

Moments for Mission

Southwestern Washington Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ by empowering congregations and church leaders to grow in worship, education, outreach, stewardship and other ministries.
 August 2016

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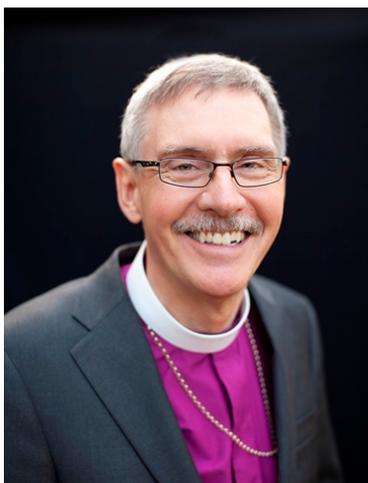
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.

The Road Less Traveled

by Bishop Richard Jaech



Dear Friends in Christ,

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
 And sorry I could not travel both
 And be one traveler, long I stood
 And looked down one as far as I could
 To where it bent in the undergrowth;
 Then took the other, just as fair...*

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
 I took the one less traveled by,
 And that has made all the difference.*

(Robert Frost, The Road Not Taken)

Summer is a great time for traveling and is also the time when we go exploring down the roads less traveled. When we are on a vacation trip, we probably have our main route all planned out and we intend to stick to it. But then there is that moment when we come upon a sign that says, “Scenic route”, or we get an unexpected invitation to visit a friend, or we’re just walking down the street and something catches our eye. All of a sudden we have a choice. Do we stay with what’s planned or do we step off into a new adventure where we’ve never been before. Some of our best summer stories come from taking the road less traveled!

When we read the book of Acts, a lot of the stories about Peter and Paul tell about them taking the road less traveled. They are traveling along and all of a sudden have a choice to make about where to go. Go to Athens or go to Ephesus? Stay in Philippi or head to Macedonia?

The writer of Acts tells us that the choice they make does not depend only on their rational, analytical thinking. Rather, they regularly take a path because the wind of the Holy Spirit blows them in that direction. They think with their heads about what to do, but they also listen to their hearts to see where the Spirit is tugging them. Often it’s a sudden, instinctive decision.

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That gives me an idea for something we could have fun with and learn from this summer. As we are traveling around, we can notice the moments when something catches our eye. We can notice the places where we are drawn to take a new path, to try something new or take a road less traveled. Then, when it seems right, we can let ourselves do it. Take the Scenic route; stop for an ice cream cone; buy the train ticket and go!

Then, as we enjoy this summertime travel and exploration, we can also ask ourselves, “Where is God trying to catch my eye? What new path might the Spirit be prodding me to take? Is it possible that my life journey is going to present a road less traveled that will bring much deepening and growth?”

Enjoy the rest, relaxation, and adventure that this summer offers.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Rick Jaech

Synod Voting Members Head for Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans

From August 7 – 13, nine voting members of our Southwestern Washington Synod will be in New Orleans attending the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Approximately 2,500 voting members from all sixty-five synods in the United States and the Caribbean will be in attendance as well.

The Churchwide Assembly is a packed schedule of worship, biblical reflection and making decisions about the mission and ministry of our national church body. Similar to a synod assembly, the Churchwide Assembly will vote on resolutions, elect officers and pass a budget for the ELCA.

In addition to the “work” of the Assembly, there is opportunity to enjoy fellowship, singing and conversations with ELCA Lutherans from all over the country. It is a joy to discover that God has brought together a very diverse, committed, Spirit-led group of people in our ELCA!

The voting members from our Synod are Bishop Rick Jaech; Paul Opgrande, Synod Vice President; Deborah Anderson, Creator, Bonney Lake; Clara Eickoff, young adult member, St. Mark’s by the Narrows, Tacoma; Pastor Sigi Helgeson, Bremerton; Tin-Tin Lee, youth member, Trinity, Parkland; Pastor Kathleen Neeley, Family of Christ, Vancouver; Larry Johnson, AIM, Faith, Shelton; Doug Wright, Trinity, Parkland.

On the Road with the Bishop



Throughout the month of July I have made trips to Ocean Shores, Gig Harbor, Olympia, and twice to Vancouver in order to engage Synod members in our Synod Fundraising Campaign, *Deep Roots, New Life*. At this point we are building a broader leadership team and speaking with potential donors.

July 24

It was my joy to visit New Wave Lutheran Church in Auburn, WA, led by Pastor Sibog Lee. *Photo, l to r, Pastor Sibog Lee, Pastor Dan Wilson (retired) Sibog's mentor, Pastor Mary Sanders, United, Tacoma and Ou In Jang, Pastor Lee's wife.* New Wave is our newest Korean Lutheran congregation. New Wave Lutheran worships at All Saints Lutheran, led by Pastor Jan Otto, where I also worshipped the same day, *shown below.*



Congregations in Transition

Lord, we pray for your wisdom, insight and peace for the congregations in our synod who are working through a time of pastoral transition

Mobility-August 2016

Congregations in Call Process	Position	Status	Pastoral Care
Bethany, Longview	P	TR	Julie Bracken
Bethel, Brush Prairie	P	I	Joe Aalbue
First, South Bend	P	I	Janeen Smith
Galilean Chapel, Ocean Shores	P	TR	Linda Milks
Ocean Park, Ocean Park	P	I	Dave Pritchard
Salishan Eastside Mission	P	TR	Lauren Vignec
Stella Chapel, Vancouver	P	TR	Elten Zerby
St. Paul, Vancouver	P	TR	Skip Getman

Mobility position key

*P – Pastor
AP – Associate Pastor
AIM – Associate in Ministry
DM – Diaconal Minister
DC- Deaconess*

Mobility status key:

*NV – New Vacancy
TR – Transition
I – Interviewing
C – Calling*

Calls Accepted

Pastor Dawna Svaren has accepted a synod call to serve as Redevelopment Pastor at **Ocean Park Lutheran** in Ocean Park. Her call will begin on September 1, 2016. Pastor Svaren is transferring from the Eastern WA/Idaho Synod.

Pastor Chuck Slocum has accepted the call to serve as Pastor at **Peninsula Lutheran** in Gig Harbor. His first Sunday there will be September 11th. He is transferring from Vinland Lutheran in Poulsbo.

Installation

PLU Campus Pastor, Jen Rude, will be installed at PLU in Lagerquist Hall on Tuesday, September 6th following the University Convocation (at approximately 10:45am). Clergy asked to vest in color of the day.

Retirement

Pastor Mark Woldseth, Gloria Dei Lutheran, Tacoma, retired at the end of July after 25 years serving as their Pastor.

A Proclivity for Paradox

By Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton

A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject of all, subject to all (Martin Luther in Freedom of a Christian).



Wow, Lutherans love paradox! Law and gospel. Saint and sinner. Free and bound. David Swartling, former ELCA secretary, often noted that we are a “both and church” in an “either or world.”

This proclivity for paradox, or at least the recognition that this is part of the

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Lutheran tradition, was often cited as a strength during the churchwide conversation phase of Called Forward Together in Christ (elca.org/future).

For four months synod assemblies, synod councils, the Conference of Bishops, the ELCA Church Council, ELCA ethnic associations, churchwide staff, the Faith Formation Network, individuals, agencies and institutions have been praying and considering together what might be God's priorities for the ELCA. It has been an engaged and energetic process.

Definite themes emerged all across this church. The next phase of the process will present these themes for consideration for all of us in the ELCA—once again in synods, congregations, agencies, colleges and universities, seminaries and at the Churchwide Assembly.

Spoiler alert: I'm going to lift up two of the themes now. First, in describing what it means to be an ELCA Lutheran or in answering the question "What is God calling the ELCA to become?" we overwhelmingly answered "a diverse, inclusive, multicultural church." In the settings where I led the conversation, I gently admonished pastors to let the laypeople speak so all of the baptized could be heard. Diversity was understood to be ethnic, economic and generational. We said congregations should reflect the communities in which they are planted. Marvelous!

The second theme I will raise now is that the ELCA is constituted so there is very little enforceable accountability. ELCA members can decide to participate in the life of their congregation or not. Congregations can decide to participate in the life of the synod or greater church or not. Pastors can decide to be engaged beyond their congregations or not. Even synods and bishops are often caught between their specific contexts and participation in churchwide decisions.

We aren't bad people. The overwhelming majority of us don't intend to be oppositional. There are forces at play that exacerbate this lack of accountability. The first is cultural—American Christianity is congregational and the autonomy of the individual is darn near sacrosanct. This started long before the breakdown of trust of institutions in the 1960s and '70s. Church membership is understood as a voluntary association. One can opt in and out as one chooses. In the American context faith is a private affair.

The second is that it took great sensitivity to care for the histories, politics and ecclesiologies of our predecessor church bodies (the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America) as the ELCA was being born. It was an enormously daring leap of faith to become the ELCA. I believe we are still working on trusting each other.

Our conversations in the Called Forward Together in Christ process show that we believe God is calling us to be a diverse and inclusive church. We need to be clear about our motivation. If it is a desire, no matter how well-intentioned or noble, to diversify the church, I don't believe God will bless our efforts. But, if it's our earnest desire to share the intimate and liberating love of

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'Paradox' continued from page 5

Jesus, then we will have to hold each other accountable as we take the hard but holy steps to open up a 94 percent white church.

Which brings me to the Luther quote at the beginning of this column. Faith is personal—God loves each one of us—but it is never private, nor is it lived apart from other Christians. In Christ we have been set free and in that perfect freedom we are subject and accountable to one another.

A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address: bishop@elca.org. This article first appeared in Living Lutheran's June issue. Reprinted with permission.

One Out of Many

By Pastor Kim Latterell, Synod Bishop's Associate



On the seal of the United States of America is written the phrase *e pluribus unum*. It translates from the Latin to English as one out of many. It serves our nation as both an ideal and a promise. We are fifty states but one nation. We are many colors but one people. We are many expressions of faith and yet one of every nation under God. We are multi-gifted but one in service to all. We hold many individual interests but share one grand goal of a democracy built on justice, freedom and peace for all. At least that is our stated hope.

But of late, the ideal of unity, the dream of a just peace seems deeply shattered. Instead of seeing ourselves as one people, by our words and actions we have become broadly fractured into many bitter sides and are quick to define ourselves not by who we stand with but by whom we stand against. Police versus public. White versus black and brown. Citizen against immigrant. Faith against faith. Leaders who are charged to serve in unifying the nation chose instead to rant and rave against every necessary compromise. Clearly, that deep, less-than-human emotion of hatred has surfaced in so many hearts. It's killing us.

Hate speech. Racial profiling. Assault weapons. High capacity magazines. Divisive political diatribes. Prejudice. Fear and mistrust. Walls. Threats. A cry for law and order in place of justice and peace. These are the tools hate clings to in its effort to make many out of one, to drive us apart into separate corners.

Near the end of the first century, a writer of 1 John wrote this brilliant reminder for all people and especially for people of faith: Those who say 'I love God' and hate their brothers and sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love

God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from God is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. *Continued next page*

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Clearly hate can become as all-absorbing as love is. The major difference between love and hate is that, to love is enriching and fulfilling, whereas to hate is to be drained and diminished. Lovers find themselves, while haters lose themselves. Hatred is the ultimate consuming passion. Of late, it is consuming us, our ideal and our dream for this nation. We, as one, must resist such hatred and find new ways to love each other in both word and deed, speech and action.

Hunger

End Hunger? The Single Most Important Step

Posted on July 25, 2016 by Ryan P. Cumming on ELCA World Hunger site

This blog originally appeared on the Huffington Post Impact site: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-p-cumming/end-hunger-the-single-most-important-step_b_11136672.html.

A few years ago, I was at the [World Food Prize](#) in Des Moines, Iowa, for the Borlaug Dialogues, an annual international conference on food security, agriculture, and food science. Representatives from NGOs, businesses, local communities, and national governments offered their solutions to hunger around the world, from encouraging young agri-entrepreneurs to [shipping fish heads to Africa](#). There was no end to creative (and, at times, dubious) solutions to world hunger.

What is the right answer? Maybe, like many at the Borlaug Dialogues argued, the solution is to [increase agricultural output](#), since we have too many people and not enough food. On the other hand, some argue that we already produce more than enough for everyone, so [food waste](#) is the real issue. Maybe the answer lies in the science of [GMOs that can "save the world from hunger, if we let them."](#) Perhaps the solution is more straightforward—[give hungry people peanut butter](#). Or, it could involve transforming [economic opportunity through social enterprise](#), the "only" solution to global poverty according to the author of that article. And so on and so on.

About the only thing most folks seem to agree on is that the answer isn't more relief but more development. Figuring out which path toward development to take, though, is another matter. Even the best routes aren't perfect. Increasing agricultural output doesn't address rampant food waste. Developing more GMO seeds doesn't address [lack of clean water](#) or lack of jobs. Microlending can provide huge benefits, but it [doesn't work everywhere](#) and doesn't work everywhere in the same way.

But there *is* a single step we can take to end hunger for good around the world and in our own communities: **listening to one another**. Too often, the "solutions" to hunger and poverty come down from the "top," rather than rising up from the ground. Those of us in developed countries are moved by the problems we see in developing nations and bring our own solutions to bear in communities that are not our own. At its worst, this feeds the sort of "savior complex" on prominent display recently in the [controversy](#) over Louise Linton's new memoir. At its best, this top-down model proffers solutions that simply don't work. *Continued next page*

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The kind of meaningful listening that builds relationships between and within communities helps solutions arise that are effective and sustainable. This model “challenges one-sided, top-down, and donor-recipient approaches...and emphasizes the need for developing mutual relationships in which all are considered teachers and learners,” says Rev. Dr. Philip Knutson, the regional representative of the [Evangelical Lutheran Church in America \(ELCA\)](#) in Southern Africa. Knutson warns that without cultivating relationships through listening, development projects can lose sight of context and “may be short-sighted, benefiting some but excluding others.”



Fyness Phiri of Chithope Village, shown in photo left

When listening is authentic, though, programs can respond to a host of needs, including practical needs for economic empowerment and personal needs like recognition of self-dignity. In Malawi, the [Evangelical Lutheran Development Service \(ELDS\)](#), supported in part by the ELCA through [ELCA World Hunger](#), is working with women and men to build community and overcome the challenges of hunger and poverty. (ELDS

is the diaconate arm of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi, led by Bishop Joseph Bvumbwe.) Fyness Phiri, one of the participants in the “Livelihoods Improvement and Empowerment Project,” recalls, “I was one of the poorest people in the village...before ELDS introduced this project.” Fyness used to ask her neighbors for money to buy food for herself, her husband, and their four children.

At a community meeting in 2013, Fyness joined other women to start a village savings and loan group. After some training and community-building meetings with ELDS, the group gave out its first loans. Fyness and the other women were able to start small businesses and purchase seeds and fertilizers for their farms. Eventually, the start-up money helped Fyness produce enough food to feed her family, pay back her loan, and sell some of her surplus at market. **“Since I joined the project,” she says, “my life has completely changed. I have food in my house, and I’m able to send my children to school. Because of the knowledge [I’ve gained], I will be able to continue and help others even if the project phases out.”** Because ELDS invested in the community and the relationships formed among the women, the impact is not only sustainable but replicable.



Extension worker Chesterman Kumwenda, shown left demonstrates how to use a treadle pump.

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Microfunding worked wonders for the women in Fyness' village, but for Charles Chikwatu's community, the problem was not access to funds but lack of water for their fields. Charles and other participants worked together to learn how to use efficient treadle pumps to increase the land they could tend for maize and tomatoes. The benefits of the new method are huge, Charles says: "I easily find money through sale of my crops [and] I have managed using the money from irrigation to send my children to secondary school. I have also started a grocery with the money from this farming."

New irrigation systems wouldn't help Fyness, who didn't even have money for seeds. A village savings and loan wouldn't have helped Charles' community address lack of access to water. But by listening closely, ELDS helped Fyness, Charles, and their communities transform their own situations.

And because of this, the benefits extend far beyond the immediate needs for food, according to Knutson. "[C]ollaboration between individual members in a community has enabled the individuals and the community to gain in knowledge and confidence to leverage other benefits enabling them to start new business and advocate for government support for local clinics and other rural development projects," he says.

New, creative solutions to hunger and poverty abound, and many offer much promise. When these are employed in the context of relationships where participants become leaders and vision is built from the ground up, effective action can take root and grow. *Sometimes*, the answer is reducing waste. *In some places*, the answer is increased production. *With some groups*, the answer is enterprise. But in every time, place, and case, the best response is to listen.

Photos: Gazeli Phiri and Dickens Mtonga, courtesy of ELDS

Ryan P. Cumming, Ph.D., is program director of hunger education with ELCA World Hunger. He can be reached at Ryan.Cumming@ELCA.org.

Wellness

Healing Takes Time

*Rev. Dr. Scott Stoner, Living Compass Wellness Initiative
Published July 8, 2016*

I have spent thousands of hours fishing in my life and a month ago I hooked something I have never hooked before-myself. With the help of a large Northern Pike that I was trying to get off of a multi-hooked lure I buried one of the free hooks deep into my left thumb. It was a barbed hook which greatly increased the pain as well as the challenge of extricating it from my thumb. Since the barbed hook was already half way through my thumb I
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debated for a moment whether to try and push it all the way through, or to try and pull it back out. After a few minutes of debate as to what to do next I made what turned out to clearly be the right decision. I had my wife drive me to the local emergency room, which thankfully was only thirty minutes away.

The doctor was able to see me quickly and assured me that he knew exactly what to do, as the hospital was located in an area in Northern Wisconsin known for its great fishing. He explained that he had extracted hundreds of hooks from many hands and feet over his many years of practice. Once my thumb had been numbed he went to work and ended up pulling the hook out the way it had gone in, which unfortunately allowed the barb to do more internal damage as it was being extracted. Soon the ordeal was over and after expressions of deep gratitude to the medical staff I was on my way with a well-bandaged left thumb.

It's been a month since this happened and I have learned an important lesson from the healing process. What has been remarkable is how quickly the surface level of my injury has healed. The hole in my skin where the hook entered (and exited with the help of the doctor) has completely healed. If you were to look at it you would hardly be able to notice that there had been an injury. The internal healing, however, has been much slower. I still have a great deal of pain deep within my thumb, and any careless bumping of it continues to cause me great discomfort.

The lesson in this for me is perhaps obvious. Just because a person's wound may look healed and totally fine on the outside, it doesn't mean that the deeper, internal healing process matches that outside appearance. A person who has experienced a traumatic loss of any kind may appear "fine" shortly after their painful experience. They may even report that they are "fine" when asked. But we need to be aware that the healing of the deeper wound from their loss will take much longer. It is also wise to know that any experience that bumps up against this loss will continue to cause discomfort for a long time, perhaps for years, to come. This lesson applies not only to individuals, but to couples, families, organizations, and society as a whole. The deep wounds of racism in our culture are just one example of how long, and how painful the process of a deeper, internal healing can be.

Perhaps you know someone who looks they are doing "fine" on the outside, but is still experiencing a deeper, internal pain on the inside. Perhaps that person is you in some way. I hope my painfully learned lesson with a fish hook can serve as a reminder that deeper healing always takes longer than we expect and we are wise to be careful and gentle with ourselves and/or others during the healing process.

What Do You Do When the Bridge Locks Open All Day? Have Church Anyway!

By Jean Clark Kaldahl with cheers of thanksgiving

If we use the criterion that an effective leader is one who trains his followers so well that they can carry on without him, then Pastor Ron McClung is doing his job very well as Mission Developer for Peace Lutheran Fellowship, Port Ludlow, WA.

Our elusive Hood Canal Bridge was stuck OPEN at 8 AM on Sunday, July 10. The competent busy little bees who prepare the room at the Beach Club where Peace Lutheran Fellowship meets, who put up the banners and vestments for the altar table had done their task. The Altar Guild women poured the wine into their proper vessels and individual cups. The homemade bread was ready under the linen. Nancy's garden flowers were in place.

The information Kiosk was set up with fair trade items, copies of Living Lutheran, Luther's Catechism Yellow Lutheran Shirts, etc.

The refreshments were on the side serving counter. The smell of coffee perking were all in place at 10 AM, the worship time. But no Pastor Ron. He is frantically phoning Alyssa Wright, the technical director, saying he could not get there. The Hood Canal Bridge between his home and Port Ludlow was stuck open.

The plan evolved. With no bulletins, Alyssa would still project the prayers, the hymns, the liturgy. Cynthia Buschagen, a (retired) Associate in Ministry by profession, but most valuable member of Peace, along with competent Assistant Minister for this Sunday, Sue Lind, Musician JoAnna Klein, Lector Robert Wright, Soloist Ed Klein, all shared the Service sent to Pastor Ron at his home via Alyssa and her technical skills. They presented the whole service without a hitch. Worshipers stood, sat, prayed, praised, sang just like any Sunday.

Special dispensation came from Pastor Ron, by phone, delivered by written note to Cynthia that it was in good order and right that she should offer up the Holy Communion, under Pastor's authority for consecration.

Sermon: no problem there. Pastor sat in his home, with camera focused on himself, (wonderful blessed "selfie") and delivered one of his best, focused on the Colossians reading. The congregation could hear and receive these holy words.

So the over fifty members, friends, tourists, visiting relatives from afar, experienced a rich worship. Everyone just knew the procedure, did his/her part led by Sue and Cynthia to have the Sunday morning worship today.

It was an historic day, the day the Bridge was stuck open for seven hours and Peace Lutheran folks just carried on thanks to gifts of the Spirit, technical savvy, and the love and blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen.

Our Congregations (news and neat ideas from our synod congregations)

Job Opportunities in our Congregations:

Choir Director, Trinity Enumclaw, Trinity Lutheran Church, Enumclaw

Youth Faith Formation Director, Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Vancouver, WA

Shared Financial Administrator, First Lutheran Church, Tacoma. First needs a Financial Administrator 10-15 hours/week- Looking for another congregation that may ease contact Gary Crawford <GCrawford@columbiabank.com>, Treasurer at First in Tacoma, to discuss.

Nursery Adult Supervisor, Family of Grace Lutheran Church, Auburn

Gloria Dei, Olympia has over 100 volunteers for each day of their Vacation Bible School this summer! They are also having a Memorial Garden and Columbarium Groundbreaking August 21 after their 10:30 am service.

On fifth Sundays, a Lutheran Worship is held at the **Washington Correction Center for Women ("Purdy")** in Purdy. On Sunday, July 31st, 102 incarcerated women along with Empowering Life volunteers from **St. Mark's by the Narrows in Tacoma** and **Peninsula Lutheran in Gig Harbor** came together for worship. Pastor Coe Hutchison and his "Good News Music Team" from **Grace Lutheran Church in Port Townsend** led wildly enthusiastic folk and gospel singing. Pastor Hutchison's message focused on God's unconditional, steadfast love. Communion was served and prayer requests were collected.

Agnus Dei, Gig Harbor is carpooling the free **Jazz under the Stars at PLU**- Thursdays July 7- August 11 at PLU The community events are held in the outdoor amphitheater of the Mary Baker Russell Music Center on the PLU upper-campus. Bring your lawn chairs and your picnic food. The series is sponsored by the PLU music department. At intermission, a performance on the world-famous Fuchs pipe organ in Lagerquist Hall. There is free coffee every week, snacks for sale, and stargazing after the last three concerts at PLU's Keck Observatory, weather permitting, courtesy of the PLU physics department. Concerts are NEVER cancelled due to weather. Concerts in August: August 4: Eugenie Jones (Tacoma vocalist) August 11: Greta Mata (August 4th's organ recital will feature the playing by Satya Jaech, Bishop Jaech's wife.)



Calendar

September 11, 2016- God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday

June 16-17, 2017 -Synod Assembly, at PLU, Tacoma

August 7-10, 2017 -**ELCA Rostered Leaders Gathering** in Atlanta Georgia "On the Way Together" (Begins Monday evening at 5pm and will end on Thursday by noon.)

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