



the mission

THE NEWSLETTER OF EXTRAORDINARY LUTHERAN MINISTRIES



Proclaim Rostered Leaders and Seminarians at the 2014 Retreat.

FAITHFUL and FABULOUS

Eighty rostered leaders, ministry candidates and their families gathered for connection, renewal, and learning in early May for the 2014 Proclaim Retreat, "Dreams & Visions." This gathering is supported through registration fees and contributions from ELM supporters.

Here's a quick summary of this year's retreat...

Connection: "a place for renewal, collegiality, learning and witness"

Rev. Brad Froslee

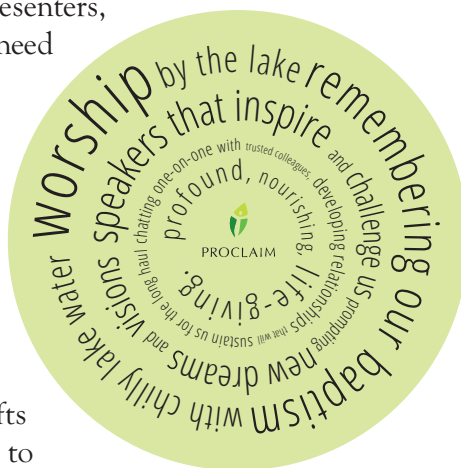
Inspiration: "More than any other group of clergy with whom I gather, this is the one that most reflects and shines with the new life of the Risen Christ." Rev. Mark Erson

Vision: "As I look to my first call, the keynote, presenters, and workshops provide me with the foundation I need to engage in the work of justice and peace that is God's vision for creation." Emily Ewing, First Call Candidate

Hope: "fills me with the patience, the vision, and the love to continue working for my place and for the places for all those who are still on an exile's journey." Tim Feiertag, First Call Candidate

Call: "re-grounded me and reminded me of the gifts I have to celebrate and the energy that brought me to ordained ministry in the first place." Rev. Angela Nelson

First year seminarian Becky Goche sums it up this way, "It was amazing!"



INSIDE.....

Proclaim Profile:
Brenda Bos

ELM is Gold!
your gifts are used wisely and thoughtfully

**ORDAINED.
CALLED.
WELCOMED.
GRADUATED.**
updates about Proclaim leaders you care about

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



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MISSION

*ELM affirms and supports LGBTQ
Lutheran rostered leaders and those
pursuing rostered leadership while
engaging allied congregations and
ministries to proclaim God's love
and seek justice for all.*

Proclaim Profile: Brenda Bos

I first felt a call to ministry in high school. But my denomination (not Lutheran) wasn't ordaining women, so I went into television production instead. I got involved in the American Baptist church and joined a touring musical group where we sang in malls and prisons and churches. I was pretty good at evangelism, but realized I felt more comfortable encouraging those who were already believers.

When I was 24 I fell in love with a woman and thought I could never be welcome in church. I spent a decade away from church and missed it terribly.

In my thirties I met a gay man on my television show who was going to a mostly African-American Baptist church near my house. I decided to go and loved it, but quickly realized none of the gay members were out. I stayed in the closet, but happily got very involved in the finance committee of the church. The church wanted to elect me Financial Secretary. I came out to the pastor, who was devastated. While he wanted me to stay in the church, he told me I could not be in leadership. I remember praying, "God, why would you bring me back to church and then take it away? I was going to be the Financial Secretary of that church!" to which God said, "You're thinking too small..."

About a year and a half later a young woman on another television show I worked on died suddenly. The cast asked me to be the "pastor" at her funeral. I stood on a television stage in front of 150 Hollywood professionals and claimed the promises of God. Afterwards several people told me I was in the wrong line of work - clearly I should be a pastor! I knew they were right. I applied to the local seminary and decided at the last minute to come out in my application. I was rejected for being gay. Once again it was affirmed the church did not want me. Finally, I googled "Gay churches in Los Angeles." A list of welcoming congregations came up, including, thanks be to God, an ELCA church about a half mile from my old Baptist church. It turns out, I more or less stumbled into St. Matthew's North Hollywood, Joel Workin's church in the last years of his life, and the congregation served by the Rev. Paul Egertson before he became bishop.

A few months later I told my pastor, Susan Wolfe Devol, about wanting to go to seminary. She encouraged me and said, "By the time you're ready for ordination, we'll be ordaining gay people." It was a risk, but she was right.

In sum, I started my Lutheran journey in a welcoming congregation and went to seminary because a Lutheran pastor told me it would be OK. Jessica Vasquez-Torres, from Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training, challenged those of us at the Proclaim retreat to move beyond safe spaces to brave spaces. I can be brave because the ELCA first made me feel safe. Thanks be to God.



Brenda Bos is awaiting her first call as pastor. Brenda is grateful for your generous gifts, which provide her with the Proclaim community and support LGBTQ-led congregations.

"I remember praying, 'God, why would you bring me back to church and then take it away?'"

—Brenda Bos

What you'll find on elm.org...

PROCLAIM PROFILES

HISTORICAL NEWSLETTERS
(FROM 1989 ON!)

NEWS

ELM is Gold!

Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries recently reached the Gold participation level with Guidestar, a top online resource for information about nonprofit organizations. Groups are ranked based on their transparency and accountability. Gold is the top level.



Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians, "Think of us this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries." ELM takes seriously this commitment to using our supporters' resources wisely and carefully.

ELM a Resource

In March, ELM Program Director Rev. Jen Rude and Proclaim member Rev. Jason Glombicki participated in a panel discussion about LGBTQ candidacy at the ELCA Conference of Bishops' meeting. The following week, ELM Co-Chair Rev. Julie Boleyn joined a retreat of ELCA seminary contextual education directors to discuss best practices and resources for LGBTQ candidates on internship. Your support helped us prepare for and be present for these events.

Giving Thanks for Colleen

In mid-May, Colleen Simon was fired from her job at a food pantry because she is married to the Rev. Donna Simon. Colleen and Donna are tireless advocates for justice in their hometown of Kansas City and we give thanks for their witness. In writing about the story, Colleen said, "We are called to love one another - let us live out that call and put our energies towards justice for all those at the margins. Peace to all." Their story reminds us that even as we celebrate, we remember the long road ahead. Donna is a member of Proclaim and was on the historic ELM roster. She is pastor of St. Mark Hope and Peace Lutheran in Kansas City.



PROCLAIM



Photo by Dick van der Duim

ORDAINED - Rev. Angela Joy Nelson, March 29, 2014, Christ Our Emmanuel, Chatham, NY.

Also: Jason Glombicki - Wicker Park Lutheran, Chicago, IL. Laura Kuntz - Calvary Lutheran Church and St. Stephen Lutheran Church.

CALLED - Rev. Megan Rohrer is installed at Grace Evangelical Lutheran, San Francisco. Other recent new calls: Rev. Beate Chun - St Francis Lutheran, San Francisco; Rev. Dawn Roginski - Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Vallejo, CA.



WELCOMED - Nancy Wichmann is a new member of Proclaim!
Other new members...

Rev. Thad Fisher	Chelsea Marsh
Rev. David Engen	Jean Hay
Robin Fero	Rev. Kelly Heide
Brian Whitton	Rev. Ernie Varga
Levi Powers	Joe Brewer
Rev. Nancy Haupert	Matthew DeLoera
Rev. Lori Pilatzke	

GRADUATED - Cary Bass-Deschenes receives the Master of Divinity degree from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. Photo by Michael Bass-Deschenes

Also receiving the M.Div degree in May 2014:

Emily Ewing, Alex Raabe - Chicago
Paul Gibson - Philadelphia
Jill Rode, Emmy Kegler - Luther
Gretchen Rode, Amanda Nelson - Berkeley
Joel Bergeland - Yale Divinity School
Amy Hanson - Iliff School of Theology
STM: Edwin Weber - Southern





We held this year's Proclaim retreat at the beautiful Thrivent-owned Heartwood Center because we'd been welcomed into the Thrivent Choice program and we received a 25% discount for being a Lutheran group. The current Thrivent policy makes it unclear if we'll return to Heartwood for future events

Thrivent Financial Update

Earlier this year, Thrivent Financial made several statements related to changes in Thrivent funding programs. Individuals who had designated Thrivent Choice Dollars to Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries received letters saying our organization was no longer eligible for funding from Thrivent because we were considered "too divisive." ELM had been approved for Thrivent Choice dollars in February of 2013 and received \$2,985 in funds last year. ReconcilingWorks was also impacted by these changes.

Emily Eastwood from ReconcilingWorks and I met with Thrivent officials on April 10 in hopes of finding a workable solution. Unfortunately, the only suggestion that Thrivent had for us was to encourage our supporters to direct their support to a congregation who could then send it to us. We feel this proposed "workaround" is disingenuous and unhelpful for those of us working so hard in support of Lutheran ministers and congregations.

Thrivent - please WORK WITH, not around, our ministry.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION

- +If you are a Thrivent member, contact your Thrivent Representative and CEO Brad Hewitt (brad.hewitt@thrivent.com) about the important work of ELM and ReconcilingWorks and ask them to restore support of our ministries.
- +Pray for Brad Hewitt and the Board of Thrivent.
- +If you make a gift to ELM in response to Thrivent's actions, please put "Thrivent" in the memo line.

When you give to ELM, you support these acts of affirmation, accompaniment and advocacy for LGBTQ leaders.
Give online at www.elm.org or give via the enclosed envelope.