



# Welcome, Readers!

## Reserve the dates of: November 12-16, 2004

The biennial Ecumenical Resource Center  
Gathering is scheduled for November 12-16,  
2004 in Tempe, Arizona under the theme:  
“The Desert Shall Rejoice and Blossom”  
from Isaiah 35:1.

We will be staying at the Fiesta Inn Resort.  
Go to [www.ercg2004.org](http://www.ercg2004.org) to get the list of  
speakers, presenters and all the mounting  
excitement for this GR-R-R-REAT event.

You can even download an  
early registration form.

What a wonderful time this is going to be!

(By now, you have received your form)



*This is the logo for  
our gathering.  
How beautiful!*

*You can download  
it from the web site.*

ASSOCIATION OF LUTHERAN RESOURCE CENTERS

# Loaves & Fishes

Volume 8, Issue 2, April 2004

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## Dialogue with Darlene



Hi Everyone!

Blessings to each of you! I hope that you had a beautiful Lenten & Easter Journey that was filled with renewal and love.

As I hear about all the budget cuts, tight budgets, and difficult times throughout many of the synods in the ELCA, I think about our Resource Center Network. We are so fortunate to be able to partner with so many others in this ministry. On-line we share information, we answer questions, we help each other find resources that are no longer available, we connect with each other to provide better connections to the congregations in our synods. Wow! We are ONE

Resource Center in ONE Synod, but in reality our congregations have 38+ Resource Centers, not including all of our ELCA Partnerships and Ecumenical Partnerships working with us to provide our congregations with the best service! Do they know this? Are they really aware of how your center networks with so many others? If not, I think it is time for some PR work.

Before congregations decide to hold back dollars to the synod, which ultimately affects the Resource Center, it is our job to remind them about the wonderful job their synod is doing providing the Resource Center as a service to them. Service is the key word here and congregations need to know that the Synod provides the Resource Center as a service to them.

How do we get the word out? You say you are already doing it, through mailings, brochures, newsletters, website, etc., but should you do more? I say, you need to continually keep doing more AND you need to continually be creative in what you do. As DeWitt Jones says in "Everyday Creativity" - "Looking at the ordinary and seeing the extraordinary". Don't continue to do what worked over and over again, use what worked and make it better!

As resource centers we share "resources" and information to further the ministry in our congregations, but we need to share more about what our centers do with each other. Before budget cuts start to strangle the ministry we do, we need to share information about our centers. What do we each do to further the growth, development, and creativity of our centers? What PR tools are used to keep your congregations wanting more? How creative can you get at Synod Assembly with your report and display? Are you an important partner with your synod staff? If not, how can you become one? Let's start sharing these ideas with each other.

I challenge each of us to organize in writing, with all tools (pictures, skits, sample format etc.) provided, the creative ideas we do to continually keep our centers new and refreshed each year. I ask that you send these ideas to Darlene at ECSW 16 Tri-Park Way, Appleton, WI 54914 before 10/15/04. I will make copies and have them ready to hand out (to ALRC Members) at the Ecumenical Gathering in Tempe, AZ in November. Some ALRC time will allow for sharing & questions on these ideas. Maybe we can have an ALRC link along with our newsletter for the sharing of these creative ideas online, just for Resource Centers!

Many people discussed the need for this type of sharing in our "Brainstorming" sessions in Chicago in October. The ALRC Board is listening and trying make our "dreams" become "reality". When we do this, even struggling centers have the resources to be the best! Sharing, networking, partnering at its best!

Thank you for sharing in this ministry with me,

**Darlene**

# **Voice and Vision**—*Coordinator of ELCA Resource Centers—Julie Aageson*

Members of the ALRC,  
Easter blessings to each of you! Thank you again for all the ways you support each other and the web of relationships of which the ALRC is part. Over and over again, I hear about the generosity and collaboration of ELCA Resource Centers and the remarkable way we mirror the best of the church. It's a high compliment and serious affirmation of each of you.



As the planning process continues for restructuring in the ELCA, resource center ministry plays an even more important role. I'm including here a letter sent to Bishop Hanson's assistant, Pastor Charles Miller, and copied to the three unit heads with whom we work most closely. Please read it and if you're willing, send a similar note to Charles Miller, Kathie Bender Schwich, Eric Shafer, and Wyvetta Bullock. Support for the work of resource centers is a constant challenge on every level, synodical included. We need to speak for one another as passionate advocates for the important way centers serve and support the church.

God be with you all

*Julie Aageson,*  
Coordinator, ELCA Resource Centers

**ELCA RESOURCE CENTERS**  
Serving all 65 Synods  
of  
The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

March 30, 2004

Dear Pastor Miller,

As you continue the planning process for restructuring, I want to remind you of the critically important work being done by ELCA Resource Centers. Particularly in a time of cutbacks, this network of 70+ resource centers plays an increasingly important role in communicating and sharing the resources of the church. On behalf of ELCA Resource Centers, I want to highlight the following:

Churchwide support for ELCA Resource Centers speaks volumes about shared ministry. The centers are primary conduits of resources and resource information. Working hand-in-hand with churchwide units continues to be a high priority.

In addition to general support, three churchwide units have partnered to support a part-time deployed position, Coordinator of ELCA Resource Centers. Serving as a bridge between synods, regions, and the churchwide organization, this position has provided a valuable voice and vehicle for working collaboratively.

ELCA Resource Centers are extraordinary examples of shared ministry "out in the church." Supported by their respective synods and regions, they model the best of networking and good stewardship by sharing resources and resource information.

Evidence of the significant partnerships between resource centers, churchwide staff, Augsburg Fortress, and our ecumenical partners can be observed in the remarkable exchange of information online (ELCA Resource Centers meeting on Ecunet) and at a web site created by the association of Lutheran Resource Centers for the entire church, [www.synodresourcecenter.org](http://www.synodresourcecenter.org)

As deliberations continue about how best to serve the church, please remember the significant role of ELCA Resource Centers. It's one of the best kept secrets in the ELCA!

Julie K. Aageson,  
Coordinator, ELCA Resource Centers

# Connecting with Augsburg Fortress—by Beth Lewis



As you know, in 1450, Johannes Gensfleisch the Younger, also called Gutenberg, revolutionized printing by inventing a new printing process. Martin Luther and his colleagues took advantage of this new process to distribute his writings throughout Germany. This was the first time printing was used to spread reformatory or revolutionary ideas that were of interest to all classes of society.

In the 554 years since this invention, we have continued to use the printed word for faith formation. Augsburg Fortress is now using new printing and other technologies to bring new resources to congregations faster than ever before.

Beth A. Lewis, Pres/CEO  
Augsburg Fortress  
[beth.lewis@augsburgfortress.org](mailto:beth.lewis@augsburgfortress.org)

As of July 2003, Augsburg Fortress had no products available for sale in a downloadable format on our website. As of April 2004, we have over 500 different products available for congregational leaders to download!

We are using this downloadable technology to bring new products to our communities of faith faster than ever before. We are using it to provide flexibility of media on key, popular products. And, we are using the Internet to keep good products in print that in past years would have been put out of print because there was not much demand for them and we couldn't afford to maintain inventory for only a few users.

Here are a few of my favorites for you to share with those who come to you for advice on resources: We have received hundreds of requests from congregational leaders for materials to assist them in leading small group discussions on popular media. So, we have developed a new category of resources called "Up for Discussion." These downloadable discussion guides are a bargain at \$5 each. Then, the purchaser has our permission to reproduce them for use within his or her congregation or small group.

The first three "Up for Discussion" items are:

✓ UP FOR DISCUSSION: THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST to assist groups in discussing the recently released Mel Gibson movie. <http://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/item.asp?isbn=6000211465&clsid=109661>

✓ UP FOR DISCUSSION: THE DA VINCI CODE to help groups explore key issues raised in this best-selling book. <http://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/item.asp?isbn=6000211473&clsid=109664>

✓ UP FOR DISCUSSION: THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE to guide Lutheran discussion groups through this bestseller with a Lutheran lens on the content. <http://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/item.asp?isbn=6000211775&clsid=110979>



Beyond the discussion guides, there are several complete books available to download from our website. These include some of the core materials used in every congregation, such as THE SMALL CATECHISM and LUTHER'S NINETY-FIVE THESES. <http://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/category.asp?clsid=95691>



The largest category of downloadable products is music. We have a wide array of choral, organ, and piano music available on line. These are organized by type of music, but also within each section, by season of the church year. <http://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/category.asp?clsid=94175>

One of the most exciting new "traditional" products available from Augsburg Fortress is DAVEY AND GOLIATH'S CAMP CREATION: A SUPER GOSPEL CELEBRATION, for Vacation Bible School 2004. It has received rave reviews and awards from 3rd party VBS reviewers! Among their comments:

CAMP CREATION was awarded "Top Pick" by 'Round About the Church. This is a first for AF. Here's just a bit of the review: "I have never reviewed a VBS resource with as much hands-on active learning as Camp Creation. This VBS is brilliantly written to fully involve kids, has a tremendous focus on application and is just plain fun! Tremendously well done, Augsburg Fortress!"

(Continued on page 6)

# A report from Craig's Corner

The ALRC operates on the basis of member dues from centers and associate members along with judicious stewardship of several grant funds. At the Fall 2003 meeting the members voted to raise membership dues to \$75 in 2004 and \$100 in 2005. This was a recognition that this membership organization could not accomplish its mission without a more significant contribution from members and friends.



The ALRC closed 2003 with \$11,750.44 in resources, all of which were grant funds. The fall conference was a significant (and certainly worthy) expense. Operating funds for 2004 will come from an anticipated \$3000 in membership dues. As of April 7th, we had received 24 center memberships totaling \$1950 and one associate membership of \$35. Reaching our budgeted total means another 12-15 centers and a few associate members will support the ALRC in 2004. Membership income will support the ALRC Newsletter, board communications, modest administrative expenses, and promotion of resource center ministry. Grant moneys will continue to be used to support conference participation, software for new centers, mentoring programs, and subsidize the operating budget for one more year.

So the ALRC Financials look like this:

Operating Funds:  
Income from dues \$1985  
YTD expenses—144.47

Total Operating Funds = \$1840.53

Carryover Grant Funds \$11,750.44

Total ALRC Assets \$13,590.97

- by treasurer Craig Boehlke

## Happy Birthday to YOU-U-U-U



Many happy returns!

From the Lutheran Resource Center of Clear Lake, IA - Contact, Karen Harthan—05/01  
From The Resource Connection at Atlanta, GA - Contact, Sue Huff—05/02  
From the NW Penn Synod Resource Center at Oil City, PA - Director, Mary Housholder—05/04  
From the Lower Susquehanna Synod at Harrisburg, PA - Contact, Marty Shifflett—05/06  
From The Resource Connection at Atlanta, GA - Director, Mardee Rightmyer—05/14  
From the Easter MN Resource Center, St. Paul, MN - Contact, Cindy Telleson—05/14  
From the Resource Center, Fargo, ND - Contact, Kim Bailey—05/25  
From the Region 1 Resource Center, Seattle, WA - Contact, Janet Nelson—05/27  
From the East Central Synod of WI at Appleton, WI - Contact, Ellen Mai—06/17  
From The Source, Inc. of Washington, D.C. - Contact, LaJuan Quander—06/17  
From the NE Ohio Synod Resource Center at Cuyahoga Falls, OH - Director, Karen Kaufman—06/21  
From The Vineyard at Baltimore, MD - Director, Holly Crispell—07/06  
From the SWMN Resource Center, Redwood Falls, MN - Director, Sara Johnson—07/09  
From the SE Penn Synod Resource Center at Norristown, PA - Director, Joanne Carlson—07/12  
From Church Resource Center of Kansas City, MO - Contact, Amy Lumanog—07/18  
From The Resource Center of NW Minnesota at Moorhead - Director, Kay Jastram—07/19  
From The NW Synod of WI, Eau Claire, WI - Assistant Dir., Bonnie Weber—07/22  
From the Region 1 Resource Center, Seattle, WA - Director, Carolyn Strain—07/24  
From the Lutheran Resource Center of Clear Lake, IA - Contact, Beth Forbess—07/31

(Belated Birthday Greetings to those whose special day is already past!)



# Connecting with AF—continued

*(Continued from page 4)*

And, **VBSsupersite.com** selected **CAMP CREATION** as the winner of their 2004 "Most Improved" award and 2004 "Editor's Pick" award, saying, "After years of struggling, Augsburg Fortress may have just re-entered the VBS game. Focusing on an Activity Center model, and using 60s pop culture (and ELCA-owned) icons Davey and Goliath, this Vacation Bible School is definitely worth a second look for those still searching for a theme. This curriculum is so improved that even Group fans should take a second look."

There is an on-line component to **DAVEY & GOLIATH'S CAMP CREATION**, too! Be sure your Christian Ed and VBS coordinators know about the many free ideas that are available for them on this webpage: <http://www.augsburgfortress.org/vbs>

There is also a free message board available so that you can exchange ideas with others using **CAMP CREATION**.

Last, but not least, Augsburg Fortress now offers free eNewsletters and eUpdates on a wide range of topics. Lay and rostered leaders are invited to register to receive newsletters on the topics that interest them the most; Christian Education, Leadership, Music, etc. Be sure that the leaders in your synod know about this simple sign up procedure. In less than 60 seconds, they can sign up for these free collections of tips, techniques and new product information at [www.augsburgfortress.org/enewsletter](http://www.augsburgfortress.org/enewsletter)

But, we need your help for the free Augsburg Fortress Books eNewsletter. We need to find people from a variety of backgrounds (clergy, laity, seminary professors, AIM's, and more) to read books for us and write up brief reviews for us to include in our eNewsletter. These are not paid reviews, but the reviewer may keep the book(s) with our compliments for his or her library. Obviously, we need people who not only love to read and review books, but who are also good writers. Prospective reviewers should contact Deborah Erickson at [Deborah.Erickson@augsburgfortress.org](mailto:Deborah.Erickson@augsburgfortress.org)



From Gutenberg to Google. We've come a long way in 554 years! But, the mission is the same - to proclaim the Good News and assist people of all ages with faith formation, no matter what the media!

Many ELCA and other Christian churches are using **THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE** for congregational book-clubs, small groups, etc. Augsburg Fortress has had numerous requests for help in guiding discussions of this best-selling book from a Lutheran perspective. You asked for....you've got it!

Pastor Eric Burtness (St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Beaverton, OR) has just written AF's newest downloadable discussion guide: **UP FOR DISCUSSION: THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE**. Like Augsburg Fortress' other popular, downloadable **UP FOR DISCUSSION** guides, this one is only \$4.95. And, purchasers have permission to reproduce it for use within their particular group (congregation, small group, seminar, etc.)

Here's the link, for your convenience:

<<http://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/item.asp?isbn=6000211775&clsid=110979>><http://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/item.asp?isbn=6000211775&clsid=110979>

The Conference Call with Augsburg Fortress Publishing House on May 25 at 10am, cdt, will feature Beth Lewis, ceo of "The House."

Julie Ageson will post an agenda as the date draws nearer.

Be sure to phone in and be part of this conversation.

It's very informative and enlightening.

