

## **The Bishop's Road Show – The Season of Easter**

**May 3, 2010**

Dear Friends,

This edition of the Bishop's Road Show will provide you with some new prayer concerns, information important to Voting Members and Visitors to the Synod Assembly (driving directions), a Wall Street Journal article, and my up coming travels.

Late last week word was received that one of the Bishop's Lay Worship Leaders **Kathy Klingensmith** was admitted to a Parkersburg Hospital due to an ulcer in her stomach. Emergency surgery was conducted on Friday, April 30. From additional reports it sounds as if Kathy is healing well and should be home towards the end of the week.

**Maureen Corrigan**, our Office Administrator has been home for slightly more than a week and is recuperating at home. We continue to invite your prayers for Maureen.

**Randall Herman**, the intern at Grace, Petersburg, WV left his internship for about a week due to heart issues. Randall has an enlarged heart and has had life long issues related to his heart. Randall has returned to his internship at Grace and is feeling well.

On Sunday, April 25 **Harold Levin**, father of **Mary Nielsen** died due to a massive stroke. His funeral was held In Illinois on the 28<sup>th</sup>. I invite your prayers for Pastor Erik and Mary Nielsen and their extended family due to this unexpected death. For those of you who like to send cards, mail them to The Nielsen's, 4513 Grand Central Avenue, Vienna, WV 26105.

With the **Synod Assembly** slightly more than a month away the "White Pages" (all of the written reports) are now available on the Synod's Web Site. Please go to [www.wv-wmd.org](http://www.wv-wmd.org) and on the left hand side you will see the phrase **Synod Assembly**. When you click on that phrase you will see what is available for you to read and print. The Proposed Agenda is also on the Web Site.

When driving to the McLure Hotel, 1200 Market Street see the below directions:

### ***Directions traveling I-70 from the East:***

Stay on I-70 even though signs will say that the Wheeling Tunnel is closed. Follow the detour onto Route 2 by-pass to the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Exit.

Right on Market Street (Fourth traffic Light)

Hotel located on the right (corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Market, 2 blocks after you turn onto Market Street.

*Directions traveling I-70 from the West:*

Take I-70 Exit 1A to Main Street

Turn right on Main Street South and follow to 14<sup>th</sup> Street

Left on 14<sup>th</sup> Street one block to Market Street

Left on Market Street to 12<sup>th</sup> Street

Hotel located on the right

**Please note....there are only 3 parking spaces in front of the Hotel for check –ins.** You may circle the block (take a right on 12<sup>th</sup> Street, go one block to Chaplain Street and make a right. You will see the sign on your right for **PARKING**. Enter the parking garage, get your ticket and come into the lobby of the hotel, register with the Synod Committee, get your Hotel Room assignment from the Hotel staff and ask to have your parking ticket stamped. It is my understanding that visitors and local Voting Members are welcome to park in this Parking Lot too and may get there parking ticket stamped at the front desk.

A friend of mine, Tena Willemsma, likes to forward to me good stories found in newspapers about Appalachia and Appalachians. The below piece first appeared in the Wall Street Journal and several other papers picked it up. It was written by a writer who was covering the mining disaster at Montcoal, WV. If you have not seen this piece, I think you will appreciate it. If you have seen it, I think it will give you pause to reflect upon who we are.

AP: On the Ground: Humbled by hospitality in W.Va. mine country © 2010 AP

A Massey Energy coal silo towers over Marsh Fork Elementary on April 6, 2010, near the Upper Big Branch Coal Mine in Naoma, W.Va. It would be embarrassing if it were not so humbling.

Hours after the West Virginia mine explosion Monday, scores of journalists from all over the country started arriving — in a very rural area with no communications or places to sleep closer than an hour's drive away.

When the governor began giving press briefings at Marsh Fork Elementary School (this week happens to be spring break, so the children are out), journalists began getting comfortable at the site a few miles from the mine entrance, and we never left. By Tuesday, a couple dozen satellite trucks filled the parking lot, and classrooms with tiny chairs and paintings on the walls were turned into newsrooms and bedrooms.

And all of a sudden there was food — a lot of food. Pepperoni Pizza. Pulled pork and beans. Fried chicken, potatoes and green beans. Cookies. Crackers. Doughnuts of all stripes.

Usually I lose a few pounds while covering stories like this. The deadlines are too tight, the access to food often limited. This time, I'll be going home a little rounder, and with a touched heart.

The food was cooked by residents and donated by businesses in this community. Some of it came by way of a local Red Cross, a Wal-Mart, and a United Way, but even more was the home cooking of kind West Virginians who just wanted to take care of us.

Imagine, here we are, an aggressive and hard-charging bunch of journalists in the middle of this devastated community, and it's THEY who are taking care of US!

The kindness hasn't been lost on any of us. By Thursday, two plastic jars — "school collection" and "community collection" — were put out, and by Friday both had a few hundred dollars. I feel like we owe this school and these people so much more.

When I asked interim principal Shelly Prince how folks could be so giving at a time like this, she said that many felt it was soothing to help others. This situation made them feel helpless, and helping others was doing something. She also said it gave people a chance to show the world what West Virginians are "really like."

"Often on TV, we are not portrayed in such a good manner. We often are portrayed as ignorant and backward," she said. "But we are just ordinary people who live ordinary lives."

I have to disagree. These people are extraordinary.

***Peter Prengaman***, multimedia editor at the AP's South Desk in Atlanta, is in West Virginia to help cover the coal mine disaster.

Finally, my travels will slow down this week. Last week I spent a day with the Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia's annual Assembly at Cambridge Springs, PA, then to Gettysburg Seminary Board meeting for two days, a council meeting and then worship with Resurrection Lutheran, Weirton, WV this past Sunday.

This week I will be in the Synod Office on Tuesday and Thursday. I will work at home on Wednesday and Friday. If this rain stops I will be outside today playing in my garden. Thursday evening I will meet with a church council and then on Sunday I will serve as the preacher at St. Paul's, Aurora, WV and St. John's, Red House, MD.

My prayers are with you as the Season of Easter seems to be melting away and soon it will be the lengthy season of Pentecost.

God's blessings,

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