

MISSION MATTERS

Central/Southern Illinois Synod
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2017 Synod Assembly, June 1-3 Gateway Convention Center Collinsville, IL

The Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, IL will be the site for the 30th annual synod assembly, June 1-3, 2017. Located on the north side of I-55 (exit #11), the area features many hotels and restaurants.

Dr. Sarah Hinlicky Wilson, an ordained ELCA pastor, will be the assembly keynote speaker. Wilson is an Adjunct Professor of the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France and the editor of the theological quarterly *Lutheran Forum*. She is the author of two books and of over one hundred articles on theology.

The Rev. Dr. Wyvetta Bullock, Assistant to the Presiding Bishop, Executive for Administration, will be the ELCA churchwide representative. She has served in this position since 2007. Previously, she served as Executive for Leadership Development and Executive Director for the Division for Congregational Ministries. Agenda items include: election of a Bishop; election of Synod Council members; Synod Constitution Update Resolution; Pedal for a Purpose update; consideration of a 2018 budget; reports on varied ministries; and break-out forums.

Visitors are welcome to attend the Festival Worship on Thursday, June 1st at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, 442 S. Demazenod Drive, Belleville, beginning at 8:00pm. An offering will be received for our Madagascar companion synods. Visitors are also encouraged to attend the break-out forums, but visitors must register at the convention center in order to ensure adequate space for the forums.

Visitors are also invited to participate in the Ambassadors on Wheels event, a five-mile ride on June 1, beginning at noon at Our Lord's Lutheran Church, Maryville to the Gateway Center. As part of this year's Pedal for a Purpose, this event seeks to raise \$50,000 to help support the ministries of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois.



In their own words...



I have felt God calling me in different ways throughout my life. Sometimes it was a vivid thought that popped into my head.

Sometimes it was a persistent nudge in a certain direction. I am usually surprised by the idea and struck by how right it is. That's how I moved to the Midwest, married a co-worker who is still my best friend, and became a Lutheran at age 30. When numerous thoughts and experiences coalesced into the firm conviction that God was calling me to ordained ministry, I had to be obedient. I also had to do a lot of praying and have discussion with my spouse.

I began the process at age 42. I had two children, a husband, a business, and a master's degree in a different field. Going back to school required extensive planning and logistics, as well as a leap of faith. My family and congregation's support and encouragement make this leap of faith not only possible, but also joyful. It is not easy, but it is absolutely right.

Kristen Schmid is a first-year MDiv student at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and Coordinator of Spiritual Gifts Ministries at her home church, St. John's Lutheran, Springfield, IL

TOGETHER IN MISSION



Our Savior, Bradley participates in ecumenical mission to help homeless

Our Savior, Bradley is partnering with a number of other churches and agencies to address the needs of the homeless in Kankakee County. Partners include the Salvation Army, Olivet Nazarene University and Compassion in Action (a ministry of Wildwood Nazarene Church). Fortitude Canteen Outreach Mission, building relationships with struggling individuals in Kankakee County by meeting them where they are, providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, and connecting to community resources, is the result of their collaborative efforts.

Once a week, a team of 5-10 volunteers each, drives a canteen van to designated areas within the Kankakee-Bradley-Bourbonnais region for a 30-minute stop. The team distributes clothing and personal hygiene items, a sack meal, snacks and hot coffee and cocoa, as well as Bibles and devotional materials. The team also shares appropriate referral resources for those in need of specific services.

Prince of Peace, Mt. Vernon begins tutoring program

Prince of Peace, Mt. Vernon has partnered with Cove Connection, a ministry of the Baptist Children's Home and Family Services of Illinois, to begin a pilot program of after school tutoring. The stated goals are: 1) to help children with homework; 2) work on math and reading skills; 3) develop a positive relationship with the children; and 4) encourage better social skills and self-discipline.



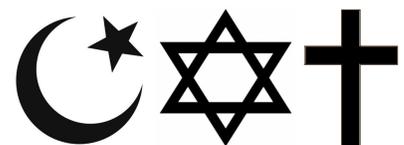
The church team consists of four members and the pastor, who work with two school aged children and their family. They work with the children on a weekly basis and once a month, the family participates in reading, game playing, and fellowship activities. If the pilot project is successful, Prince of Peace may begin to work with a second family. Cove Connection hopes to develop this program as a model for other congregations.

Christ, Monticello embarks on Three Faiths, One God study

Tiana Montgomery, a synod council member and a member of Christ, Monticello, is leading a discussion group at the church entitled "Three Faiths, One God: Judaism, Christianity, Islam". The group, which also includes members of St. Andrew's Church and Lutheran Campus Center (CIMIC), Champaign, visited the Central Illinois Mosque and Islamic Center in Urbana for a prayer service, lunch and discussion. The discussion was so in-depth that it merited the scheduling of a second visit, which will take place on March 10.

Six members of CIMIC, including the Imam, attended worship at Christ, Monticello on February 26 (Transfiguration Day) followed by discussion. Another follow-up visit to the mosque for prayer, lunch and discussion is being planned.

A group from Christ will visit Sinai Temple, Champaign on March 17. The over-arching purpose is to foster dialogue in order to understand and know each other better.



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Mission Matters... is a synodical newsletter.

Synod congregations, agencies and institutions

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