



## MINISTRY OF THE MONTH



### Ministry of the Month — Companion Synod Programs

## Who Are Our Companions?

✧ *The Iglesia Evangelique Luthérienne du Cameroun*, led by President Rev. Dr. Thomas Nyiwe, began eighty years ago with the arrival in Cameroon of European and American missionaries. For nearly half of those years, the EELC has been an independent church body—self-governed but with continuing close connections to its founding partners. Today, almost all of its seminary and Bible school professors, doctors and medical staff, and development leaders are African—competent, skilled, eager, faith-filled men and women who are leading *their own church* through very trying times into a greatly promising future. Seven years ago, the church in Cameroon estimated it had approximately 1000 congregations. Today, growth is so rapid that they can only guess at about 2000. The EELC and the South Dakota Synod, ELCA, became companion synods at the formation of the ELCA in 1988.

✧ *The Iglesia Luterana de Nicaragua "Fe Y Esperanza,"* led by President Rev. Victoria Cortez, was begun in Nicaragua by Lutheran refugees from El Salvador who had fled during that country's civil war. When those refugees returned to El Salvador, Nicaraguans decided to continue the Lutheran witness in their own communities. The ILFE was received as a member church of the Lutheran World Federation in 1994. This very young church has approximately fifty worshipping communities, served primarily by lay pastors who live and work in the rural communities that they serve, and in the poorest areas of the capital city, Managua. The ILFE and Lutherans in South Dakota began our walk in faith together in 1999, shortly after Hurricane Mitch had devastated northern Nicaragua, and formally established our companion synod relationship in 2000.

—Pastor Jeff Sorenson

### *About the Ministry of the Month...*

The 2004 South Dakota Synod Assembly passed the following schedule of monthly ministries for 2005. As in the past, the purpose of these emphases is to uplift important ministries throughout this synod and the larger church, and encourage designated giving above and beyond regular offerings. We hope that congregations will seize the opportunity to recognize these partnerships in the prayers of the church during these months, and to hold up these ministries through various activities.

January: Luther Seminary  
February: Heartland Ephphatha  
March: Prison Ministries  
April: Lutheran Youth Organization  
May: Companion Synod Programs

June: Mission Congregation Start-up  
August: Answer the Call  
September: Lutheran Campus Ministry  
October: Native American Ministry  
November: ELCA World Hunger Appeal

No monthly ministries are scheduled for the summer months or December, when many congregations have special Advent-giving emphases.



### Roots & Wings Family Retreat

2:30—5:30 P.M., Sunday, April 24 — American Lutheran Church, Castlewood

Parents, Grandparents, Teens, and Children... *Everyone is welcome!*

Come take a wonderful journey through the Bible, sing and play together, and learn new ways to nurture faith in families of all ages. Take home materials to keep it going in your home! For registration information, call American Lutheran Church, Castlewood, 793-2444.