

# SYNOD NEWS

The Spirit of Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

February 2008

**Called  
Together in  
Mission:  
Faithful and  
Bold**

**21st Annual  
Synod Assembly  
May 29-31, 2008**

**Split Rock Resort  
Lake Harmony, PA**

Assembly materials will be mailed to congregations and leaders this month. Online registration ([www.godslove.org/assembly](http://www.godslove.org/assembly)) will be available at that time.



*Almighty God, giver of all good gifts, look on your Church with grace and guide the minds of those who shall choose a bishop, that we may receive a faithful servant who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

## Choosing a Bishop: Questions to Assist in Preparation



**Electing a bishop** is one of the most important decisions made by the synod and churchwide assemblies of this church. It is a call to a position of great responsibility and to a unique partnership with members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with other Lutherans and ecumenical partners around the world.

### What is our process for electing a new bishop?

The synod's election process for a bishop is defined in section S9.04 and a continuing resolution adopted in 1995 that calls for ascertaining and defining needs, concerns, and priorities and for a period of not less than three (3) hours for discussion following the second ballot.

Here is a brief version of the steps in the process adopted by the synod council (the full text is available on the assembly page of the synod website):

1. The first ballot is a nominating ballot. Any ELCA pastor is eligible. If no one is elected (75% is needed), names of all eligible persons will be posted so that those who wish to may withdraw. Those who do not withdraw will appear on the second ballot—the only point at which nominees may withdraw.
2. Three-quarters of the votes are needed for election on the second ballot. If no one is elected, the top seven vote-getters (plus ties) will remain on the next ballot.
3. Those seven will be invited to address the assembly for three minutes each.



4. Following these addresses, Mission Districts will gather in separate rooms. Each candidate will spend fifteen minutes in each Mission District for conversation.
5. Two-thirds of the votes are needed for election on the third ballot. If there is no election, the top three names (plus ties) will be carried over to the fourth ballot. At the conclusion of the session in which the results are announced, each of the three will be given the same biblical text and asked to prepare a 10-minute Bible study or reflection.
6. The next session will begin with the Bible studies or reflections. The fourth ballot will then be taken.
7. If no one receives 60% of the votes on the fourth ballot, the top two names (plus ties) will appear on the fifth ballot; a simple majority is needed to elect. If necessary, a sixth ballot will be taken.

### When does the new bishop take office?

According to the synod constitution, the bishop's term begins on the first day of the third month following election. That means that the new bishop would take office on August 1, 2008.

For more information on the assembly, including nomination and resolution submittal forms, housing, the assembly program, and the Bulletin of Reports, go to [www.godslove.org/assembly](http://www.godslove.org/assembly). Information will be posted as available.

# Upcoming Events



## A Women's Retreat on Discernment

February 22-24, 2008

Mariawald Renewal Center, Shillington

This year's retreat will explore how to feel God's presence more clearly, hear God's voice, and discern God's will for our lives by honing our inward and outward listening skills.

The retreat leader, Eileen Flanagan, has authored a book on discernment in relationships and taught a 10-week course, "Discerning Our Calls," at Pendle Hill, a Quaker study center in Philadelphia.

There will be time for relaxation, recreation, Bible study, worship and fellowship. The retreat fee of \$140 includes room and all meals. Registration deadline is February 1, 2008.

For a brochure with more information and a registration form, go to [www.godslove.org/calendar](http://www.godslove.org/calendar) and click the link on the Feb. 22-24 date. Or call 610-682-1337 or 888-499-2699.



## Fit for Jesus

**SYMDANO**

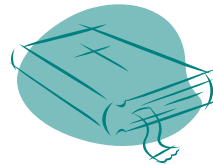
(Synod Youth Ministry Day and Networking Opportunity)

April 19, 2008

Christ Lutheran Church, Conyngham

An event for youth in grades 3 through 12 plus their parents, advisors, and Sunday school teachers. This year's theme, "Fit for Jesus," will focus on our spiritual, physical, and emotional health.

More information will be available on the youth calendar on the synod website ([www.godslove.org/youth](http://www.godslove.org/youth)). Or contact Karen Matthias-Long at [Karen@nepsynod.org](mailto:Karen@nepsynod.org).



## Saturday School

Saturday School is held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, Emmaus.

**February 16:** 9:00 a.m. session, *Christianity and World Religions*, Dr. Paul Rajashekar, dean, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; 1:00 p.m. session, *Luke/Acts*, Pr. Jeff Butz, Grace, Belfast

**March 29:** 9:00 a.m. session, *Jesus through the Ages*, Bishop David Strobel; 1:00 p.m. session, *The Letters of St. Paul*, Dr. Richard Carlson, professor of biblical studies, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

More information and a registration form are on the synod website ([www.godslove.org](http://www.godslove.org)). Or contact Cheryl Meinschein, [cherylrich@fast.net](mailto:cherylrich@fast.net).

## Parish Nurse Event

### Why Do We Do This?

A workshop for parish nurses and those interested in health ministry

**March 8, 2008**

The Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit, Emmaus  
The keynote speaker for this workshop will be the Rev. Jim Bowers.

The cost of \$20 includes lunch and snacks.

Check the synod website for more information.

