

# I-K Lutheran

## *Where God is doing new things*

October 2017



This year's commemoration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation is unlike most other previous commemorations. Many previous anniversaries were characterized by looking backward to celebrate and reassert what makes Lutherans and other Protestant traditions different from Roman Catholicism. This year Lutherans and Roman Catholics are looking back and looking forward together. As one book, co-written by Lutheran and Roman Catholic writers, puts it, we are remembering together in hope of re-membering the body of Christ. [Aageson, Julie K.. **One Hope: Re-Membering the Body of Christ**. Fortress Press.]

This quincentenary's common commemoration is rooted in fifty years of formal dialogue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. These decades of dialogues have, in turn, been rooted in the understanding that unity is first and foremost a gift of the Holy Spirit. But we also acknowledge that we have failed to live into that unity and are called to repent and live into that gift as vigorously as we can in order to serve the world together in the name of the Christ who unites us.

In preparation for the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity issued a joint resource entitled "From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017." That very helpful resource concludes with five ecumenical imperatives. I think of them more like helpful guides, directions, or even commitments that can shape engagement not just between Lutherans and Roman Catholics, but for any groups or individuals who are reaching across divides to live more deeply into the unity that Christ prayed for and God offers as gift. I have adapted these wise guides here in the hope that they will assist you in your local setting as you participate in the relational reformation of reconciliation in which we "share the goal of confessing Christ in all things, who alone is to be trusted above all things as the one Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5f) through whom God in the Holy Spirit gives himself and pours out his renewing gifts" [*Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 18].

- We always begin from the perspective of unity and not from the point of view of division in order to strengthen what is held in common even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced.
- We let ourselves be continuously transformed by the encounter with the other and by the mutual witness of faith.
- We again commit to seek visible unity, to elaborate together what this means in concrete steps, and to strive repeatedly toward this goal.
- We jointly rediscover the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ for our time.
- We witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.

Peace be with you,

Bishop Bill Gafkjen

"From Conflict to Communion": <http://ow.ly/mZWC30fbviE>

"Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification": <http://ow.ly/sTCW30fbv8y>

## **Know Your Numbers: Indiana-Kentucky Synod/Mission Territory**

The Indiana-Kentucky mission territory includes people of God who live in Indiana and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The territory covers a total of 76,826 square miles with a total population of more than 11 million people. 51,000 people are ELCA Lutherans attending worship in 182 congregations, and 2 congregations under development. This includes Bishop Bill and 130 active pastors, 12 pastors who are on leave from call, 135 retired pastors, 35 pastors serving in non-congregational ministries, 2 synodically authorized ministers, 15 active Deacons and 15 retired Deacons. There is one synodically authorized worship community, two congregations under development, three camps and five campus ministries. The mission territory is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which includes about four million members in nearly 95,000 congregations organized in 65 synods.

## **Campus Ministry at University of Louisville**

We pleased that Pastor Austin Newberry is now serving as Campus Pastor for the new Episcopal/Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Louisville. Pastor Newberry began his ministry at the University of Louisville on September 1, 2017. He continues to serve as Pastor of First Lutheran Church in Louisville. If you have students attending the University of Louisville, please let Pastor Newberry know by emailing him at [p.austin.flc@gmail.com](mailto:p.austin.flc@gmail.com).

## **Youth News**

The first issue of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod's *Youth News* went out earlier this week. If you'd like to receive future issues by email, please contact Carol Webb at [cwebb@iksynod.org](mailto:cwebb@iksynod.org).

## **“God’s Work. Our Hands.” Sunday**

Did your congregation participate in “God’s Work. Our Hands.” Sunday? If so, we’d love to hear what you did! We’ve already heard about an amazing variety of service to our neighbors done across our mission territory. Send us your story. We’d love to see your photos, too. Send to [tdearchs@iksynod.org](mailto:tdearchs@iksynod.org).



**Indiana-Kentucky Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.