



The Union



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"The Union" e-mailed during the year-www.synodresourcecenter.org-by the Northwest Synod of WI Resource Center located at 1005 Oxford Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54703.

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New things are coming....!

Hi to everyone,

This is a brief newsletter this time. My husband, Howard, and I will be headin' west on Wednesday, March 16. One of our daughters in Denver will be having her second baby and we will be helping out by looking after the first one who will be 3 in June. It's exciting!

There are a few things I wanted to get out to you before the end of the month.

Mark this one down—If you order a VBS Kit before March 31, 2005, you will receive a free gift. Either a Director CD-Rom with clip art, templates, and more OR a video with 4 summer Davey and Goliath episodes. When you call in to order, mention which free gift you would like. 1-800-328-4648 will get you the order desk!

Now, here is some more...FYI...
"...As the ministry of publishing for the ELCA, we at Augsburg Fortress are dedicated to serving you with top quality Christian materials that communicate the Gospel, enhance faith, and enrich the life of the Church and the communities it serves.

Unlike other publishers and church supply companies, Augsburg Fortress reinvests all profits made into the development of new quality ministry resources for the church. The result—one mission that encompasses both the needs of your church and the ability for Augsburg Fortress to pro-

vide you with resources to meet those needs.

Please partner with me in the coming year to spread the word about resources available from Fortress Press. I'll happily provide review copies, descriptive text, electronic images and whatever I can for you to use in your newsletters, e-newsletters, and websites. I look forward to any suggestions you might have about how we can better work together and hope to hear from you often.

Have a Good Year!
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Thanks, Bob for keeping us informed!

Last month, a Presbyterian Resource Center in Appleton closed its doors. Our mentor RC Director, Darlene Kalfahs from Appleton was given the opportunity to take all resources in the closing Center. She very graciously shared with us, so now we have even MORE resources for you to use. We also received like-new shelving that holds these newly acquired books, videos & kits. Be sure to browse the on-line catalog or come in and see what we have. All of it is a great addition to our already top-notch Resource Center!

The SRC Crew

Welcome to First Pages.....

Lots of good info

Welcome to First Pages for March! Below you'll find news about four major new products that we are producing to help the ministry of churches everywhere. These have been creating quite a buzz, and we want to be sure you've got the latest information to pass along.

Here We Stand is a groundbreaking confirmation program that combines traditional print and online resources. The program consists of three units: Small Catechism, Old Testament, and New Testament. Each unit will be available as a binder and on the Web. The program is sold as an annual membership that includes all three binders and full access to Here We Stand online. In addition to all of the material available in the binders, Here We Stand online features audio and video clips, PowerPoint presentations of each lesson, online planning tools, bonus lessons, and customizable versions of each lesson. The Lutheran Handbook is the innovative learner resource for the program (sold separately from the membership) and uses humor to teach the essentials of Lutheranism. To learn more about Here We Stand, call 1-800-328-4648 or go to www.herewestandconfirmation.org <<http://www.herewestandconfirmation.org>>.

No Experience Necessary is a new Bible study series written by Kelly Fryer, best-selling author of Reclaiming the "L" Word. The title and approach of the Bible study are taken from Fryer's previously published book No Experience Necessary, which has been revised and expanded for use with the Bible study. The approach of No Experience Necessary is both unique and traditionally Lutheran: unlike other more information-oriented studies, No Experience Necessary focuses on the small group experience with God's Word, welcoming those

who are both new to and experienced with Bible study. The study consists of the revised and expanded book, four units of seven sessions each, and a video introduction to the study by Kelly Fryer in both VHS and DVD. To learn more about No Experience Necessary, call 1-800-328-4648 or go to www.noexperiencenecessary.org <<http://www.noexperiencenecessary.org>>.

Sundays and Seasons.com is coming! Imagine one place where you can access all ELCA liturgies, all lectionary texts, and all prayers and proper content-easily, continuously, and reliably. Imagine planning worship with unparalleled flexibility, so you can design the worship that suits your congregation. Imagine having all of the content for the day-lectionary texts, prayers, suggestions for hymns-brought to you instead of you having to seek it out. Imagine finding congregational song and liturgical music, too. Imagine being able to save your worship plans for future use, and re-use.

In July, 2005, Sundays and Seasons.com, a new online worship planner, will bring you all of this and more. This revolutionary new resource will contain:

- ✓ All current ELCA liturgies, including LBW, WOV, This Far By Faith, Libro de Liturgia y ntico, Renewing Worship, Occasional Services, and more
- ✓ The complete NRSV, searchable by verse or word
- ✓ All current ELCA prayer content, including prayers from Sundays and Seasons
- ✓ Suggestions for congregational song, from all current ELCA hymnals
- ✓ A growing assortment of hymn texts and hymn graphics for use in bulletins or projections
- ✓ Lectionary art graphics from Graphics for Worship, Icon, and Icon Two
- ✓ Reproducible children's bulletins from Kids Celebrate

Users will be able to choose the date and type of worship they want to plan, and then

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Remember secretaries, this publication is NOT for your eyes only! Don't forget to pass on the electronic directions to others - staff/leaders - who need to know what's goin' on at the Resource Center! Print copies and make them available in your office for walk-ins. We're here to help make life easier for planners!

New confirmation curriculum

In January, "Here We Stand" was field tested in one of our large congregations, Sharon Lutheran, Grand Forks. Their gifted and exceptionally savvy youth/education leader told me earlier today how pleased they are with this new resource. Some quick comments from Kim Adams:

* Here We Stand is theologically solid and an exceptional combination of practical and accessible resources—"so refreshing to have such solid material that doesn't need to be beefed up or dumbed down or rewritten"

* Great background material, layout that is easy to use, grabs the attention of the kids, is flexible and has options that are creative and really helpful

* It addresses different learning styles very effectively

* Our kids loved it, our small group guides loved it



Kids loved it

WHEN CAN WE GET IT???

1. The Web site www.herewestandconfirmation.org has some initial information posted, but more will be available in late March.
2. A brochure will be sent to churches and Resource Centers in the next week to 10 days with more information about the program.
3. On April 1 an online demo will be available for

churches to test-drive at the URL in the first column.

4. There are 3 units in the program: Small Catechism, Old Testament, and New Testament. Each unit will be available as a binder and online. Both the online and binder content launch on the same date. The launch date for the first unit, Small Catechism, is 7/15/05. The other units will debut Spring '06 and Summer '06.

5. There are three main components to the program: the unit binders, the online part, and the learner piece called The Lutheran Handbook.

6. The program is sold as an annual membership based on average worship attendance. The membership includes all of the binders and full access online (the handbook is sold separately).

7. The Lutheran Handbook will be available later this month.

Very good news!
Julie

(This article is from Julie Aageson, Eastern North Dakota Resource Center director)

A Message from Beth Lewis.....

"Dear Friends:

...As you requested, here is a summary of how I end my speeches and other conversations as I travel around the ELCA meeting with rostered and lay leaders. Please feel free to use/adapt this to your contexts by including it in synod newsletters, using it in your own speeches to Christian Ed leaders, pastors, etc.

Augsburg Fortress asks for three things from our partners in ministry throughout the ELCA:

1. For your prayer support for Augsburg Fortress, your ministry of publishing.
2. For your intentional consideration of the stewardship issues around purchases made within

your congregation, synod, etc.... for curricula, books, candles, offering envelopes, and whatever else you buy. We aren't naive enough to expect you to buy everything from us. But, we think that it is important to note that any profits we make do not go into shareholder value or to purchase fuel for a corporate jet, as they do with many of our competitors. Instead, any profits AF makes get reinvested into the development of new ministry resources for the ELCA and our ecumenical partners.

3. For your advocacy...help us share the story of the much more ministry/customer centric Augsburg Fortress and the importance of the stewardship consideration

when resources are purchased by our ELCA partners in ministry.

Blessings to you,
Beth Lewis, President and CEO
Augsburg Fortress Publishing"



First pages continued.....

(Continued from page 2)

choose the worship elements they want to include, in the order they choose. The Sundays and Seasons.com engine will deliver your entire worship plan in a single, continuous document—no more cutting and pasting, or swapping disks or files!

Churches will be able to subscribe to Sundays and Seasons.com on an annual basis. The subscription cost will be based on average weekly attendance. Since Sundays and Seasons.com is a web-based product, you will be able to use all of these features from any office in your church, from home, from the road—anywhere!

And don't worry about our beloved Sundays and Seasons annual print resource! This will still be the home for planning material, plus deep reflective content and other study material not found on Sundays and Seasons.com.

Check soon at www.sundaysandseasons.com <<http://www.sundaysandseasons.com>> for a free demo and complete details about signing up!

Icon Two for Projection

Churches that use projection for their worship or education will find hundreds of uses for Icon Two for Projection from Augsburg Fortress. This collection includes 250 fine art lectionary-based images for all times of the year.

- ✓ Each one colorized and presented on an attractive background
- ✓ Each one provided in full-screen and thumbnail size on PowerPoint(tm) slides
- ✓ Use full-screen as a backdrop before, during, or after the service
- ✓ Use the thumbnail-image slides with your text, music, or other images to reinforce the image of the day
- ✓ Plus, a wide selection of matching backgrounds without images, for mix and match use
- ✓ Exhaustive lectionary and theme index included in User Guide—find what you need in a snap!

"A gift for pastors who want to project weekly images based on lectionary texts! Sure to appeal to the rich religious imagination of our congregants." —Richard Jensen, author.

Blessings to you throughout this Lent and Easter season. Look for the April edition of First Pages in just a couple of weeks!

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Just a word about the Rotation Model Sunday School workshop—What a great day that was—March 5 at Osseo Evangelical Lutheran Church in Osseo. The picture to the right is a shot of the glorious lunch the women of the church provided for the crowd of 110 and the picture on the left side is just one of the workshops held in the wonderfully decorated rooms of Osseo's rotation Sunday school.



This was truly a learning, sharing, enjoying, enlightening day for the participants. Darlene Kalfahs & Allison Thome from the East Central Synod, Pam Foster from Augsburg Fortress, and Jenny Markgren and teachers from Osseo Evangelical, Greg Kaufmann and Bonnie Weber from the Northwest Synod of WI led the group in events of the day. One comment heard, "This is the best thing I have been to in a long, long time!"



Photos by Rev. Greg Kaufmann

We are getting over 70,00 hits on our site monthly!



The "condolence letter" is one of the most popular search items.