

Faith grows when we give

"What we do with our possessions will impact our relationship with our Lord," said the Rev. Charles "Chick" Lane, ELCA stewardship director, at Power in the Spirit in July. "Your faith will grow when you take steps to connect it with your wealth. We certainly want to serve God but we can't quite cut our ties to our wealth," he added.

Lane, keynote speaker on the Power theme, "God Gives! We Care! We Share!" said too often "we want to be part of the body of Christ but we want our billfolds and checkbooks excluded. We have the unbiblical idea that money has nothing to do with faith."

Too many ELCA congregations have "a culture of scarcity in which money is seldom talked about (except when) the topic of conversation is getting the bills paid." Many today want to be a disciple of Christ, he said, but they want to shield their finances from that relationship.

Lane listed four issues that cause many people to want to put their financial lives in a box and shield them from Jesus: Many accept that money is not to be talked about; churches want to draw a sharp line between the spiritual and the business in congregational life; many in every congregation have their financial houses in disarray (an average ELCA member gives less than 2 percent of income to church work) and pastors often have their finances in disarray.

The message of the Bible is that "what we do with the possessions God has entrusted to us has a profound and direct connection to our faith."

Possessions-house, car, clothes, even a paycheck, don't establish ownership-"they are use permits from your Heavenly Father."

A session on greening congregations produced a host of suggestions on saving energy and recycling by such practices as energy audits, organic gardening, use of canvas bags for groceries, long-lasting light bulbs, timers for heating and cooling.

The 2009 Power in the Spirit will feature author Mark Allan Powell at Roanoke College on July 9-11, according to Elizabeth Smythe, coordinator.

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Lutherans in the news

Pastor Robert McCarty (right) is moving from Souderton, Pa., to accept a call to **Christ, Staunton**. He and his wife, Elizabeth, who he met at Penn State University, have two sons. He previously served a two-congregation parish in Pennsylvania. Before seminary, he worked in communications at a public television station and a Cazenovia, N.Y. company.

Pastor Kaye Hute (below, center) was ordained on July 11 at her home congregation of **St. Andrew, Portsmouth**, in a service led by **Pastors Cathy Fanslau** (right) of St. Andrew, and **Karen Van Stee**, a former pastor. Hute has accepted a call to **Christ, Claysburg, Pa.** and **St. Luke's, Roaring Springs, Pa.**



Pastor Frank Honeycutt, of **Ebenezer, Columbia, S.C.**, and formerly of **St. John, Abingdon**, will be the speaker for the annual **Gathering of the Ministerium** on Oct. 13-15 at Virginia Beach. The theme will be "God's Appeal through Us as Proclaimers of the Word."

Two children of **Prof. Paul and Ellen Hinlicky** of **Roanoke College** have new posts. **Dr. Sara Wilson** will be assistant research professor at the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France. She will be the consultant to the international Lutheran-Orthodox dialogue and she will continue to edit the quarterly journal, *Lutheran Forum*. **William A. Hinlicky** will teach theological English at the Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. A May graduate of Roanoke College, he spent six years in Slovakia while his parents were missionaries of the Slovak Zion Synod. He spent 15 months with the Army Reserves in Kuwait.

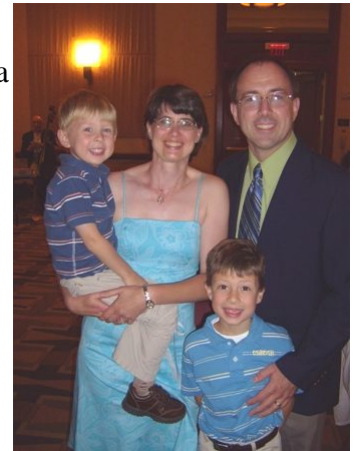
Trinity, Pulaski, will celebrate 120 years of ministry with a special **Trinity on the Corner** service, led by **Bishop Jim Mauney**, on Sunday, Aug 24. A 40-foot time line will contain pictures and historical items from the congregation's history at 5th Street & Washington Avenue in Pulaski. Reunion choirs will sing, an offering will benefit the Synod Trust Fund for Mission and a fellowship luncheon will follow the service, according to **Pastor Terrie Sternberg**.

Bethel, Winchester, honored **Vernon Joyner**, who retired after more than 60 years on an organ bench, or over 3,000 Sundays at several churches. Also, **Khris Nguyen** has participated in Bethel's Lutheran Immersion Summer of Mission for college students, sharing the gospel with 75 refugee children in Jacksonville, Fla. **Kaley Gordon**, the congregation's first summer immersion participant, has been on a five-week mission, assisting at a girls school in Tanzania this summer.

Holy Trinity, Lynchburg, celebrated 20 years of partnership with a Lutheran church in **Holzminden, Germany** when a group of youth and adults from the German church worshiped at Holy Trinity on July 20. **Pastor Rudiger Schmidt**, retired pastor at Holzminden, was the preacher. A number of groups from both congregations have exchanged visits and **Jakob Haller** and **Fabian Schax** from Holzminden served as outreach ministry interns at Holy Trinity.

A Share Your Faith Sunday evening program with hymn singing a covered dish meal was planned at **Christ Wise**, according to **Michael Samerdyke**, lay leader.

An anonymous donor at **Trinity Ecumenical Parish**, Smith Mountain Lake, has offered to match



funds contributed for an elevator from June 1 through May 31, 2009. Approximately 20 small groups meet regularly at Trinity for mutual support, service, spirituality and study.

Christ, Fredericksburg, is planning its annual joint retreat with **St. George's Episcopal Church**, at Shrine Month, Orkney Springs, on Oct. 10-12. The theme will be "We are One." Also at Christ, Fredericksburg, an Accessibility Weekend Team built an accessibility ramp for an elderly woman.

Anna Ray Roberts, president of the council at **Grace, Rural Retreat**, has retired after more than 41 years as librarian at **Wytheville Community College**. She has served at four locations.

Elizabeth Young, St. John, Roanoke, has received the 2008 Humanitarian Award given by the Alumni Association of **Emory and Henry College**, her alma mater. The award is given annually to an alumnus/a who exemplifies the spirit of help and love of others.

Prince of Peace, Orkney-Basye Parish, held its annual Drop Your Drawers Drive to collect new underwear for some disadvantaged school children in Shenandoah County. The drawers will be distributed at Open Door Food Pantry in Mt. Jackson.

Blessings of two churches From Changarawre to Winchester

by Pastor Jim Utt, Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Winchester, VA

It was not a scheduled stop on the itinerary of a full day of travel into "bush country" to visit schools and churches in the Karatu District of the Northern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Our diocesan host, Pastor Yotham Baha, said it would only take a few minutes and would mean so much to this struggling congregation on the outskirts of Karatu.

At eight in the morning, the pastor, elders, and many members of the Lutheran congregation of Changarawre village were waiting for us as we arrived to offer a prayer of blessing for the new church they were trying to build. A make-shift set of "pole pews" under a canopy of strips of white cloth designated the site of our welcome and opportunity to worship. Pastor Dwayne Westermann, our "mission safari" leader, insisted that I offer prayers, scripture reading and a blessing for the building of a new church.

In September 2000, Susan, my wife, and I traveled on a Discovery Safari with Godparents for Tanzania, an organization that Westermann was establishing to help educate children and youth of Tanzania. By the time we left Changarawre, we were all

That one stop changed more than just a day's itin in Karatu, Tanzania and Grace in Winchester, Virginia! an amazing journey convinced that helping this congreg propose to Grace. In 2004, 19 members of Grace traveled to Tanzania to celebrate the dedication of the new church at Changarawre (right) with a four-hour worship service in which 56 persons were baptized and



a three-hour banquet, featuring three roasted goats for dessert!

For the past eight years, annual special "Tanzania Missions" offerings have been received, "alternative Christmas tree" gifts featuring carvings and unique Massai beaded art work offered for sale, Tanzanian style "after-worship-service-auctions" have been conducted (gifts from members offered for sale at auction with the monies going to our projects), and a popular Grace Global Missions Market for Advent has developed-all raising over \$85,000 in eight years for building churches, kindergartens and supporting other mission projects.

Grace has built a second church at Lositete, a remote Massai village on the edge of the great African rift. Eight members from Grace traveled this June to celebrate with this congregation during a three-hour worship service in which 19 people were baptized, 11 youth confirmed, and 16 "excommunicated members" restored to full communion! A delicious banquet with roasted goat was topped off with Massai warriors demonstrating their strength with "leaping dances" and the women dancing, displaying their unique beauty and their beautiful beaded necklaces. It was a "National Geographic" kind of experience! Commitments have been made to build two more churches at Kambi ya Simba (Camp of Lion) on the way to Lositete and at Makhoromba high on the Oldeani Mountain range overlooking the Serengeti. One kindergarten has been built and two more are under construction in other villages outside of Karatu. A sunflower seed press has been purchased and other "micro" economic projects are being developed with support of two vocational schools. Medical supplies have been purchased for Karatu Lutheran Hospital and members of the congregation, David and Joyce Ray, Dr. Richard Nanna and his wife, Brooks, have volunteered summers to be on staff at the hospital.

Monies are in hand to have a "bore hole" drilled for the hospital. Individual members, children in Sunday School and Vacation Bible School have given school supplies and special offerings have been received for food at times of draught. Extra monies have been given to supplement the income of "servants of the church"--pastors, lay evangelists and teachers in church-owned schools who have gone without pay for months at a time.

From that one "off schedule" stop at a village outside of Karatu, Tanzania, Grace, Winchester, has been blessed with renewed energy and commitment for the outreach mission and ministry of the church. Thanks be to God for our brothers and sisters in Tanzania!

(Information on the work of Godparents for Tanzania and their travel program, Discovery Safaris, is available at www.godparents4tz.org.)

Book of Faith

by Lisa Geiger, Synod advocate for the Book of Faith

"That the whole church become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture."

The ELCA's Book of Faith initiative is about renewal; it's about our renewal as a people of God rooted in the Lutheran tradition, the renewal of our congregations throughout the Synod, and the renewal of our hearts through the living Word of God.

How exciting that we are about to embark together on a journey through God's word as a Synod and as a national body of believers! The Book of Faith initiative invites us not only to read the Scriptures through our unique Lutheran perspective, but also to join in conversation with one another about God's word, and how it affects our lives in Christ each day.

The Bible is a book of faith and we are a Bible-shaped people. The lives, stories, and history of

Scripture are not just those of Moses, David, Jonah, Mary, Jesus, and Paul, but they are our lives, our stories, and our history too. The Book of Faith initiative will help us journey together as Lutherans through Scripture where we not only read about God, but encounter the living God directly; we not only learn about Jesus, but we meet Jesus personally.

As Diane Jacobson, director of Book of Faith writes, "We come trusting that immersion in the Bible, becoming more fluent in the language of the Bible, will help us live more deeply into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, and empowered by the Word."

I am truly blessed to be serving as your Synod advocate for this wonderful initiative. I look forward to working, learning from, and meeting many of you along the path. If you have questions or would like to be put on my Book of Faith e-mail list, please contact me at ljgeiger1@cox.net or 757-468-5445.

(Lisa Geiger, a member of Emmanuel, Virginia Beach, is a computer services manager for a government contractor at Navy headquarters in Norfolk. She is working on a master's degree in theology and hopes to teach religion or do other church work in the future).



Choosing the right path to ministry

by Deanna Scheffel

(Deanna Scheffel, Our Saviour, Warrenton, a recent graduate of the College of William and Mary, writes about her call experience. She will enter Southern Seminary this fall.)

When I was looking at colleges, I didn't know what I wanted to major in, what I wanted to be when I finished school. I chose William and Mary because of the beautiful area, the great reputation and the amazing sense of community I felt when I stepped on campus.

I had to pick an area of study right away to be placed with a freshman advisor. This is when a new pattern emerged in my life: taking the path of least resistance. I was pretty good at math and enjoyed science, so I told William and Mary that I wanted to be a biologist. After my first semester, I found that I was really not cut out for biology, but I excelled at chemistry so I switched.

But academics is only half of the story. While I was getting a career plan together, I also got involved with ministries. My faith has always played an important role in my life. I have been blessed with wonderful parents who not only raised me in the church, but also provided great examples of faith-filled living. Growing up, church was a big part of my life, as was serving the community.

In college God has blessed me with opportunities to serve Him through the Lutheran Student Association, and through Young Life in local middle schools. I know that God is present in every aspect of my life, but in my obsessive organization, I scheduled certain hours for ministry, and certain hours for school work. My job track and my life track were two separate paths that I jumped back and forth between.

It was at this point that Pastor Andy Ballentine of St. Stephen, Williamsburg, said something that initially made me very angry. He caught me looking at a course catalogue for Gettysburg Seminary while eating dinner in the college room, and told me that he had just visited with my hometown pastors at a synod

youth event.

They had told him I should consider going into ministry. I responded that the classes looked really interesting, and I'd love to go to seminary just to get the knowledge, but that wasn't what I wanted to do with my life. As he walked out of the room, Pastor Ballentine said, "Well you know, if it's what God wants you to do with your life, you don't really have a choice."

I was so upset by this statement because the idea that I might not be able to control my future was radical to me. I was in the process of controlling my future. I had chosen to become a chemist, and did not take well to somebody telling me that this may not be the right path for me. The demands of chemistry were increasing. But the hours of study were creeping into the hours set aside for ministry, and I wasn't happy.

I began to realize that as stubborn as I was, my heart was not with chemistry; my passion really was for working with kids and helping them grow in Christ. I realized that no matter what I did, I would never be happy with the amount of time I could give to the church.

I knew I needed to take a step back and look at what I was doing. I decided to go on a discernment retreat put on by Project Connect, an ELCA organization designed to help young adults understand God's call in their lives. Here, I first learned the word, vocation.

Vocation is more than a job. It is more than a way to pay the bills. Vocation is stepping into God's plan, finding your passion, and serving the world in your own unique way. When I finally realized this, and listened to God speaking through the people around me, I felt great peace. I am no longer struggling and fighting to succeed, trying to be someone I am not, but am at rest knowing that God will lead me.

I am now on a journey to seminary and ordained ministry in the Lutheran church. It is a path my family and I know very little about. But I trust that God has given me the gifts necessary to carry out His will, and I trust that He will be with me every step of the way.

This Lutheran has \$50 million dollars to lend



Paul Economy, a busy layman at St. Philip, Roanoke, became an instant celebrity in mid-summer when an interstate billboard and a newspaper column carried his picture and the offer: "Come see Paul. He has \$50 million to lend." Economy is a vice president and branch manager for Member One, a Roanoke-based credit union.

Lending has been strong and a Roanoke Times column "did pick up the speed," Economy said. He hasn't used all of the \$50 million yet but the first month of the summer promotion generated "multimillions" in loans, a dramatic increase from previous months, a marketing executive of the credit union told Shanna Flowers, the newspaper columnist. The billboard "lets people know what we do here. It's truly rewarding to see people achieve financial goals," Economy said.

Economy said people came in and said they saw the billboard ad and applied for a loan for a vacation and others needed money for repairs or college expenses. In a tight economy for many financial institutions, this credit union had the funds to take on more customers. Member One has over 20,000 outstanding loans.

Economy, a former council member and Sunday School teacher, has just returned from a church mission trip to Malawi and he is chair of the congregation's Global Mission Team. He also serves as president of the Roanoke Ballet Theatre board.

Rose Kidabing brought her faith from PNG

After a busy 24-day visit across the Virginia Synod and earlier stops in Salt Lake City, Chicago and Wisconsin, Rose Kidabing (right) will take a message of "being together in faith and reaching out" when she returns to Papua New Guinea where she is president of the New Guinea Island District Women. Her organization of close to 3,000 women is part of the 1.2 million Lutherans in that far-off land.

Kidabing, a small woman with strong faith, traveled from the Triennial Convention of ELCA Women to ELCA headquarters and a Global Mission Event in Wisconsin before speaking at the Synod Women of the ELCA convention in Richmond and visiting congregations from Blacksburg to Luray last month. Karen Mayer of St. Michael, Blacksburg, (above), drove Kidabing across the synod.

Her travel by plane and car on interstate highways contrasted with her trips by boat and bus and walking to women's gatherings in her country. In her work, Kidabing coordinates workshops in four circuits (conferences), runs Bible studies, promotes literacy and food preparation. Most of the women in her country are illiterate but they want to read the Bible, she said.

She lives with her husband, Biyam Kidabing, a carpenter, and their five sons and one daughter, in two bush houses, with a corrugated iron roof. The children live in a house next door. They have dirt roads and no electricity but she says her country is not poor. "We are rich in natural resources but the government takes any income," she said.

The people grow their own food and the long-term goal is for the women to learn more skills, according to Kidabing. The women make soap and tie colorful fibers together for packs, bilums, which they sell and carry on their heads. She learned English in school more than 20 years ago but language is complicated in a country with 800 dialects. She and her husband have different dialects but they meet with Pidgin, a universal tongue.

Her term as president of the Islands District women is near the end and Kidabing is ready to retire



from 24 years of leadership of women at Good Shepherd, her home church, the circuit and the district. Her husband has supported her church work but she wants to spend more time with her children.

Kidabing was pleased with the "friendly welcome" she received in Virginia and she was impressed by the "modernized technology. "You have everything (in the U.S.). You are committed. When you say you will get it done, you do it."

She was grateful for the support of the Virginia Synod. As a companion synod to the Island District, the Virginia Synod has provided funds for two school buildings and a boat and the synod youth are raising money for an Island District headquarters.

Two to be ordained and serve Valley churches

Nathan Robinson and Sarah Trone Garriott will be ordained after accepting calls to Shenandoah Valley churches,



Robinson (left), who is already serving at Emanuel, Woodstock, will be ordained Aug. 9 at 4 p.m. at Gloria Dei, Hampton, where he has been a pastoral resident for almost two years.

A native of Port Allegany, Pa., Robinson is a graduate of Dickinson College, Boston University School of Theology and the Gloria Dei Academy and he has completed course work at Gettysburg Seminary. He and his wife, Kyleene, have moved to Woodstock.

The ordination date for Garriott (right), who will move to Martin Luther, Bergton, had not been determined by synod officials at the end of July. Garriott, a recent graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, is a Minnesota native who graduated from the College of St. Scholastica and earned a master's degree from Harvard Divinity School. She has been a VISTA worker in New Mexico, an advocate for abused women and children, a pediatric chaplain at a Chicago children's hospital and a seminary intern in Petersburg, W. Va. Her husband, Will Garriott, is an assistant professor in justice studies at James Madison University.



ELCA women elect Anjanette Hodges as treasurer



Anjanette Hodges of Our Saviour, Christiansburg, was elected treasurer of the Women of the ELCA at the Triennial meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, July 8-10. She is a past treasurer, board member and conference coordinator of the Virginia Synod Women's Organization.

Hodges, wife of Pastor Fred Hodges of Our Saviour and a daughter of Keith and Genie Brown, St. John, Roanoke, is a Virginia Tech accounting graduate and the corporate controller of Community Housing Partners, Christiansburg. The Hodges have three sons.

She was cited as Volunteer of the Year for Families with Children in the Mid-Atlantic Region of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and she has been treasurer of a number of

organizations.

Hakkenberg is interim dean at Roanoke College

Michael Hakkenberg of College, Salem,, a history professor and former director of the honors program at Roanoke College, has been named interim vice president / dean of the college. He replaces Dr. John T. Day, dean for six years before moving to a post at John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio.

Hakkenberg, who holds a master's and a doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, joined the Roanoke faculty in 1995.

In two other moves, Juliet J. Lowery has been named director of multicultural affairs and Dr. Jack Steehler, a long-time chemistry professor, has been appointed to the new post of director of student / faculty research.

Vesna Zeljkovic, a Roanoke junior who came from Bosnia-Herzegovina, became a U.S. citizen on July 4-an event recorded on the front page of The New York Times and many other newspapers. After she became a citizen, Zeljkovic hugged President George Bush and their photo made the papers. Bush asked her how it felt to become a citizen. "Amazing," she replied. She celebrated with her sorority sisters from the college.

A Green Advisory Committee of more than 20 faculty, staff and students at Roanoke College has been named by Michael Maxey, president. They will start by conducting an audit of current college efforts and the results will be used to help identify additional opportunities for sustainability efforts.

The committee will examine the feasibility of options for impact and cost effectiveness and make recommendations to Maxey and his cabinet. Mac Johnson, senior advisor to the president, is chair of the committee.



Glade Creek celebrates 180 years

Glade Creek at Blue Ridge, oldest Lutheran congregation in the Roanoke Valley, will celebrate its 180th birthday on Sunday, Sept. 21. Pastor Stephen P. Shackelford said Sunday School will be at 9:45 a.m., followed by worship with Communion at 11:00 a.m.. Our mission, he said, is to love and serve all in Christ.

After the anniversary service, a potluck dinner, music, fellowship and reflection on God's continued blessings throughout the 180 years will follow. The congregation worships at 3359 Webster Road.

The congregation, organized on Sept. 1, 1828, was comprised of five families---Flook (Fluke), Henderlight, Kessler, Murray and Spickard. The congregation was led by the Rev. D. J. Hauer, the pastor/organizer. Worship and Sunday School was held before the organization.

The first church was a log building on the hillside near the old Glade Creek Cemetery, a quarter-mile south of the present brick structure. The oldest gravestones are there. A Union brick church was built by the Lutheran, Baptist and Missionary denominations about 1856, according to a church history. The congregation was part of a Botetourt Parish of four or five churches for many years. The present brick church was first used for a service in January 1941, during the service of Pastor J. D. Utt. The church was constructed at a cost of \$6,238.08.

Dr. R. Homer Anderson, superintendent of Synod, preached at a dedication service in September 1942. An afternoon sermon was given by Dr. Oscar Blackwelder of Washington, formerly of Christ, Roanoke.

VLH donates land for New Market clinic

Virginia Lutheran Homes has donated 1.25 acres of the former Stirewalt property in New Market to Shenandoah Memorial Hospital for construction of a clinic adjacent to Luther Crest, a VLH elderly housing facility.

Construction of the clinic will benefit Luther Crest residents as well as the town of New Market, said George "Skip" Zubrod, VLH president. VLH also owns an adjoining 30-acre tract which eventually will be offered for sale, he said. The hospital also purchased other land for the clinic site.

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