



Eastern Washington Idaho Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Rev. Martin Wells, Bishop
Rev. Mark Nelson, Assistant to the Bishop
Rev. Helga Jansons, Director for Evangelical Mission

For Annual Meeting reports in Synod Congregations:

Dear Members,

Thank you for gathering for your annual meeting! I pray that your deliberations will produce generous and fair budgets, resolutions that direct your ministry and mission-plans for the year to come.

For many the tendency is to “flop” toward the future, rolling forward with “ministry pretty much like it was last year.” This year offers the same challenge that deliberate planning always presents: A need for leaders of vision and courage who will step forward and say “Doing it the way we’ve done it before isn’t working anymore. God is calling us from the future and it’s time we were more intentional about our mission and ministry.”

The unique opportunity this year comes from leaders of vision and courage who at the 2011 Churchwide Assembly asked each congregation to be more deliberate in planning for mission. Given the changes in the world God is calling us to serve, it is unfaithful to “flop” or “slouch toward Bethlehem” (as the poet says), without some resolve that the call of God is serious and persistent.

Resources are available to you and your congregation! Pastor Helga Jansons will be leading the effort in our Synod as our Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM). Here’s the first challenge: For most congregations there are only three time slots for such a deliberate effort: Pre-Easter (now!); Easter Season; and the fall of 2012. Time is of the essence!

Imagine! Just imagine getting to this point in the season next year and how good it will feel to know deep in your congregation’s bones, “the plans God has for you, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11). This was the promise the Lord gave to God’s people at the end of Exile and it is the same promise today, “a future with hope!” Now dig down together and from your prayer and your neighborhood’s need unearth this plan. I believe this will be deeply satisfying work!

Blessings,
Bishop Martin Wells