



# OUR SAVIOUR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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For Immediate Release

## **Bishop Margaret Payne to Visit Our Saviour's**

*Head of ELCA's New England Synod Will Preside at 10:45 AM Service on Sept. 18*

**FAIRFIELD, Conn.**, September 2, 2005 – Margaret G. Payne, bishop of the New England Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), will pay a special visit to Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Fairfield on Sunday, September 18, presiding at the 10:45 a.m. service.

Prior to the service, Bishop Payne plans to meet with congregants at 9:30 a.m. to discuss a variety of matters affecting the Church, including the findings of a recent ELCA study, "Journey Together Faithfully: The Church and Homosexuality."

"We are delighted to welcome Bishop Payne to Our Saviour's and we look forward to sharing our worship with her," said the Rev. Mark Christoffersen, pastor of Our Saviour's. "The bishop and Our Saviour's share a mutual vision to enrich our ministries aimed at young people, both within congregations and in communities. This is the first emphasis of the bishop's fund she has recently established."

"It is an honor for me to visit Fairfield, and to share in the worship experience with the people of Our Saviour's," said Bishop Payne. "Everywhere I travel throughout New England, I see Lutherans rooted for life. We are rooted in the gospel, living in God's abundance, reaching out to new partners, new mission and new efforts to be a public witness to the gospel. Although Lutherans make up a tiny percentage of the region's population, our ministry is branching out and deepening. We invite you to join us."

A graduate of Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Penn., Bishop Payne began her career as an English teacher in Punjab, India, on a Fulbright grant. She was ordained as a minister in the Lutheran Church in America in 1984 following graduation from Princeton Seminary in New Jersey. Her first call was to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Princeton Junction, N. J., where she served for seven years. In 1991, she was called to be assistant to the bishop in the New Jersey Synod specializing in the area of stewardship, as well as relating to pastors and congregations throughout New Jersey. Prior to her election as bishop in 2000, she served as vacancy pastor at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Wilbraham, Mass. As a member of the Conference of Bishops, she serves on the Theology and Ethics Committee, and represents the Conference on the steering committee of The Fund for Leaders in Mission. Recently she has been appointed to serve as Chair of the Sexuality Task Force of the ELCA.

The New England Synod of the ELCA is comprised of 193 congregations in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Upstate New York and Vermont. It is one of 65 synods in nine regions that make up the ELCA, which has nearly 11,000 congregations nationwide.

In addition to hosting Bishop Payne, Our Saviour's will hold its annual church picnic on September 18 immediately following the 10:45 a.m. worship service. The public is invited to both the service and the picnic. Our Saviour's is located at 160 Hill Farm Road (corner Duck Farm Road) in Fairfield. For more information, contact the church at (203) 255-0545.

### **About Our Saviour's**

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), reaches out to the world and to its local communities with the Good News of the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The congregation receives strength for this mission through Worship, Christian Education, Service, Benevolent Giving, Witness, Mutual Support and a commitment to grow in faith and participation. Our Saviour's is guided in the belief that, "As God Gives to Us, So We Give to Others."

Holy Communion is celebrated during worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. each Sunday. The church also offers Sunday School and Adult Forum programs at 9:30 a.m. For more information, please call (203) 255-0545 or visit us at [www.oursaviours.net](http://www.oursaviours.net).

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