

# Blessed is the ordinary

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ELCA Director for Evangelical Mission

Most of us live ordinary lives. We go to work, we eat breakfast, we walk our dogs, we pay our bills, and we do a whole lot of other ordinary stuff that fills our ordinary days. If we think ordinary is mundane or boring, our expectations may lead to disappointment and dissatisfaction.

Yet, how blessed are we in the lives that we live? We have home and family, food and clothing, daily work and all that we really need from day to day. We are blessed. We are kept warm in the winter and cool in the summer. We have many means of transportation in order to get from here to there. We have corrective lenses to help us see more clearly and devices to assist our hearing. We have access to health care professionals and medications to help us deal with our illnesses and injuries. There is entertainment and activity to suit just about every taste. Is all this ordinary? To us perhaps, but certainly it would not be considered ordinary for the vast majority of people around the world.

We have come to assume that we deserve all that we have, that we have a right to all these blessings and hence we lose sight of the fact that they are blessings and not automatic givens for us. We become immune

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to recognizing God's gifts and begin to believe that these things are ours, that we have earned them, they are our due!

Oh, how good is God! God gave God's own son that we might have life and have it abundantly. Forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are granted to us all. Think how ordinary is water, bread and wine, and yet when God's word is proclaimed, these ordinary elements become the means of God's grace for us, in us and through us. The ordinary and the sacred collide, and we are blessed and changed. We are changed for the sake of something so much bigger than any of us can even imagine. Yes, we may live rather ordinary lives and yet we also become extraordinary as God's grace inhabits our hearts, and the sacrifice of Jesus is made real to the world in our living day to day.

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## Life-Long Learning Events

***Living the Good Life: Connecting with Faith in the Real World***  
Nov. 9-10, 2012  
Camp Ewalu, Strawberry Point, Iowa

Led by the Rev. Dr. Norma Cook Everist of Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, this family retreat offers activities for all ages to explore the basics of the Christian faith together. Family accommodations will be at the newly renovated Walnut Lodge. Register no later than Monday, Oct. 15.

***Worship Windows to the World***  
Saturday, Nov. 17, 2012,  
9 a.m.-12 noon  
Bergen Lutheran, Roland, Iowa

Dr. Mons Teig, professor emeritus of worship at Luther Seminary, will lead this look at the connection between what people do on Sunday and the rest of their lives. Teig will point out how different forms of worship help people see life in a contemporary, creative and life-altering way

Co-sponsored by the Riverside Conference and Bergen's Restoring

our Future Campaign, this event will be especially helpful for clergy, lay worship leaders, worship planners, and worship committees. Cost to attend is \$15 per person or \$10 for groups of five or more. Registration is due Thursday, Nov. 15. A sack lunch will be included.

To learn more about either event, contact Susan Friedrich, **563-422-6242** or [friedrichsusan@gmail.com](mailto:friedrichsusan@gmail.com). Registration forms can be downloaded at [www.neiasynod.org/events](http://www.neiasynod.org/events).