



St. Luke's Youth Receive Award from City of Bloomington

The Teens In Ministry (TIM Team) Group at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Bloomington, has been awarded the Bloomington Loves Its Kids volunteer service award on February 2 in the Bloomington City Council chambers. The award is given annually to individuals or groups who serve the community in an outstanding way.

St. Luke's TIM Team consists of 30 active senior high students who help lead the congregation's children's ministry on Wednesday nights and also volunteer at local nursing homes twice a month, playing board games and doing manicures. Six adult leaders—Kent and Shari DeBlicek, Cary Hamblin, Laurie Limbeck, Deb Wege, and Richard Wright—work closely with the students to coordinate these ministries.

The students were inspired for these ministries after attending the ELCA National Youth Gathering this past summer.



The Teens in Ministry team at St. Luke's received an award from the City of Bloomington for their volunteer work.

Rogers Named Minnesota House of Representatives Chaplain

Paul Rogers, pastor in the Minneapolis Area Synod, has recently been elected chaplain for the Minnesota House of Representatives. He will serve in that capacity through May 2007.

Paul cites two primary responsibilities in this role: First, he is to open daily sessions with prayer or arrange for someone else to lead prayer. Daily sessions are held primarily on Mondays and Thursdays, with some additional days. Also, he is to be available for pastoral care for the representatives. He notes that this was a larger task in times past, when outstate representatives found it more difficult to return to their home congregations regularly.

Paul plans to be at the House whenever it is in session, to become familiar with the topics being discussed and also to become "a familiar face" to the representatives there. He is grateful for this opportunity to serve members of the House and, therefore, the state. As he serves in this way, Paul says, he takes seriously the issues of diversity, especially the diversity of faith communities—the various Christian traditions, those of other faiths, and those who are not part of a faith community. Also, he is sensitive to the issues of church-state relations—what is appropriate in this arena.

Paul says, "I would hope, too, that since they know I'm a Lutheran, and an ELCA Lutheran, that I would represent the church well, so when I'm through, people would have a good opinion of the Lutheran Church."

Ministerium Inspires Action for Veterans and Families

Approximately 40 people braved the cold on February 15 to plan the church's response to the needs of returning veterans and their families. The gathering sought to provide recommendations to churches as a follow-up to the January Joint Synod Ministerium, "Healing the Wounds of War."

DVDs of the Ministerium are available. E-mail ListenToVets@comcast.net to learn about how to be involved in this good work.

Amy Blumenshine explained the concept of Veteran's Day in the churches on November 11, 2007, inviting veterans: "Help us understand your war experience."

Church-based care groups/buddy circles will start for veterans and their families at Calvary Lutheran Church, Golden Valley. One is already in process at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Burnsville.

Pastoral care networks specific to the needs of veterans and their families will be established. Some spiritual directors will be encouraged to step forward with expertise in this area. The group will explore pathways to spiritual healing for those recovering from the soul wounds of war. Liturgies of welcome, healing, and reconciliation are being developed as well as pertinent Bible studies.