



Synod (news) 'Snippets'

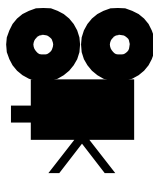
EaND Synod's Nov/Dec highlights for church bulletins

Greetings in the name of Jesus,

I am seeking to walk a thin line between equipping the saints for the work of ministry while at the same time helping the other expressions of the ELCA (congregation and synod) find their voice.

I have enjoyed being with each conference assembly, especially for the question and answer times. Those times have been good learning opportunities for me and I trust they have been for others.

I have been asked to create some FAQ (*frequently asked questions*) videos for posting on our synod website, www.eandsynod.org to assist with questions you are probably encountering. My first preference would be for me, Terry, or Kari to be with you in person, but with 230 congregations we simply cannot get to all of you before annual meeting time. These video snippets are designed to help you/your people think through some of the complex questions with which we are all dealing.



I'll try to make them downloadable so that you can utilize them where you need to do so.

Bill

Pastor Bill Rindy

Serving as Bishop of the Eastern North Dakota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dry Season: a recent letter from our missionaries

Dear Friends,

Dry season arrived on Friday. It rained last Thursday but since then the sunlight changed, the wind changed, and the humidity has changed. There might be another small rain, or 2, but everything looks more like dry season. Even the dry season laughing doves, "pirtide" in Fulfulde or "kerengede" in Gbaya, have arrived. It seems that dry season has, also, arrived in

the ELCA Global Mission. From correspondence we received from Global Mission last evening, they foresee the possibility of a 30% reduction in giving to the Churchwide office. This is in protest to actions taken in Minneapolis a couple of months ago. We have been watching the news in Fargo, as well, and there have been several congregations who voted to hold back funds from Chicago in protest to ELCA General Assembly actions. We will not comment on



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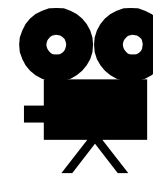
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the rightness or the wrongness of such a move even though June and I have our own opinions but we must speak of the consequences of these actions.

Global Mission Unit is now in the process of drastically cutting back funding which includes program grants, Chicago staff, and current missionary staff. The cuts will not end there but will continue as program cuts to partner churches. In about 2 weeks, they will be making some very hard decisions in Chicago as to what, and who will be cut, and what and who will remain. This means major restructuring, and reevaluation, of the work being done by Global Mission. This kind of major surgery is one of the most difficult things ever undertaken by staff in Chicago but if we are to stay alive, and stay true, to the call that we have been given by our Lord and Savior it must be done.

Please pray for strength, and above all wisdom, for those that are asked to make these decisions. We will have a leaner, Global Mission but let us all pray that we will end up with a more effective ministry of spreading the Gospel with the priority to those who have not heard the Good News.

These people, here in Cameroon, include particularly the Fulbe people such as the Imaniya, who actively seek a relationship with Christ, and those in more remote areas of the Poli Region where there have been difficulties for many years. Just as important is the Gospel in action with our brothers, and sisters, with whom we are partners in this endeavor. This endeavor includes health work, leadership training, women's work, support of Church growth, Church roofs and on and on.

To demonstrate the immediate consequences of these reductions, as I was writing this letter, Mme Baba Martine brought a written request from the Bible School, and Deaf School in Tcholire, asking for a loan of 1,500,000 CFA (about \$3,490) to keep them running. It was signed by the Director of the

Tcholire Bible School, and five teachers which includes the blind, Braille teacher who put his finger print on it. They addressed the letter to me, personally, in the hopes that I had some money lying around that I could give them to help them feed their families, and pay the electric and tax bills to keep them functioning. The Bible School is one month into the 4th quarter and they haven't received their normal subsidy. They request that I float them a loan until the subsidy comes in. Will it? There is, also, a women's conference taking place in this same district which starts on November 8th, at a new congregation just created, and I am unable to help them with any funds.

I can understand the need to protest decisions that we do not adhere to but we must be very careful about how we go about it so that we do not hinder the work that we have been called to by our Lord and Savior. Some people have advocated circumventing Chicago to do this but I do not.

Something must be done in order to uphold the calling that we all have, as members of the body of Christ. Make decisions about withholding funds with care, **"Have no anxiety about anything but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."** Phil. 4:6

Your Missionaries in Cameroon and CAR,
Phil and June Nelson

You are encouraged to correspond with the Nelsons via email at juneandphil77@aol.com

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
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