



# Report of the Division for Outreach

## Organization

### Board

Ms. Mary S. Anderson, Kennewick, Wash. (2009)  
Pr. Linda Boston, San Jose, Calif. (2005)  
Pr. J. Elise Brown, New York, N.Y. (2005)  
Pr. Pamela R. Fickenscher, Minneapolis, Minn. (2009)  
Mr. Michael E. Franklin, Brentwood, Tenn. (2007)  
Pr. Dennis L. Heaney, Somonauk, Ill. (2007)  
Ms. Deborah Joncas, Ft. Collins, Colo. (2005)  
Mr. James R. Judy, Brookfield, Ohio (2005)  
Mr. Steven E. Koenig, Elwood, Neb. (2009)  
Pr. Donald E. Liles, Las Vegas, Nev. (2009)  
Ms. Deborah Lundahl, Damascus, Md. (2007)  
Mr. Francis R. Ramos Scharron, Guaynabo, Puerto Rico (2009)  
Ms. Luz E. Rubert-Lopez, Trumbull, Conn. (2009)  
Ms. Ardith Senft, Glendale, Ariz. (2005)  
Mr. Ronald Solimon, *chair*, Albuquerque, N.M. (2005)  
Pr. Gerald E. Wahl, Minneapolis, Minn. (2009)  
Mr. Lance W. Webster, Wayne, Neb. (2007)  
Ms. Jan Weness, Adams, Minn. (2005)  
Ms. Deborah C. Wilson, Decatur, Ga. (2005)

### Advisors

Pr. Kathie Bender Schwich, assistant to the presiding bishop  
Bishop Gary M. Wollersheim, Northern Illinois Synod  
Mr. Justin Oakman, St. Paul, Minn., representative from Commission  
for Multicultural Ministries Steering Committee

### Executive Staff

#### Chicago-Based Staff:

Executive Director: Pr. Richard A. Magnus  
Associate Executive Director: *vacant*  
Executive for New Congregational Development: Pr. Ruben F. Duran  
Executive for Newly Organized Congregations: *vacant*  
Executive for Renewal of Congregations: Pr. David D. Daubert  
Executive for Latino Outreach: Pr. José L. Garcia Jr.  
Executive for Leadership for Outreach Ministries: *vacant*  
Executive for Mission Partners and Outreach Support: Ms. Marlys  
Waldo, associate in ministry  
Director for Rural Ministry Resources and Networking: Ms. Sandra  
LaBlanc, associate in ministry

#### Mission Directors - Deployed and Shared Staff:

Pr. Brian "Red" Burchfield (Synods 1A, B, C)  
Pr. Darius I. Larsen (Synods 1D, 1F)  
Pr. Harvey E. Blomberg (Synods 1E, 2A)  
Ms. Maria Paiva (Synod 2B)  
Pr. Yutaka Kishino (Synod 2B,C)  
Pr. Marta Poling-Goldenne (Synod 2D)  
Pr. James A. Hytjan (Synod 2E)  
Pr. Keith O. Zeh (Synods 3A, B, C, D, E)  
Pr. Richard M. Mork (Synods 3F, G, H, I)  
Pr. Leonard A. Dale, II (Synod 4A)  
Vacant (Synod 4B)  
Pr. David Klumpp (Synod 4C)  
Pr. Stephen C. Kanouse (Synods 4D, E, F)  
Pr. Jose L. Garcia, Jr. (Synod 4E)  
Pr. Robert Klonowski (Synod 5A)  
Pr. Janet Hunt (Synod 5B)

Pr. Joseph P. Bleakley (Synod 5C)  
Pr. Kathryn J. Gerking (Synod 5D)  
Pr. Danette E. Johns (Synod 5E)  
Pr. Darrel Gerriets (Synod 5F)  
Pr. Jennifer Johnson Wrege (Synod 5G)  
Pr. Carmala K. Aderman (Synod 5H)  
Pr. Joy Mortensen Wiebe (Synod 5I)  
Pr. Gregory Van Dunk (Synod 5J)  
Mr. Scott Austin (Synod 5K)  
Pr. Lanny D. Westphal (Synod 5L)  
Pr. Stephen Marsh (Synod 6A)  
Pr. John D. Schleicher (Synod 6B)  
Ms. Terri Dillon (Synod 6C)  
Pr. Roy G. Gottschling (Synod 6D)  
Pr. O. Dennis Mims (Synod 6E)  
Pr. Timothy F. Iseringhausen (Synod 6F)  
Pr. Judith Spindt (Synod 7A)  
Pr. Jane Shields (Synod 7B)  
Pr. A. David Anglada (Synod 7C)  
Pr. David W. Preisinger (Synod 7D)  
Pr. Glenn L. Simmons (Synod 7E)  
Pr. Claire Schenot Burkat (Synod 7F)  
Ms. Helen Harms (Synods 8A, B, C, D, E, H)  
Ms. Elizabeth Yenchko (Synods 8D, E)  
Pr. Sherman G. Hicks (Synods 8F,G)  
Pr. Henry J. Boschen (Synod 9A)  
Pr. Derrick Gomez (Synod 9B)  
Pr. B. Robert Beaver (Synod 9C)  
Pr. Gary Christensen (Synod 9D)  
Pr. Ronald J. Ryckman (Synod 9E)  
Pr. Felipe Lozada (Synod 9F)

## Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Division for Outreach is to foster and facilitate outreach through this church by starting new congregations and renewing existing ministries in order to grow the Church and make devoted disciples of Jesus Christ. The governing description of this unit appears in continuing resolution 16.11.C95, printed in Section X of this *Pre-Assembly Report*. This work is accomplished in partnership with synods, congregations, and clusters guided by churchwide and synod strategies.

## Guiding Principles

The board of the Division for Outreach, during the 2003-2005 biennium, adopted its purpose statement and the following seven guiding principles: Guided by the Spirit to implement the purpose, this division will value: *growing congregations; asset based ways of working; participatory decision making; an inclusive church; holistically evangelical ministry; empowering and equipping leadership; and ministry that reproduces ministry.*

## Report of Work for 2003-2005

### Commitment to Multicultural Ministry

This division continued to stress the importance of being led by members of the five ethnic communities in planning, carrying

out, and evaluating its work. Staff members worked with the Commission for Multicultural Ministries to identify and train representatives of each of the communities to assist in both areas of the work. Churchwide strategies for the Asian and Pacific Islander community, the Hispanic and Latino community, and the American Indian and Alaska Native community guided the leaders from those communities who assisted this division in identifying areas for new congregation starts, in writing new ministry profiles, and in seeking leadership for those sites. Excellent contextual work was done with synodical Latino strategy development and implementation.

This unit provided input to ministry strategies for the Arab and Middle Eastern and the African American communities. The board of this division adopted an African American/Black Outreach Strategy at its September 2004 meeting. That strategy provides significant action steps for the national strategy to be considered at the 2005 Churchwide Assembly.

### ***Evangelism Strategy***

The Evangelism Strategy adopted at the 2003 Churchwide Assembly included the objective to “Start and Renew Congregations.” That objective called for phasing into existence by 2010 the pattern of annually starting 100 new congregations and annually redeveloping at least 200 existing congregations. It further called for developing assessment tools to assist in the task, and alternative funding sources for funding both aspects of the work.

This unit, with the help of the Division for Congregational Ministries, identified *Natural Church Development (NCD)* for use as one assessment tool. *NCD* is a research-based system for understanding congregational life that correlates healthy congregational life with congregational growth. The underlying paradigm is that the Church is an organic entity and functions with a foundation of sustaining principles referred to as *biotic* or *life-giving* principles.

The biotic principles are: *multi-usage*, the best ministry can be implemented many times and in multiple ways; *inter-dependence*, a change in one part of the system will affect other parts; *multiplication*, healthy ministry reproduces itself; *energy transfer*, energy must be moved in a system to where it is most helpful; *symbiosis*, the best solutions reinforce and support other areas in the ministry; and *functionality*, everything has a function and is accountable to doing it.

*Natural Church Development* uses a survey tool to assess eight characteristics of congregational life. Those characteristics are: *holistic* small groups; *empowering* leadership; *loving* relationships; *passionate* spirituality; *inspiring* worship; *need-oriented* evangelism; *gifts-oriented* ministry; and *functional* structures.

The role of coaching is a clearly identified skill that has been targeted both in developing new ministries and renewing existing ministries. Training during the biennium with a group called CoachNet developed 15 licensed trainers for coaching *NCD*. These trainers began training in the synods that will cultivate, during the next several years, additional coaches for new and renewing work in ELCA synods.

*NCD* is an assessment tool. Prior to its use it is essential to assess missional consciousness of the ministry. Work with new and renewing congregations begins with clarity of mission, and moves to values and guiding principles appropriate for that

ministry. As the tool is used, coaches assist congregations to see their roles as instruments for the reign of God, their connection to the community and the wider Church, and their involvement in advocacy and justice. Within a clear biblical, theological, and missional framework, the *NCD* tool provides congregations with guidance to build healthy ministries that can grow both in the quality of ministry and in the numbers of faithful and engaged participants.

### ***New Congregations***

The Evangelism Strategy called for 40 new starts in 2004 and 50 in 2005, although the actual number of new congregations will be eight to 10 fewer each year largely due to a lack of leaders. Fifty-two new ministry profiles were approved in 2004 and more than 50 already have been approved in 2005. Funding partnerships have been developed that could reach the projected goals.

The numbers of additional leaders may increase because of changes being made in seminaries that increasingly adjust curriculum and field education to prepare graduates for the work of development and renewal of congregations. The *College of Developers* was organized during the biennium. Leadership to this annual two-day gathering for support and encouragement is given primarily by persons involved in development. A highlight in 2004 and 2005 was the involvement of seminarians from several of the ELCA seminaries.

Funding partnerships continued to develop during the biennium. Nearly all new ministry profiles reviewed in January 2005 included significant funding from other congregations, synods, clusters of congregations, or individuals. A study was initiated regarding the use of second mortgages or congregational equity loans to provide for new starts, or for the purchase of land and buildings. The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) and this division are promoting the Mission Founder and Mission Partner programs, as well as encouraging individual giving to start new congregations. This division also seeks to broaden ownership for starting new congregations and invited the Conference of Bishops to send regional representatives to the decision-making Review Table. Seven regions were represented at the January 2005 Review Table.

This division is committed to a goal of 50 percent of the new starts being in communities of color, where the primary language is other than English, and communities of poverty. Churchwide outreach funds will be used increasingly to reach this goal as more proposals for new starts come from leaders of these communities. Over one-half of all the current ministries under development are ethnic-specific or multicultural.

*NCD* and coaching became integral to the work of starting new congregations during the biennium. Training for developers now begins with content on the theological, biblical, and missional focus for congregations, then includes content on the biotic principles and quality characteristics used in *Natural Church Development*. This will allow use of the *NCD* assessment tool early in the development of the new congregation and may speed the process of quality and numerical growth.

### ***A Changing Paradigm***

This division shifted its working paradigm during the biennium to working toward healthy congregations that can be

entry points for starting new and increasing numbers of renewing congregations. This new paradigm values and works toward multiplication of healthy ministry that reproduces itself as well as reproducing leaders for ministry. Conferences were held in 2004–05 on second site ministries to honor the congregations that have accomplished this multiplication of ministry and to encourage congregations considering the approach.

### ***Small Town and Rural Ministry Alliance***

The ELCA Small Town and Rural Ministry (STaR) Alliance began in 2003 as a response to the 2001 Churchwide Assembly resolution calling for an additional staff person for the rural ministry office. The alliance model is a concrete way for the three expressions of this church to let their voice be heard. The ELCA STaR Alliance matches people and institutions throughout the ELCA through affinity groups. These groups have 10 criteria for existence; they establish their own life cycle, group norms, and project or purpose. This new model of ministry has provided excitement, energy, and positive results. The *weaver* staff person who organizes the affinity groups is focusing on perfecting the methods of organizing. The director for rural ministry is working within the churchwide structure to have churchwide staff work with the groups.

### ***Ministry Among People in Poverty***

The inter-unit working group on Ministry Among Persons in Poverty (MAPP) has been working together for several years. After gathering information on how different units fund MAPP, the working group will propose coordinated efforts within the churchwide expression. In addition, the inter-unit working group meets with the Conference of Bishops' MAPP Committee each fall to continue coordinating efforts as well as to improve communication. This becomes especially important during reorganization to keep the MAPP ministry at the table.

### ***Geographic Parishes***

Three efforts are beginning to look at geographic parishes (sometimes called cooperative, multi-point, or yoked parishes) as missional opportunities that build on community assets and respond to community needs. The first is focusing on exchange of information, gathering models, and conducting research that identifies ecumenical ministries within the geographic parishes. The second involves the Division for Ministry, Wartburg Seminary, and the director for rural ministry in the Division for Outreach looking at geographic parishes as sites for contextual education as well as points of mission. This effort is seeking grant funding and will utilize the *Discovering Hope* method of research—from the field for the field. The third effort began as

an outgrowth of a conference on multiple-point parishes held in Montana. This effort also is focusing on the missional aspects of geographic parishes and is comprised of mission directors and the director for rural ministry. Each of these efforts is looking at this growing model of ministry and seeking ways to share the information, how to provide leadership and training in these settings; and ways to engage the substantial unchurched population living in rural and small town settings.

### ***In the City for Good***

The results of a 2003 Urban Summit and consultation by the Urban Team resulted in a change in direction for *In the City for Good*. Consultations will continue in urban centers to assess and suggest strengthening transformational congregational ministry. Out of those consultations teams of leaders will be encouraged to attend the annual Summer Urban Ministry Institute (convened ecumenically with other urban partners). Grants will be made available to cover the costs of this training. The resources of the *In the City for Good* Fund will be used to strengthen leaders who are ready to involve their congregations in transformational ministry through a clear purpose, values, guiding principles, with assessment of progress via *Natural Church Development*.

## **Major Directions for 2005-2007**

The staff members and board of the Division for Outreach have been preparing for the proposed Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission Unit. This new unit will continue the cooperative work of *NCD* and coaching begun during the last biennium by the Division for Congregational Ministries and the Division for Outreach. The new unit also will provide a place for further cooperation with stewardship and Christian education staff to participate fully in the work of starting new and renewing existing congregations. The work of the Evangelism Strategy should be strengthened by the proposed new unit which also includes significant multicultural ministry staff and resource development.

There is much to be done in God's mission of reconciliation, justice, and peace. The staff members and board of the Division for Outreach look forward to the proposed restructuring to strengthen those aspects related to starting new and renewing existing congregations.

### **DIVISION FOR OUTREACH**

Ronald J. (Ron) Solimon, *chair*  
Richard A. Magnus, *executive director*