

Wanted: Congregation to Partner with LCCN #6 in Nepa

by Kris Perry, DM

LCCN #6 Congregation in Nepa is located in a mostly Muslim neighborhood close to Jimeta. Over 700 people gather for worship each Sunday, and 437 children are in the Sunday school program. Founded in 1981, this growing and vibrant congregation is greatly interested in how American Christians deal with their Muslim neighbors. The congregation has active youth groups, boys' and girls' brigades, and a very strong women's fellowship and men's fellowship.

The church has recently purchased land adjacent to their current sanctuary in order to expand the church. They are in a capital campaign to raise five million niara (approximately \$40,000) for the building expansion. Until they begin building, they are allowing homeless congregation members to live in the homes now on the new church property.

The primary focus of this congregation is to bring the message of Christ to their Muslim neighbors. Their current pastor, the Rev. Joel Kloblai, is very excited about the possibility of developing a relationship with a church in the Minneapolis Area Synod. This congregation is in an urban area, so it would be a good partner for a Minneapolis Area Synod congregation where members would not feel comfortable going into the bush regions of Nigeria. The Rev. Dr. Peter Bartimawus, provost of Bronnum Lutheran Seminary and a guest at the 2007 Synod Assembly, was the previous pastor at LCCN #6 in Nepa.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can become a partner congregation with one of the LCCN churches, contact Kris Perry at krisp@visi.com or at 612-418-5410. Watch future *Interacts* for profiles of other LCCN congregations seeking Minneapolis Area Synod congregation partners.



The people of LCCN #6 Nepa want to share the gospel with their Muslim neighbors.

Congregations Can Provide Accompaniment to Vets and Families

by Amy Blumenshine

Hurrah! The 2,600 members of the Minnesota National Guard who were deployed for 22 months have returned! Special church resources for soldiers returning home and their families are now available on the synod Web site, www.mpls-SYNOD.org. Background information, tips and resources for ministry can be downloaded.

The materials and resources have been prepared by the Coming Home Collaborative (CHC) in accord with the 2006 synod resolution on assisting veterans re-integration. CHC is also working to stimulate a congregational outreach network that will act as the "arms of Christ" accompanying veterans and their families in their transition process.

Churches can provide information about what to expect in transition and hold the veteran and family in prayer while they are in their transition home process. While soldiers returning from war will vary greatly in what they have experienced and how that has impacted them, every veteran will be going through a transition process upon arriving home. CHC urges early intervention before small problems become big ones. They also encourage an early diagnosis of disability, if it exists, before the wounded veteran experiences secondary wounding, such as family breakdown, job loss and addiction.

CHC recommends, along with the Minnesota National Guard, that all returning soldiers register for health care with the Veterans Administration upon their return. Along with the Disabled American Veterans, they encourage veterans to document their exposures to traumas and toxins while they have memory and witnesses. CHC encourages all veterans to pay attention to their particular transition, seeking help for particular concerns before they become big problems. Contact CHC at ListenToVets@comcast.net.

Goodbye Kathryn. Hello Rachel.

Kathryn Bressandes left the Minneapolis Area Synod staff on August 17 to get married in Hawaii and move to Ohio. We wish her the best in her marriage and thank her for her hard work during the past year.

With Kathryn's departure, we welcome Rachel Swan as administrative assistant for stewardship and candidacy. She will assist the Rev. Heather Hammond, bishop's associate, in the areas of leadership, training and development. You can reach her at 612-230-3311 or r.swan@mpls-synod.org.

Rachel comes to us from the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota where she was the office coordinator. She also served at the Cathedral Church of St. Mark, Minneapolis, as director of new member ministry, as well as membership secretary and confirmation coordinator at Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church, Prior Lake.