderson Hall is a four-story residential hall providing a variety of housing arrangements including: one-person suites, four-person apartments, eight-person/two-story townhouses, and fifteen-person floorhouses. Suites include a refrigerator, microwave, and shared bathroom. Apartments include a full bathroom, living room, and kitchen. Townhouses and floorhouses include a living room, dining room, full kitchen, and two baths. All bedrooms in Anderson Hall include a bed, dresser, desk, and chair for each individual. There is cable, Ethernet, and a telephone connection available in each apartment. Other amenities include a laundry room on the main level; as well as lounges and study rooms on each floor. The linen packet includes blanket, pillow with pillowcase, top and bottom sheets, towel, washcloth, soap, and a cup. All bathrooms are semi-private. Common areas will be unfurnished.

Double bedrooms are \$55 per individual, per night, to be paid with Assembly registration. Assembly attendees may designate a roommate on the registration form or allow LC/NA to match roommates.

Single bedrooms are \$100 per individual, per night, to be paid with Assembly registration. Please note that single bedrooms may still share a commons space and bathrooms with other attendees.

Holiday Inn Metrodome

For Assembly attendees who prefer a hotel experience, LC/NA is pleased to offer a limited block of rooms at the Holiday Inn Metrodome, less than one mile from the Augsburg Campus. The friendly staff is committed to offering all of the features and amenities you've come to expect from a full-service Holiday Inn—as well as the following features:

- Complimentary shuttle to Augsburg College and



the Light Rail Station

- Complimentary wired and wireless high-speed Internet access
- New Sealy Posturepedic bedding in all guest rooms
- Onsite fitness center, with lifecycles, treadmills, and stairclimbers
- 14th-story indoor pool, sauna, and whirlpool
- Kids Eat Free and Stay Free policy

Singles and doubles are \$102 per night. All reservations will be made directly with the hotel. Reservations must be made by Wed., June 16, 2010 (21 days prior to arrival). Attendees must specify that they are with Lutherans Concerned/North America when making reservations. All reservations can be guaranteed for late arrival with a credit card or by an advanced deposit. Guaranteed no-shows will be billed to the individual attendee.

To make a reservation with the Holiday Inn Metrodome, please call 800-448-3663 and specify that you are making a reservation with Lutherans Concerned/North America.



Registration and Cost

Online registration available until June 1, 2010.

Registration after June 1 by mail or in-person on-site.

Registration form can be filled out online (www.lcna.org) or downloaded for mailing.

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Registration fees will cover all programs of *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters* and all meals, from dinner on Thursday, July 8 through lunch on Sunday, July 11.

Regular Registration: \$285

Pre-Event Registration: \$50 (includes dinner & breakfast, does NOT include housing)

Kids (ages 5–15): \$50

Special Registration Rate for Congregational Teams

4+ Registrations from the Same Congregation: \$225 (regular) per person

Registrants must mail in paper registrations together

On-Campus housing

(see description in Location section on page 15)

Double Bedroom: \$55 per person/per night

Single Bedroom: \$100/per person/per night

Holiday Inn Metrodome (to be booked directly with hotel): \$102 per night, plus tax

Call directly: 800-448-3663 or 612-333-4646

Ask for the rate for Lutherans Concerned/North America

Saturday Night Celebration Only

(already included with full registration)

\$75 – includes reception, dinner, program, and dance (worship is free and open to all!)

Held at Central Lutheran Church and Minneapolis Convention Center

Anti-Racism

Racism is a complex, often bewildering issue. Sometimes it is difficult to find safe, supportive spaces to learn about the issue and express how it affects us personally. The anti-racism event will help us sort through the complexities of racism and discern meaningful ways of addressing its personal and communal impact. This is excellent training for local and chapter leaders to receive. This pre-event is a part of LC/NA's continuing commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization.

Biblical Storytelling

Biblical storytelling is both ancient and modern — a multimedia, kinesthetic, full-bodied experience of the Word of God. We invite you to encounter this living word as it was originally proclaimed by the earliest people of faith, immersed in an oral culture in which history, tradition, and God's promise were passed on from generation to generation. Whether as a spiritual practice, a form of prayer, or just good ol' fashioned storytelling around the fire, come and learn how to embody Bible stories in a fresh and exciting way. In this workshop we will hear and learn sacred stories by heart, letting them dwell within us, in order to go and tell these transformative tales to others. Discover the old, old stories of Jesus and his love anew.

Couple Care

A time set apart to relax, laugh, talk, listen and pray with your partner or spouse and be encouraged by others. We will identify our strengths and growth areas, model dialog and effective communication practices, and explore our calling to serve God as couples of faith. "Top Ten Faith Practices" for establishing a Household of Faith will be introduced. "CoupleCare" is for all couples or partners in a committed relationship.

Dick and Linda Staats have been married for more than 40 years. Dick is retired clergy of an RIC congregation in Phoenix. Linda, Director of HomeGrown Faith and national consultant, has served on both congregation and synod staffs. Each has a degree in Marriage & Family Counseling and certifications in couple's communication programs and marriage enrichment.

Ministerium

The Ministerium is an opportunity for LGBT clergy, ministers, seminarians, and would-be ministers from all rosters of the Lutheran communion to fellowship and network. LGBT ministers, both lay and ordained, rostered and non-rostered, out, partially out, closeted, active, retired, resigned, or removed from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM), Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS), Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and independent Lutheran churches are invited to attend.

As we **find** our way... it is **critical** that we provide places and times for **mutual support** and **mentoring**.

Scholarships

Scholarship assistance is available to help defray registration costs. To request a scholarship, please send an email to assembly@lcna.org. Preference will be given to youth, young adults, and students.

If you find you are in a position to help someone, please donate to the scholarship fund. These funds will be distributed to those who request scholarships and help us bring more people to *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters*.



Pre-Events

Movement-building pre-events will occur from 1:00 pm on July 7 until noon on July 8. These events will provide opportunities to go deeper into particular aspects of the LGBTQ movement. Many of the events are for a specific population. The \$50 fee includes facilitation, dinner and breakfast. Housing is one extra night.

Since CWA07, a number of ELCA pastors have been outed or have chosen to come out. In addition many LGBT seminarians and seminary interns are moving through candidacy processes in the ELCA, ELM, and ELCIC. As we find our way through this chapter of the movement for full participation, it is critical that we provide places and times for mutual support and mentoring.

The retreat-style gathering will include worship, large and small group conversations, and affinity group sessions. Probable topics of conversation include: building a network of support; finding a place: to worship, to serve, to be; preaching the liberating word; called to serve: for seminarians and those considering ministry; coming out to congregations; gender identity and expression in ministry; out, proud and serving — what's next.

Sanctuary and confidentiality will be integral to this ministerium.

Youth & Young Adults

Designed for youth and young adults between the ages of 16 and 22, this pre-event will gather young activists and advocates for the GLBTQ movement and give them an opportunity to meet, collaborate, and rock the Lutheran Church. We will spend time in

worship, leadership development, and advocacy planning.

The young people involved in this forum will have continuing contact after the pre-event, staying in community throughout *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters*. They will create a community that is passionate about inclusion and translate that passion into action at the assembly and continuing back at home in their communities and congregations.

LC/NA is looking for nominations for young people to be invited to attend and be a part of this forum. If you are, or know of, a young person in the age range who would benefit from this forum, please email yoyafam@lcna.org with details. LC/NA wants to be diverse and inclusive with this invitation in every way, including regionally within North America.



Saturday Evening Celebration

On Saturday night, we are having a night on the town! To celebrate the historic gains that we have made, we are going to do something special. The reinstatement and reception of those who have been removed from the roster warrant a worship service

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Notes from the International Program Committee (IPC)

International Reaction of ELCA Policy Change: Although there has been some negative reaction to the 2009 ELCA policy change, it has been less vocal and organized than had been forecast. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) had been working discreetly with this issue prior to the ELCA policy change (because other members of the federation had fully integrated LGBT members) and continues to do so. The LWF is scheduled to hold its next assembly in Stuttgart in July of 2010. Subjects related to homosexuality are not currently on the addenda.

Recriminatory Legislation: Especially disturbing have been the rounds of agitation for harsh anti-homosexual legislation, especially in Africa. The major focus of attention is on the legislation being considered in Uganda, which would make conviction for homosexuality punishable by imprisonment or death. The IPC has joined the international protest over this pending legislation. LC/NA worked with the office of the Bishop of the ELCA to get a letter of condemnation sent by Bishop Hanson; Emily Eastwood signed a letter later sent by LGBT advocate groups to the President of Uganda. Both President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton have expressed their opposition to this legislation. Currently the bill is lying in limbo and has not been presented to the floor for a vote. Hopefully, it will die there and not go to a vote where it would likely pass.

Increased Focus: On March 11, 2010, the State Department released a periodic report to the Congress of the United States that examines the human rights records of every country around the world. Again, the report documents a growing crisis in human rights abuses targeting LGBT people globally. Significantly, for the first time most of the country chapters in the report have a section dedicated to the examination of "societal abuses, discrimination, and acts of violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity." The message in the report comes through strong and clear: LGBT rights are firmly rooted in basic human rights and cannot be socially or politically separated.

In **Malawi**, two gay men celebrated their engagement with a private party at a hospitality center in the capital. Uninvited "citizens" broke into the party and closed the event. Two days later the men were arrested. The sentence for homosexuality in Malawi is 5 to 14 years in prison. In Kenya, homosexuality is illegal and punishable by a sentence of up to fourteen years in jail. Harassment of the gay community has included the arrest of a group just making plans for a gay wedding. In Gambia, the president demanded that gay people leave the country, threatening them with beheading. The Senegalese penal code calls for up to five years in prison for homosexual behavior. Arrests in such countries often involve cavity searches, more as harassment than for any "forensic or evidence" value. Advocacy groups exist, but act at risk of injury or even death. African societies often have divergent values and double standards, which can be fanned into flames by such persons as the Rev. Kawalala, the leader of the Word Alive Ministry which links homosexuality to the wicked agenda of the West for Africa.

European Forum: We hope to continue strengthening our ties with the Forum with which we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Marti Scheel will represent us at the 2010 Summer Assembly of the Forum in Barcelona.

Let Justice Roll: Included in the plans for *Let Justice Roll* is an IPC workshop. We are hoping to have someone from the European Forum and perhaps representatives of other groups participate in this workshop.

International AIDS Conference: The International AIDS Society (IAS) has announced that the 19th International AIDS Conference will be held in Washington, DC, in July 2012, about the same time as the LC/NA 2012 Assembly which is also currently slated to be held in DC. The Board of IAS announced this decision on the basis of the announcement of President Obama that, effective January 4, 2010, the USA would end its restriction on entry to the country for people living with HIV.

—Philip Moeller, Director, IPC

that calls together hundreds, if not thousands of people to worship together and mark this major milestone. The affirmation of ministry for those who have been serving congregations for years must be marked with a shout of praise.

This major milestone in the history of Lutherans Concerned/North America will be marked with a party that raises the roof. We pray that our shout of praise will finally release the celebration that was “stuck in our throats” since last August. In order to celebrate, we will leave the assembly site to journey downtown.

We will go to downtown Minneapolis to revisit the historic place where the ELCA passed the Social Statement on Human Sexuality and voted to find ways leading to full-participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. The evening will include worship at Central Lutheran Church, the site of the Goodsoil worship during the watershed 2009 Churchwide Assembly attended by more than 1000 worshippers. Our worship event this evening is open to the public.

Following worship, we will cross the street to the Minneapolis Convention Center. We will celebrate with a silent auction, a banquet, presentation of the Jim Siefkes Justice Maker Award and the Jeannine Janson Exemplary Service Award, a dance, and lots of great fun.



Speakers

Miguel de la Torre

Born in Cuba months before the Castro Revolution, Miguel A. De La Torre and his family came to the United States as refugees when he was six months old. For awhile the U.S. government considered him an “illegal immigrant.” In his early twenties he became a “born-again” Christian and joined University Baptist Church in Coral Gables, Florida. de la Torre attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in order to



country, liberation theologies in the Caribbean and Latin America, and postmodern / postcolonial social theory.

Since obtaining his doctorate in 1999, Dr. de la Torre has authored numerous articles and books, including the award-winning *Reading the Bible from the Margins*, (Orbis, 2002); *Santería: The Beliefs and Rituals of a Growing Religion in America* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2004); and *Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins*, (Orbis, 2004). Within the academy he has served as a director to the Society of Christian Ethics and the American Academy of Religion. Additionally, he has been co-chair of the Ethics Section at the American Academy of Religion.

Dr. de la Torre has been an expert commentator concerning ethical issues (mainly Hispanic religiosity, LGBT civil rights, and immigration rights) on several local, national, and international media outlets. A scholar-activist, Dr. de la Torre has written numerous articles in popular media. He writes monthly columns for Ethics Daily and Associated Baptist Press News that continuously create controversies for his unique approach of religiously analyzing social issues from the perspective of the dispossessed and disenfranchised.

Mary Lowe

Born and raised in Alaska, Mary Elise Lowe is Assistant Professor of Religion at Augsburg College, where she is a member of the Honors Program faculty and teaches courses in contemporary theology, Christian vocation, theology and sexuality, and religion research methods. As a teacher, Mary is



passionate about helping people better understand and articulate their beliefs and lived experiences and bringing them into conversation with other perspectives in an increasingly multicultural world.

She empowers LGBTQ Christians to claim their voice and rich contributions to the church and bring their unique questions about what it means to be human, what it means to be church, how we use the Bible, and how our theology impacts other people, both positively and negatively.

Mary's research focuses on contemporary theology, particularly theological anthropology, with special attention to new understandings of the human person, the doctrine of sin, and human sexuality. She works with chaplaincy students in developing their theologies of ministry, and speaks on topics ranging from Martin Luther to feminist views of God, theologies of accompaniment, theology and hymns, and LGBT theologies.

Her recent publications include “Sin from a Queer, Lutheran Perspective,” in the forthcoming book *Transformative Lutheran Theologies: Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives* (Fortress Press) and “Gay, Lesbian, and Queer Theologies: Origins,

He has focused on **ethics** within contemporary U.S. thought...how **religion** affects race, class, and **gender** oppression

obtain a Masters in Divinity. During his seminary training he served as pastor to a rural congregation, Goshen Baptist Church in Glen Dean, Kentucky.

De la Torre continued his theological training and earned a doctorate from Temple University in social ethics. The focus of his academic pursuit has been ethics within contemporary U.S. thought, specifically how religion affects race, class, and gender oppression. He specializes in applying a social scientific approach to Latino/a religiosity within this

Contributions, and Challenges,” in *dialog: a Journal of Theology*. She has also written articles and book reviews for *Till and Keep*, *Word and World*, *The Lutheran*, and *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* (forthcoming). Mary holds a Ph.D. from the Graduate Theological Union in systematic theology, an M.Div. from Luther Seminary, and a B.A. from Pacific Lutheran University.

Bible Study

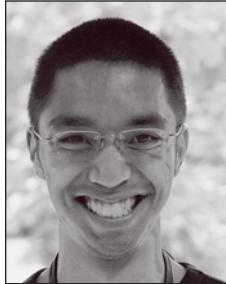
Jeremy Posadas

Jeremy Posadas is a doctoral student in the Graduate Division of Religion at Emory University, Atlanta, GA, having trained previously at Union Theological Seminary NYC and the University of Chicago. He researches how power shapes identity in congregational practices such as worship and religious education. In addition, he studies the work of Michel Foucault, especially in relation to “political spirituality” and critical understandings of race, sex, and disability.

Discerning that he is not called to live out the celibacy imposed by the former policies of the ELCA, Jeremy instead joined Goodsoil’s efforts to eliminate those policies. He has taken the minutes for nearly every meeting of the Goodsoil Legislative Team for the past four years and served as one of the Team’s main drafters. He has helped train hundreds of ELCA members for full-inclusion action and advocacy throughout the church.

During the 2006–2008 biennium, he served on LC/NA’s Board of Directors as Secretary. Now that the ELCA has eliminated the prohibition against same-gender-partnering ministers, he is pursuing ordination and hopes for the chance to live out both his vocations, to academic and congregational ministry.

The Bible Study he is conducting will be during the assembly itself. There is a separate Bible Study pre-event on July 7th that has a different set of presenters.



PAUL NIXDORF

- Hmong LGBTQ: The Intersection of Culture, Faith, and Sexuality
- Inhabiting Texts of Welcome: Using Readers Theater to reclaim our biblical voice
- Knowing and Showing Your Welcome (We’re RIC, Now What?)
- A Conversation with Miguel de la Torre
- Reconciliation with Dignity: Conversation with Mary Lowe
- International Forum
- Worship & Liturgy
- Bisexual & Transgender 101
- Bisexual 202
- Transgender 202
- Media Training
- Youth & Young Adult Forum
- Ministry on the Internet
- Youth & Homelessness
- Third Act Ministry: LBGT Aging
- Ministry with LGBT Youth
- Using Art to Support the Movement
- Believe Out Loud
- Come to the Table Discussion
- Media Engagement
- Engaging Public Figures
- Working for the Employment Nondiscrimination Act
- Gay Marriage Initiatives
- ELCA HIV/AIDS Strategy

Workshops

Our time at *Let Justice Roll* will be edifying and educational. The best workshops are those based on the mission of Lutherans Concerned/North America, include the intersections of oppression, or expand on the theme, “Let Justice Roll.” Possible workshops in preparation include:

- Speaking Truth from the Margins: The power (and play) of acrostic poetry
- Beyond Welcome: Publicly affirming LGBTQ rostered leaders

Worship

Lutherans Concerned/North America’s assemblies are framed within the context of worship. We start with a celebration of the God who binds us together, and we end with a festival of sending. In between,

Lutherans Concerned/North America’s assemblies are framed *within* the context of *worship*

from each morning’s beginning with Bible Study to the keynote presentations and workshops through to our evening worship, we are doing the work of the people. The worship experiences throughout the

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Assembly are designed to empower us for work that extends well beyond the walls of Augsburg College through our homes into the Church and the world.

Assembly worship services will draw from a rich variety of traditions, including 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.

Through jazz music and the preaching of Lura Groen, our opening Eucharist will establish how we are to participate in the ministry of justice.

On Friday night, Matt James will lead us in a service of healing and reconciliation.

Saturday night's liturgy will be in Central Lutheran Church, as a part of our downtown celebration.

Our closing worship will feature the preaching of Jay Wiesner, plus the energetic music of the Edina Community Lutheran Church worship team. ▼

Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters, July 7–10, 2010 Tentative Schedule

Here is the schedule for events at **Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters**. Latest information and details are available on the LC/NA website.

Wednesday, July 7

- 9:00 am Pre-Event & Assembly Registration Opens (Foss Center)
- 9:00 am Board and Regional Coordinator Meetings
- 1:00 pm Pre-Events Begin (Foss Center)
- 5:00 pm Pre-Event Dinner Break (Christensen Center)
- 6:00 pm Pre-Events Resume (Foss Center)
- 9:00 pm Registration Closes

Thursday, July 8

- 7:30 am Pre-Event Breakfast (Christensen Center)
- 9:00 am Pre-Events Resume (Foss Center)
- 9:00 am Assembly Registration Opens (Foss Center)
- 12:00 pm Pre-Events End
- 12:00 pm Lunch (on your own)
- 1:00 pm Affinity Group Gatherings (Foss Center)
- 3:00 pm Opening Worship
- 4:30 pm Welcoming Comments / Business Session (Foss Center)
- 5:30 pm Dinner (Christensen Center)
- 7:30 pm Keynote Session: Miguel de la Torre (Foss Center)
- 9:00 pm Evening Entertainment: Rachel Kurtz (Foss Center)

Friday, July 9

- 7:30 am Breakfast (Christensen Center)
- 8:00 am Support Groups (Foss Center)
- 8:30 am Workshops (Foss Center)
- 9:45 am Break
- 10:00 am Bible Study (Foss Center)
- 10:30 am Business Session (Foss Center)
- 11:45 am Lunch (Christensen Center)
- 1:00 pm Workshops (Foss Center)
- 2:15 pm Break
- 2:30 pm Regional Caucuses (Foss Center)
- 3:15 pm Break
- 3:30 pm Keynote Session: Mary Lowe (Foss Center)
- 5:00 pm Dinner (Christensen Center)
- 7:00 pm Deadline for Resolutions (Submission Box at Registration)
- 7:00 pm Worship
- 8:30 pm "Come to the Table" (Foss Center)

Saturday, July 10

- 7:30 am Breakfast (Christensen Center)
- 8:00 am Support Groups (Foss Center)
- 8:30 am Workshops (Foss Center)
- 9:45 am Break (Christensen Center)
- 10:00 am Bible Study (Foss Center)
- 10:30 am Business Session (Foss Center)
- 11:45 am Lunch (Christensen Center)
- 1:00 pm Workshops (Foss Center)
- 2:30 pm Depart for Downtown (Buses provided)
- 3:30 pm Worship at Central Lutheran Church
- 5:00 pm Appetizers & Silent Auction at Minneapolis Convention Center
- 6:30 pm Banquet at Minneapolis Convention Center
- 7:15 pm Program at Minneapolis Convention Center
- 9:00 pm Dance at Minneapolis Convention Center

Sunday, July 11

- 8:00 am Breakfast (Christensen Center)
- 9:00 am Business Session (Foss Center)
- 10:00 am Worship
- 12:00 pm Lunch (Christensen Center)

Affinity Gatherings

Affinity Gatherings will begin at 12:30 on July 8, for two hours. Affinity Gatherings have 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.

- Newcomer Orientation
- Storytelling Training
- Bi & Trans Gathering
- People of Color
- All Clergy