



FROM THE BISHOP



Greetings to all of you and may our Heavenly Father bless you richly,

2007 has brought many changes to our synod as well as to my family. LaDonna and I are finally moved to Sioux Falls and have most of the unpacking done. We are attempting to discover what our “new normal” is going to be.

As we begin 2008, I look forward to spending time in each of the conferences, listening to you and encouraging you to share with each other what works, what doesn't, what you are considering “trying,” and so forth. I also want to hear from you about what you would like to see from the synod office and staff. Ours is a new relationship as bishop, pastors, and congregational leaders, and we need to begin with open and honest discussion.

There will be opportunities for just such conversations in the near future as someone from the synod office will attend the pastor's conference meetings and at the Spring Pastors Conference in Watertown right after Easter. I hope you will be able to attend, for it will be a great opportunity to relax together and be renewed in spirit and mind.

Also coming up in February are three workshops for Open Prairie Multipoint ministries. (See below for more information.) I encourage you along with your congregational leaders to attend one of these workshops if it describes your ministry.

In closing, may each of you and your ministries be blessed in 2008.

Bishop Dave

Bishop David B. Zellmer
South Dakota Synod, ELCA

Open Prairie Multipoint Workshops

Mark Your Calendar Now! One-day Workshops Are Scheduled for

February 2 – First Lutheran, Britton

February 16 – Trinity Lutheran, Chamberlain

February 23 – Immanuel Lutheran, Elk Point

And possibly one West River, depending on interest...

Workshop Sessions (Proposed)

Session One—“Place and Context of Rural Ministry Today” (60 minutes). Participants share stories about their settings; information shared about what is happening in rural ministry throughout the ELCA.

Session Two—“What Some Multipoint Parishes are Teaching Us” (60 minutes). Lifting up some key learning from the ELCA's Multiple Point Parish Research Report (www.elca.org/outreach/mpp/mpp.html) and Developing Cooperative Ministries (www.elca.org/outreach/mpp/cooperative.html).

Session Three—“Discovering Hope” (60 minutes). An introduction to one of the best rural ministry resources the ELCA has developed, which is especially adaptable for multipoint parishes. Topics include: Prayer: Letting Go and Letting God; Worship: Building Community and Hope; Making Disciples: Learning to Live Jesus' Way; Caring Communities: Serving as Jesus Served; Leadership: Who's Driving the Tractor?; Context: Discovering the Gift of Place.

Session Four—“Discovering Gifts and Assets” (90 minutes). Highly interactive time with participants doing an assets-mapping and planning exercise.

Note: The intent for each session is to be *short on presentation* and *long on interaction* with workshop participants!

Watch for a Brochure to Be Mailed Soon!