**TIPS FOR GETTING MEDIA COVERAGE AND WRITING NEWS RELEASES**

1. Identify and characterize the project or event in clear words and consider the who, what, when, where and why of each project or event.
2. Establish a time line for preparing the release, having it reviewed and edited, and distributed.
3. Often times a release is sent after an event: in this case consider using a media advisory which alerts select news organizations to the who, what, when, where and why of the project and invites coverage.
4. The attached sample can be used as a template for a news release.
5. Establish one or more media contact lists which can include all local/regional/national media organizations you want to target or can be refined by geography, interest area, or previous coverage interest.
6. Attempt to find the contact person(s) in each news organization or outlet who news releases should be sent too. Try to follow-up with these people prior to your event or project to answer any coverage questions they have, to offer pre-event interviews, or simply to be sure they received the release and to gauge their interest in covering it.
7. Below is a sample template for a news or media advisory.



**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**HELP FEED CHILDREN LOCALLY AND AROUND THE WORLD**

**WHAT:** *Feeding the Children: Locally and Globally Fundraising Dinner*

**WHEN:** Saturday, October 19, 2013, 6:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** St. Philip Lutheran Church, 8115 Williamson Road, Roanoke, VA

**WHO:** Special Guest Speaker, Bishop Joseph Bvumbwe, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi

**WHY:** To raise money and awareness for feeding children programs locally and in Africa

Your coverage is invited and encouraged. For more information please contact Pastor David Derrick at 540-366-7046 or pastordavid@stphiliplutheran.net

1. Consider whether to send the media advisory and news release out simultaneously. For media advisories the recommendation is to send at least 2-5 days prior to the event. If sending the news release separately send it immediately after the event/project conclusion.
2. In addition to identifying the people in each organization who should receive an advisory or release; identify reporters or editors who may have a special interest in your subject matter, a personal connection to your church or organization, or is someone you’ve worked with in the past and garnered positive media coverage from.
3. Follow-up is important—the trick is to gauge how much is too much and might be considered becoming a pest.
4. Below is a sample news release. It should include clearly identified contact person, phone number and e-mail address, the who, what, when, where and why of the event, a quotation from one or more key players and background information on your event. One to two page news releases are preferable. It is okay to send additional documentation such as event brochures, maps, photos, video links, etc.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FOR MORE INFORMATION

October 15, 2013 Pastor David Derrick

 540-366-7046

pastordavid@stphiliplutheran.net

**VIRGINIA LUTHERANS ANNOUNCE DAY OF SERVICE**

*In the Name of Love* Projects Scheduled for Martin Luther King Day



**(Roanoke, VA)** With many government programs shuttered, families still reeling from the impacts of the great recession, joblessness and homelessness; the needs of communities and individuals have never been greater. In recognition of these issues, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America/Virginia Synod and the Lutheran Partners in Mission are sponsoring a Synodical Day of Service on Martin Luther King Day, January 20, 2014.

Individual Lutheran churches and congregations are now identifying possible community service projects and invite suggestions from organizations and individuals who may be in need of assistance. Pastor David Derrick of St. Philip Lutheran Church in Roanoke, explains that the *In the Name of Love* *Virginia Synod Day of Service* allows congregations to, “move out into their neighborhoods to serve those in need and to share God’s compassion with the world.” Derrick said, “It is an opportunity for everyone to invest time in hands-on service projects outside the walls of the church.” Teams from local congregations will pick projects and move out into the world in the name of God’s love.

Possible projects include ramp building, development of health kits, sewing projects, blood drives, assistance at women’s shelters, yard work for the elderly, repair work at group home, health fairs, roadside clean-ups, and community prayer walks. Congregations are now being encouraged to survey the neighborhoods surrounding their churches to help identify groups or people who can be helped during the *In the Name of Love* *Virginia Synod Day of Service.*

*“*With 153 congregations in the Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)”, Pastor Derrick said, “There are 153 different projects that can help folks in 153 different ways. It seems fitting to conduct this day of service on a day that remembers Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who dedicated his life to service to others.”

Lutheran Churches across Virginia are now planning their activities for the MLK holiday and interested groups or individuals are encouraged to contact their nearest ELCA church if they’d like to receive consideration for a project.

For more information on the *In the Name of Love* *Virginia Synod Day of Service* check out its Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/In-the-Name-of-Love-A-Day-of-Service-and-Sharing-Gods-Love/590085924381009>