

## First Executive Director

The ELM Covenant Circle announced February 1 that Amalia Vagts would serve as the first Executive Director of ELM. Amalia has served as Development Director since October, 2006. Amalia can be reached at 563-382-6277 or [director@elm.org](mailto:director@elm.org)

## SAVE THE DATE—

### Dazzling Bouquet

ELM will host Dazzling Bouquet, an afternoon of socializing with Chicago-area ELM supporters, on Sunday, July 19 from 3:00pm to 4:30pm. The event is at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, Chicago, IL (Chicago's LGBT Center). Tickets are \$25-\$50 sliding scale per person. There will be beverages, dazzling hors d'oeuvres, and a silent and live auction featuring many one-of-a-kind items and services. Those interested in being listed as a sponsor of the event with a gift of \$100 or more, please contact Rachael at 773-235-0610 or [operations@elm.org](mailto:operations@elm.org).

## ELCA Churchwide Assembly

ELM expresses its deep appreciation and support for the Goodsoil coalition and their work to promote policies that welcome people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Goodsoil is actively working at the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to be held August 17-23 in Minneapolis, MN. All those interested in volunteering with Goodsoil at the Churchwide Assembly are encouraged to visit [www.Goodsoil.org](http://www.Goodsoil.org) for a full listing of volunteer opportunities.

ELM is not directly engaged in changing the ELCA's current ban on ordination of partnered gay clergy. Rather, Our mission is to expand ministry opportunities for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in Lutheran life and ministry.

We and the Goodsoil partners (Lutherans Concerned/North America, Network for Inclusive Vision and Wingspan Ministries) share the vision of a church fully inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

This newsletter was printed on 100% recycled, 60% de-inked fiber (minimum 40% post-consumer waste) and was processed chlorine free, conserving the following resources:

Fully Grown Trees	Gallons of Water	Pounds of Solid Waste	Pounds of Greenhouse Gasses	Miles in a Car
0.57	353.1	28.3	73.7	64.5



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the  
mission

THE NEWSLETTER OF EXTRAORDINARY LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

## New Covenant Circle Members

ELM welcomes the following new people to volunteer leadership roles with Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries.

### Fred Wolfe (Philadelphia, PA) - Candidacy and Credentialing

Fred Wolfe is a long-time member of University Lutheran Church of the Incarnation in Philadelphia, PA and currently serves as Administrator. He is active on the SEPA South East Pennsylvania Synod's LGBTQ Task Force, serving as Camp Director for "Wonderfully Made," a camp for LGBTQ high school youth, and has been active with the YES! Coalition, a Delaware Valley Inter-Faith LGBTQ organization. Fred lives in Philadelphia with his partner, Gary Bronson.



### Rose Beeson (Phoenix, AZ) - Congregations & Ministries

Rose Beeson currently lives in Phoenix, Arizona and is a member of Faith Lutheran Church. Rose was central in her congregation's process to open calls to the ELM roster. She serves as Secretary of Lutherans Concerned/North America and is a past Regional Coordinator for LC/NA. Rose is moving to Berkeley, CA this summer and will begin a master of divinity program at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in the fall.

### Vance Blackfox (Tulsa, OK) - At large member

Vance Blackfox, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, lives in Oaks, Oklahoma and serves as Director of Annual Fund for the Oaks Indian Mission. Vance was very active in the Lutheran Youth Organization, including service as the President of the Churchwide Board of the LYO and serving on many planning teams for the ELCA's Youth Gathering. Vance is moving to Chicago this summer to begin his studies toward a Ph.D. at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago this fall.



### Pastor Paul Egertson (Thousand Oaks, CA) - Vocational Support & Oversight

Pastor Paul Egertson is a retired ELCA pastor and bishop emeritus of the Southwest California Synod of the ELCA. He resigned as bishop in 2001 after presiding at the extraordinary ordination of Pastor Anita Hill. He is currently the only ELCA bishop who has presided at an extraordinary ordination while in office. Pastor Paul Egertson resides in Thousand Oaks with his wife, Shirley, and serves as senior lecturer at California Lutheran University.

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## ORDAINED!

On Sunday, January 25th, 2009 the Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion ordained Stephen Keiser and installed him as a co-pastor of the congregation. Approximately 450 people, including about 40 vested clergy, participated in the joyful service.

Pastor Steve has been serving as a lay pastoral leader in the congregation for over eight years and is the 10th pastor in the 134 year history of the church. Pastor Steve was the 18th person to be ordained outside the guidelines of the Lutheran church because of sexual orientation or gender identity. He was ordained by the entire congregation, along with colleagues in ministry, through the laying on of hands as was the custom in the early church and revived by Martin Luther in the 16th century.



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TIME DATED MATERIAL





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**CONVENANT CIRCLE**

**Co-chairs**  
Rev. Erik Christensen  
Chicago, IL  
Lois Voss  
Edina, MN

**Secretary**  
Steve Keiser  
Philadelphia, PA

**Treasurer**  
Charlie Horn  
Philadelphia, PA

**Candidacy and Credentialing Chair**  
Fred Wolfe  
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**Collegium Chair**  
Rev. Jen Nagel  
Minneapolis, MN

**Congregations and Ministries Chair**  
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**Diversity Chair**  
Rev. Jay Wilson  
San Francisco, CA

**Mission Partner and Grants Chair**  
Margaret Moreland  
Berkeley, CA

**Vocational Support and Oversight Chair**  
Rev. Paul Egerton  
Thousand Oaks, CA

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Amalia Vagts  
Decorah, IA

**OPERATIONS COORDINATOR**  
Rachael Johnson  
Chicago, IL

## Did you know?

ELM pastors have been getting lots of press in the news lately.

- Pastor Erik Christensen, of St. Luke’s Lutheran Church of Logan Square in Chicago, IL was featured on the front page of the Chicago Tribune’s ‘City of Chicagoland Extra’. The article focused on Pastor Christensen’s path to become a pastor and his drive to keep the Logan Square church strong.
- Pastor Megan Rohrer, of the Welcome Ministry in San Francisco, was featured recently in the Human Rights Campaign’s Religion and Faith News and the San Francisco Bay Guardian. The articles focused on Pastor Rohrer’s accomplishments with the Welcome Ministry for the homeless and hungry.
- Pastor Dawn Roginski, was in a photo slide show on the San Francisco Chronicle website from the March 5, 2009 marriage equality rally. 🍀

Visit us online for links to these articles and more current news:  
[extraordinarylutheranministries.blogspot.com](http://extraordinarylutheranministries.blogspot.com)

## ELM welcomes two new roster members!

With great joy, ELM welcomes the following new ELM roster members.

**Pastor Steve Robertson** (Little Canada, MN) is a graduate of Luther Seminary and was ordained on June 10, 1979 and served congregations in Minnesota and Kansas. In 2006 Steve was removed from ELCA roster following a three year leave of absence, discernment process and decision to fully come out as a gay man in a committed same sex relationship. Since then, Steve has followed a call to hospice chaplaincy. Steve is currently serving as a Spiritual Coordinator/Bereavement Counselor for AseraCare Hospice, Bloomington.



Steve and his partner, Jeff, live in Little Canada, MN. Steve and Jeff are currently members of St Paul Reformation Lutheran Church. In addition to being the adoring grandfather to his five grandchildren, Steve also enjoys traveling, collecting coins, serving as a Firefighter/EMT for his community and being actively involved with the costumed characters of the Saint Paul Winter Carnival and Heritage Foundation.

**Pastor Paul Brenner** (San Francisco, CA) began attending St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco, CA, in 2002 and was taken into membership at the Easter Vigil, 2003. He has been an active member since, including serving as an interim pastor for a year and a half. Paul has 30 years of leadership in the hospice movement, serving programs in Jacksonville, FL; West Palm Beach, FL; Rockville, MD and Jacob Perlow Hospice at Beth Israel Medical Center, New York City in a wide variety of leadership roles.



Presently Paul volunteers in the Creative Healing Project, a program with his son, Matthew, which provides art experiences for children and teens diagnosed with potentially life threatening medical conditions. He is writing a musical fantasy, Falwell’s Follies, about what might have happened to Jerry Falwell when he landed outside The Most Fabulous Heaven Ever. 🍀

## Be a part of the movement to welcome gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender pastors to serve fully at the table of God.

Your gift to ELM supports our candidacy and credentialing work and our outreach to congregations and those following God’s call to serve. Your gift also supports direct grants to congregations and ministries. You can make a one time or monthly gift online at [www.elm.org](http://www.elm.org). Contact Amalia at 563-382-6277 or [director@elm.org](mailto:director@elm.org) with questions about giving.

visit and give online at [www.elm.org](http://www.elm.org)

## Favorite food dish

**Fred:** I’m dying to taste candied grapefruit rind dipped in dark chocolate. I have more of a bitter tooth than a sweet tooth. Don’t know what that means.

**Vance:** Korean BBQ!

## Favorite Film

**Rose:** Running with Scissors, Tipping the Velvet, Real Women Have Curves, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

**Paul:** Anchors Aweigh (I saw it 12 times as a kid).

## Favorite hobbies?

**Fred:** When I’m not at church, I always seem to either have a camera in front of my face or a trowel in my hand, sometimes both at once. Most of our garden grows in containers, either on our roofs or in the yard (to keep out of the path of the dogs).

**Vance:** I am a movie watcher! A weekly trip the theater, with friends or alone, is a must if at all possible.

**Rose:** Traveling, volunteering with the theater, participating in a bi-weekly Socrates Café, meeting friends at a bar after the Socrates Café to discuss the definition of words.

**Paul:** Reading and exploring the Internet.

## Donor Profile: Bruce Jervis and Jim Kowalski

Bruce Jervis and Jim Kowalski are two Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries’ donors who bring new meaning to the concept “tribute gift.”

In January, Bruce and Jim celebrated their 2008 marriage and the 20th anniversary of their relationship. Bruce and Jim are long-time members of St. Francis Lutheran Church in San Francisco and have been deeply involved with Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries and our predecessor organizations. In honor of their celebration, Bruce and Jim made an incredible tribute gift to Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries.

Bruce and Jim took their commitment to raising funds for ELM very seriously. First, they included a card about ELM with their invitation and indicated their level of investment in our work. Second, they spoke at their reception about their personal interest and commitment to our work. Finally, they committed to matching the gifts made by their guests. Jim and Bruce’s guests contributed a total of \$5,805 in their honor. Bruce and Jim matched this gift, saying that while it was more than they had set aside for ELM this year, it was joyful and humbling to them that so many friends and family gave to ELM in their honor.

Bruce and Jim wrote that their involvement at St. Francis and its pastors on the ELM roster first connected them to ELM. Jim says, “We were able to witness firsthand how this organization made these brilliant pastors’ ministries possible. Their talents were so well matched to the congregations that needed their gifts.”

Bruce added, “Society and culture have changed much more quickly than the church. ELM’s work is needed now more than 20 years ago, since there are more gifted pastors who are out and called to serve – and not willing to comply with the mandate by the ELCA to be closeted. ELM does even more matching of pastors and specific gifts to ministry needs now more than ever.”

Jim added, “After 20 happy years together we did not want or need gifts to us, and it was obvious to select ELM - it is our major giving priority other than our congregation. Giving to ELM connects us with the ministry of tomorrow that is already being carried out today. It gives us hope, and it feels great!”

“We are so grateful for the work that ELM is doing,” says Bruce, “and we are grateful for the many gifts that were made to ELM in connection with our anniversary.”

Both Bruce and Jim expressed their sincere hope that other ELM donors would be encouraged to consider similar ways to support ELM.

*We can easily set up tribute or memorial gifts for you. This is one way to help fund the growing mission and needs for ELM. Please contact Amalia at [director@elm.org](mailto:director@elm.org) or 563-382-6277 for more information.*



## Visit [www.elm.org](http://www.elm.org) to make your gift in honor or memory of your loved one.

### In Honor of...

Arnold & Elizabeth Tiemeyer, from Ann Tiemeyer  
Our family, from Arnold & Elizabeth Tiemeyer  
Pastor Norman Theis, from Mark Rohrbaugh  
Ordination of Pastor Steve Keiser, from many  
Bruce Jervis & Jim Kowalski, from many  
Pastor Jared R. Stahler, from Watson Bosler  
Deb Assmus & Linda Lageson, from Dave & Ruth Assmus  
Pastor Jay Wilson & Pastor Robyn Hartwig, from Rick Knight

Amalia Vagts, from Deb & Ron Wilson  
Pastor Jodi Barry, from Joyce Kronstedt  
Cara Schott, from Paul & Mary Knutson  
Pastor Kelli Shepard & others, Rod Shepard

### In Memory of...

Studs Terkel, from Rev. Dr. John Elliott