



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

February 27, 2012

Dear Pastor and President of the congregation,

In 2011 the members of the Churchwide Assembly agreed that supporting the work of congregations is one of the highest priorities of the ELCA. The LIFT (Living Into the Future Together) task force asked that congregations - in collaboration with synods - develop, review or redefine a Mission Plan by the end of 2012. Synods are to be a resource to congregations, and the *Renewed Evangelizing Congregations* Table of our synod would like to be of assistance.

While the point of planning is to get something done, plenty of churches put a lot of energy into developing a plan, but then lose steam in carrying it out. Many churches are doing missional work without having laid out a plan with goals ahead of time. Nevertheless this kind of intentionality can help to discern direction, priorities and focus. It invites an evaluation of the community context and its needs. It can help identify what the congregation needs in order to be equipped to go out into the community.

Does your congregation have some kind of Mission Plan or Strategic Plan that will guide you in the next year? If yes, would you send a copy to us? We would like to learn from it, and please let us know if we can share it with others. (We would like to have samples of Guiding Principles and plans to show at Synod Assembly.) If the answer is no, that you do not have a formal plan, have you set deliberate goals for the congregation over the next year? If so could you please send those and use the enclosed form if it is useful to you.

If you have not set goals or a specific ministry direction for the next year would your congregation welcome assistance in setting goals or developing a Mission Plan?

If yes, please tell us 3 or 4 methods that have worked for your congregation in the past: Dave Daubert's retreat, cottage meetings or congregational meetings... and let us know how we can be of assistance.

If no, would you like the synod *Renewed Evangelizing Congregations* Table to just leave you alone?

If so, we'll ask together Martin Luther's great question: "what does this mean?"

Please send your response back to the Synod Office
Attention: The Renewed Evangelizing Congregations Table

Thank you,

Your servants in Christ,

The Renewed Evangelizing Table:

Pr Karen Bates Olson, Pr Peg Harvey Marose, Pr Joel Ley, Mary Jamison, Mary and John Jensen, Charleen Kaaen, , Pr Dan Rieke, Beryl Rieke, Pr Duane Anderson, Pr Dave Haven, Pr Paul Palumbo, Pr John Hergert, Pr Mark Nelson, Pr Helga Jansons, Bishop Martin Wells