

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let me introduce myself to you. My name is Pastor Kimberly Swanson-Buffie; now that we are friends, you can call me Pastor Kimberly. I know that we are not really well acquainted yet, but I have to ask you, did anyone ever tell you how beautiful your feet are? Really, you have exquisite feet! Go ahead, look down at them now, I am sure you'll agree with me. No? Well, read on.

I am going to be the new pastor for the ELCA's newest church, right down the road in Montrose, and right in the Crow River Conference of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod. We are going to be neighbors. Now, most times when I mention that a new church is starting in Montrose, people quizzically look at me and wonder "why Montrose?"

Did you know that in the last 10 years, the population of Montrose has doubled to over 3000 people? Did you know that the average age in Montrose is just 30? Did you know that fewer than 50% of the population of Montrose has a church that they call home?

Montrose is a growing young city, full of kids and young adults, and they need to hear the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ! Paul, in his letter to the Romans, tells us of a similar situation when he writes

*<sup>13</sup>For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'<sup>14</sup> But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? <sup>15</sup>And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news!'*

Yes indeed, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring the Good News of Jesus Christ. But these are not my feet that are being described, these are **your** feet! I told you that you have really beautiful feet, and you do, for Paul tells us that a preacher must be sent to proclaim the Gospel. It is the senders-all of you-whose feet are so beautiful. Yes you, who admittedly just became acquainted with me, the preacher, you are doing the sending to Montrose. This new mission start is not being considered Pastor Kimberly's church, or the Southwestern Minnesota Synod's church; this new mission start is being considered a further extension of the Body of Christ, and therefore an extension of **you**. Your church is sending me, and your neighboring ELCA congregations are sending me, all of us are in this together. And thus my new friends, Montrose needs your support. Montrose needs your prayers; Montrose needs you to build relationships; Montrose needs your financial support. House of Grace does not need one church to do all of the sending, all of the praying, all of the relationship building, nor all of the financial supporting. House of Grace needs all of our churches, each one doing a little part, each one a part of the sending of the preacher to proclaim the Good News to those young families in Montrose.

Please look down at your feet again; they really are beautiful!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Kimberly

P.S. Worship services are anticipated to begin in the fall of 2014.



**Southwestern Minnesota Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.