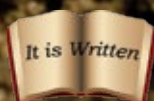


May/June 2012

Lutheran Sentinel

A Publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

"Engage Others with Jesus."



"The seed is the Word of God" (Luke 8:11)

In This Issue

- 2 From the President
- 3 What Gifts Does the Ascended Jesus Send Us?
- 4 The Seven-fold Gifts of the Spirit
- 5 The Seed is the Word of God-What Encouragement!
- 6 Empowered by the Spirit to Engage Others with Jesus
- 7 Our Comfort from Christ's Divine Nature
- 8 A Great Gift for Mom
- 9 Synod Convention Announcement
- 10 Synod Convention Report Preview
- 11 Synod Convention Report Preview
- 12 On the Synodical Scene
- 13 Bethany Lutheran College Report
- 14 Summer Camp Preview
- 15 Pastor, I Have a Question
- 16 Cross Currents
- 17 Youth Notes
- 18 ELS Finance/ ELS Historical Society Announcement
- 19 Editorial: God Works the Details
- 20 Grace Bartel: Care of the Soul



Lutheran Sentinel

VOLUME 95
NUMBER 4
ISSN 0024-7510

May/June 2012

Staff

Theodore G. Gullixson Editor
Robert Harting Assistant Editor
Arline Walker Business Manager
Wayne Halvorson Managing Editor
Jessica Fries, Erica Jacobsen Proofreaders
Paul C. Fries Graphic Designer

Contributing Editors

Paul Madson, Charles Keeler, Daniel Madson, James Olson.

Published by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 6 Browns Court, Mankato, MN 56001.

The *Lutheran Sentinel* is the official publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The subscription price is \$12.00 per year, with reduced rates available for blanket subscriptions at \$10.00 through a member congregation.

Address Editorial Correspondence To: Rev. Theodore G. Gullixson, 5530 Englewood Drive, Madison, WI 53705.

Address Circulation Correspondence and Address Corrections To: Rev. Wayne Halvorson, Box 185, Albert Lea, MN 56007.

Periodical Postpaid at Albert Lea, MN 50450 and additional offices. **Postmaster:** Send changes (Form 3579) to Lutheran Sentinel, Box 185, Albert Lea, MN 56007.

From the President

Dear members and friends of our ELS:

Fifty days after the most amazing event in world history, another amazing happening occurred in the same city. If Christ's bursting from the tomb was a world-changing event (it most certainly was!), the day of Pentecost was a life-changing event for Christ's church in the advancement of the saving Gospel.

What sticks in your mind about that day? The tongues of fire? The apostles' instant ability to communicate in foreign languages? The sermon by Peter? How about this one: the prominence of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism?

Three thousand baptisms in one day. Wow! The people—the men, women, and children—listening to Peter on that Sunday took to heart what he was preaching concerning this energizing, sacred ordinance from God: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:38, 39).

Did you hear the mention of your name and mine? Consider the words: "every one of you," "for all who are far off," and "whom the Lord our God will call."

Have you thought of how your Baptism, whenever the day and year it occurred, was enacted for your spiritual and eternal benefit as the true "church growth" method set forth so emphatically on that day in Jerusalem known as "the birthday of the New Testament Christian church"?



Someone appropriately described Pentecost as "only a few drops of the coming rain shower."

Praise God for this shower of grace! It has sprinkled on our naturally sin-hardened heart-land with Spirit-worked and Spirit-filled sprouts of blessing in our souls. "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Galatians 3:27).

The forgiveness of sins, as Peter explained long ago on that 50th day following Easter, earned by our Savior on the cross and sealed by His empty tomb, has been brought home to our own hearts by Baptism. What a miracle occurs when drops of water are connected with God's Word "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Thousands upon thousands of this sprinkling of life continue to be made. May we ever be eager to advance this awesome rain shower of grace sent from the Father above. Pentecost is on the move!



John A. Moldstad
John A. Moldstad

What Gifts Does the Ascended Jesus Send Us?

Forty days after His resurrection, Jesus ascended to the right hand of His Father. St. Paul writes that “Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us” (Romans 8:34). The apostle also encourages us to “seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1). And the Epistle to the Hebrews states in regard to the Son of God: “After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3).

When Jesus ascended, He did not thereby travel to a distant place in our physical universe. As far as the *location* of God is concerned, God is everywhere. Therefore, the “right hand” of God is also everywhere. In His ascension, Christ was exalted from His previous state of *humility* to a full use of His divine *power*. Jesus is still a human being—the son of Mary and our brother. As the ascended Lord, He is no longer in “the form of a servant” (Philippians 2:7) as He was during the time of His earthly ministry. Jesus is also still present with His people, but He is present in a different way—a way that allows Him to be with all of His people, all over the globe, all of the time.

From the “right hand” of God, Jesus also bestows wonderful gifts upon His people. He sends His Spirit into us so that we can confidently believe in Christ and boldly confess Christ. On the day of Pentecost, St. Peter proclaimed: “Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing” (Acts 2:33).

As Jesus continues to send the Holy Spirit to us through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments (see Acts 2:38–42), He also gives to the church the servants who administer these Means of Grace

for our forgiveness and salvation. When the church issues a call to a minister of the Word, it is not merely “hiring” an “employee.” Rather, it is functioning as the voice and instrument of Christ in authorizing a servant of Christ to bring the saving message of Christ to Christ’s people. When a congregation *calls* a pastor in Jesus’ name, it is actually *receiving* a pastor *from* Jesus.

St. Paul explains this in his Epistle to the Ephesians, where he also describes the reasons why Jesus gives such public servants to His church. Paul writes that Christ is the one who “ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things,” and that “he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:10–12).

As Jesus gives us His Spirit and as He gives us the pastors and teachers who proclaim His Word among us, He thereby also continually gives us *Himself*. We cannot have the Spirit of Christ without also having Christ: “By this we know that *he* abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us” (1 John 3:24). Jesus says to those whom He sends forth to teach in His name: “The one who hears you *hears me*” (Luke 10:16, emphasis added).

In His ascension, Jesus does indeed continue to abide with His church and to provide for His church. In faith, we receive, with joy, all that our glorified Savior gives. In faith, we receive Jesus Himself as He comes to us in and through His gifts!



David Jay Webber is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, and is a member of the ELS Doctrine Committee.



The Seven-fold Gifts of the Spirit

Many of us are at least somewhat familiar with the term “the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit.” *The Lutheran Hymnal* uses this phrase in several of its Pentecost hymns. Perhaps this is what St. John had in mind in the Book of Revelation when, by inspiration of that same Spirit, he referred to “the seven Spirits of God” or “the seven-fold Spirit.”

The Bible actually speaks of these seven gifts of the Spirit in only one place: Isaiah 11:1–2. This passage clearly refers to the seven-fold Spirit being poured out, not on us, but on the coming Messiah: “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.” Let us look for a moment at how the Holy Spirit, spoken of in seven ways by Isaiah, was poured out on the Messiah, the Lord Jesus:

- 1) “*The Spirit of the Lord.*” This is the only one of the seven terms that stands alone. The phrase is a clear reference to none other than the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. This is the Spirit of the only true God, the Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the eternal Son.
- 2 and 3) “*The Spirit of wisdom and of understanding.*” These terms deal with practical wisdom, the ability to see “the big picture.” It is so important for the Messiah to always be able to see the end from the beginning. He therefore knows just the right thing to do for our every situation.
- 4 and 5) “*The Spirit of counsel and of power.*” These gifts have to do with military strategy and the ability to carry out that strategy. The spiritual warfare that the Messiah would be involved in for us not only had to include a plan for victory, but also the necessary power

to carry out that plan to completion.

6 and 7) “*The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.*” This final couplet refers to both a knowledge of the will of the Lord and also a commitment to carry out that will. Recall that Jesus once told His disciples, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work” (John 4:34).

This fullness of the Holy Spirit, poured out on Jesus the Messiah, led Christ to willingly humble Himself and become obedient even to the death of the cross, so that by His wounds we might be truly and completely healed!

Through the waters of Baptism, this same Holy Spirit has been poured out on us, along with His seven-fold gifts. The Spirit desires that, by His grace, we might know “perfect peace” (see Isaiah 26:3) in trusting in this Spirit-blessed Messiah, our Savior and our Lord. It is also the Spirit’s desire that we might live in His power and blessing each day. As Paul wrote to Timothy, “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7).

On that first day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was the Father’s and the Son’s great Gift to His people and has been Their Gift to His people through the Means of Grace ever since. And all to His glory and our great blessing!



Thomas Westendorf is pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Medford, Oregon.

“Learning to Engage Others with Jesus”

The Seed is the Word of God—What Encouragement!

What a tremendous source of comfort Jesus’ Parable of the Sower and the Seed is for us who want to engage others with Jesus, but often struggle with it. The encouragement is found in what Jesus calls the seed: “The seed is the Word of God” (Luke 8:11).

If we miss that truth, we will be miserable sharers of the good news, especially if our focus is centered on the sower. One whole camp of Christians does that. Their emphasis equates the sower to the correct visible church, that alone can sow the seed in the right way for there to be the proper results. How discouraging! If a successful spiritual harvest is dependent on who the sower is or how he sows, consider how downhearted we would be if the results were “poor.” Fear of making a mistake has often kept the Gospel from crossing tongue and lips of many a potential witness to waiting, wanting, wandering ears! Or if the results were “good,” then Satan can tempt us with prideful thoughts about our great accomplishment. However, when we remember that “the seed is the Word of God,” gone are our timidity and fear; gone is any false pride or false sense of security in a person or a method. What encouragement!

We can be misdirected sharers of the good news in another way, if our focus is on the soil’s growth potential. Another camp of Christians thinks that if the soil is good, the results will be good. So, they say, the soil must get itself in the right condition, welcome the seed, and rid itself of any encumbrances to growth—such as the pathway’s hardness; the pesky, thieving birds; the root-inhibiting rockiness; and the choking effects of the fearful and materialistic weeds found in one’s life. Again, how discouraging!

If the successful growth of the Kingdom of God depended on the receptors of the seed of life and salvation, then no one would be saved and no one would have life everlasting, for no one is spiritually good soil! Think of the new and heavy burden we would lay on the hearts of those we engage with Jesus if they had to become good soil first! And don’t think that the devil won’t use this emphasis to the souls’ eternal demise. For then we would be tempted to be selective: to profile, to show favoritism, to avoid the pathway, rocky, or weedy folk, while targeting only those we determine to be the good soil folk! The seed is meant for all soils because “the seed is the Word of God.” What encouragement!

As confessional Lutherans, the Lord of the Church has so graciously equipped, positioned, and poised us with the absolute best seed to engage precious souls with Jesus. For us, the parable’s main emphasis is on the effectiveness of the seed—“the seed is the Word of God.” How living, active, and powerful is the seed. Our privileged task is to be used by the Lord in sowing the seed, indiscriminately, even whimsically, on every type of soil, with everyone! The Lord Himself will bring about the results!

So, sow! Where you are, gifted as you are, sow! The growth, fruits, and results of our sharing the good news of Christ’s full and free salvation are because “the seed is the Word of God.” The Spirit, working with the seed, will succeed and accomplish what God desires when He sows through us. Both Law and Gospel will do their work. That’s encouraging!

David Russow serves as a home missionary and pastor of Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church in Rogers, Minnesota, and is a member of the Board for Home Missions and Evangelism.



EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT

to Engage Others with Jesus

What is our fascination with superheroes? Batman and Robin, Spiderman, Captain America, even Super-Grover! What makes us want to leap tall buildings in a single bound? Is it because we too often feel so weak? We want to make a difference in our lives and the lives of those around us. We want to save the day, but we seem powerless to do it. So many times, we are just swept along by life, unable to resist its currents.

Christians can sometimes feel this way towards evangelism. We want to make a difference, but when we look at our ineptitude, weak faith, and the strength of the enemy, we lose heart. Jesus has words of encouragement for us: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The Spirit empowers us to engage others with Jesus.

The truth is that we, by ourselves, are powerless to effect spiritual change in our lives or the lives of those around us.

As the *Small Catechism* says, “I believe

that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him.” St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:3). When we approach evangelism from the perspective of our strength, we will be disheartened; we are weak. Thankfully, evangelism is not about our power. The Holy Spirit is the strength of our efforts to engage others with Jesus. He has given us His mighty Sword, the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17), to save the day.

Imagine for a moment that you are mowing the lawn tomorrow and an object streaks from heaven and crashes in your backyard. After the dust settles you see a rock with a sword protruding from it in the crater. You can’t help but tug on the hilt. To your surprise, the sword comes out. It is obvious that this is no ordinary sword. You can feel

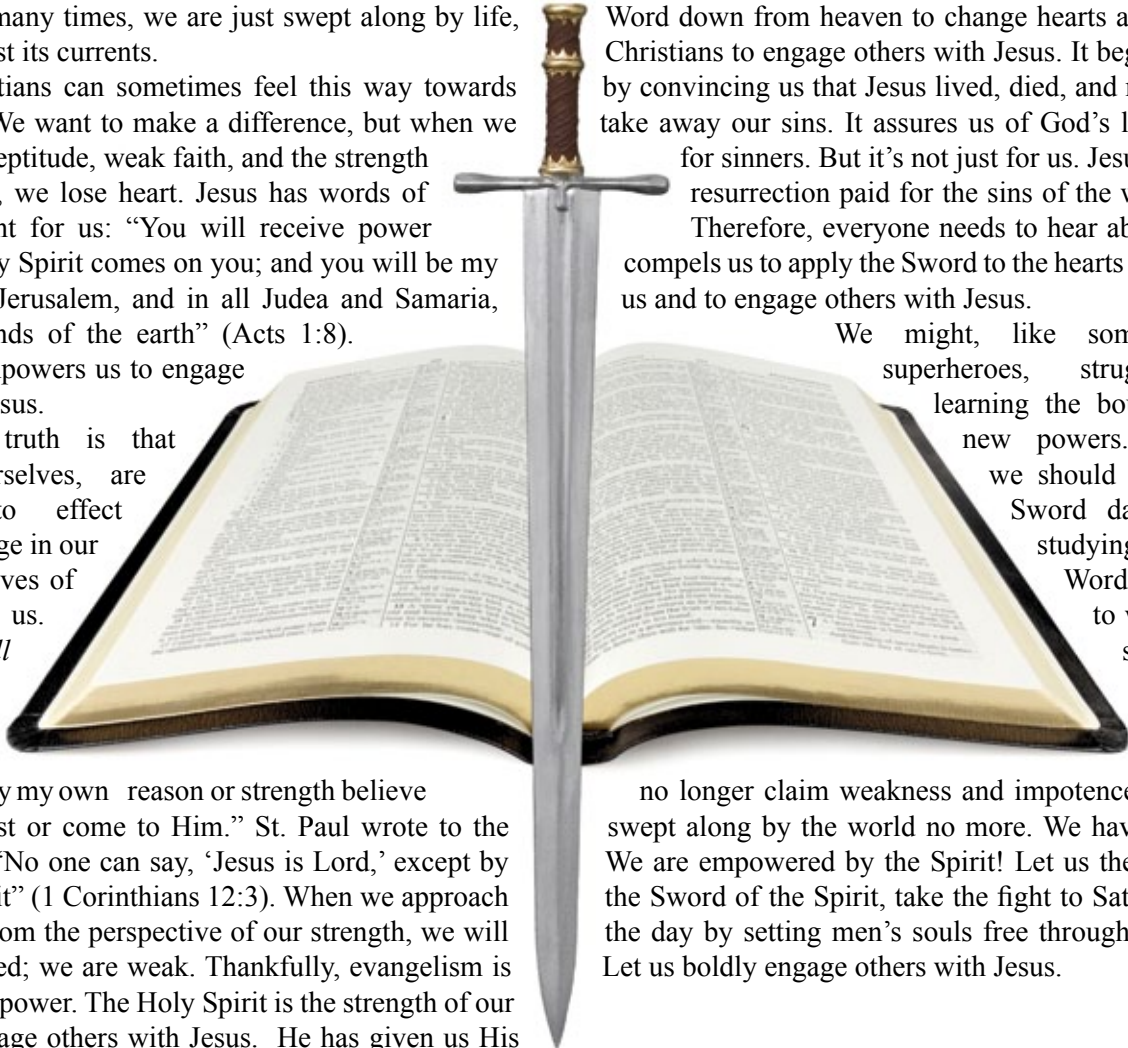
its special power tingling through you. You feel yourself being changed within. You are not the person you used to be. With the sword in hand, you are something greater, more powerful.

In much the same way, Christians wield a mighty sword. It is the Word of God. The Spirit has sent the Word down from heaven to change hearts and empower Christians to engage others with Jesus. It begins its work by convincing us that Jesus lived, died, and rose again to take away our sins. It assures us of God’s love in Jesus for sinners. But it’s not just for us. Jesus’ death and resurrection paid for the sins of the whole world.

Therefore, everyone needs to hear about Him. It compels us to apply the Sword to the hearts of all around us and to engage others with Jesus.

We might, like some of our superheroes, struggle with learning the bounds of our new powers. Therefore, we should take up our Sword daily through studying God’s Word and learn to wield it with skill. Let Christians and the Church

no longer claim weakness and impotence. Let us be swept along by the world no more. We have the Word! We are empowered by the Spirit! Let us then unsheathe the Sword of the Spirit, take the fight to Satan, and save the day by setting men’s souls free through the Gospel. Let us boldly engage others with Jesus.



Timothy Hartwig is pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in North Mankato, Minnesota.

Our Comfort from Christ's Divine Nature

How do we understand the relationship between the divine and the human natures in Christ? Some of the key Bible verses that deal with this question are the following:

- “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).
- “The angel said to Mary, ‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon you and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you; therefore also that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God’” (Luke 1:35).
- “In Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9).

If we take these words at face value, we accept as truth that the Holy Spirit conceived Jesus in the womb of the virgin Mary. The joining of the two natures in Christ was entirely by God's initiative and plan. Christ's divine nature in its full completeness is joined to the human nature. Mary's nature was human; therefore, this Offspring was human.

While we cannot explain Christ's Person, the church fathers used an apt analogy to help us. The divine nature is in Christ's human flesh as heat is in iron, they said, employing the language of the smithy. The heat penetrates to every atom and molecule of the metal. The fire communicates its own attributes to the iron. In a somewhat similar way, the divine nature of Christ penetrated the human nature, filling it and communicating, sharing, and revealing.

To describe Christ's Person, the church has used the biblical terms “unity” and “union.” For example, faithful teachers have spoken of the union of the two natures into the one Person. In Christ, the divine resides permanently in human flesh.

The Bible teaches that, after His incarnation, our Lord possessed a true human nature and that He rose in the same flesh, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the virgin Mary. He ascended into heaven and will return to give judgment on the Last Day in this body, which was pierced at His suffering for us, and we will see Him then also in His full glory as He is.

What lessons and comfort are to be drawn from these remarkable teachings?

1. The great lesson of the Bible's teaching on the salvation of us sinners begins here, namely, that the divine nature comes to the human, not the other way around. If we understand this, we have the fundamental, most basic thought in place for being able to appreciate God's love.
2. It is the foregoing that provides the way for hope. In God's inventive, loving mind and heart, we find our greatest comfort, namely, a plan revealed through His Word, the Holy Bible, by which divine grace in the Person of Christ gained the upper hand over sin!
3. So far as the joining of the divine and human natures in Christ, the whole point was the salvation of sinners (John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:21). The eternal Christ from His divine power lends eternal value to His blood, shed for us in His suffering, that cancels our sin (1 John 1:7).

James Olsen is an ELS pastor emeritus living in Ontario, Wisconsin.



A Great Gift for Mom:

The ELS World Needs Fund Mother's Day Offering

Mother's Day is almost here—on May 13! There are so many things you can do for Mom. You can send her a nice card to show her your appreciation. There is always the option of taking your mother out for dinner, so she doesn't have to cook. Maybe you are planning to buy your mom some nice jewelry. The choices are seemingly endless!

However, if you have not yet decided what to get mother (or even if you already have), let me offer this suggestion as something you can do for Mother's Day: make a donation in mother's name (or in your own name, or anonymously) to the ELS World Needs Fund with the offering envelope attached to this magazine.

First of all, in doing so, you will be showing your mother that you remember what she taught you about helping others. Whether it's helping tornado victims in Joplin, Missouri, or providing earthquake and tsunami relief halfway around the world in Japan, your donation to the World Needs Fund helps provide relief to people when they are in a time of trouble or tragedy. That is the whole purpose of the fund.

Secondly, your donation to the World Needs Fund is another way for you to engage others, (people whom you may never get to personally meet) with Jesus, showing His love to the world at large. In Japan, Christians are a minority of the population; most Japanese practice Buddhism or Shinto for their religion or are altogether secular. Your donations have helped with ongoing recovery projects carried out by our sister church body in Japan, and they have given Christians there more opportunities to bear witness to

the crucified and risen Lord.

We do not hold any illusions about massive numbers of people being converted to faith in Christ as a result of helping others in their need (though such a blessing would be well-received). The most important thing is that we reflect the love of Christ to the people around us. As our Savior instructs us in His Word, we let the light of faith shine before men, that they may see our good deeds and give praise to our heavenly Father (Matthew 5:16).

Finally, your donation to the World Needs Fund is a good way to thank the Lord for all His blessings. We love because Jesus first loved us. By His wounds we are healed; because He lives, we too will live. The Lord did not spare His own Son and, in addition to Him, has graciously given us all things—even our

mothers, who so lovingly care for us.

This Mother's Day, there is no need to run around at the last second looking for a good present. Show your love for mom and for the God who gave her to you with a gift to the ELS World Needs Fund. You can drop the envelope in the offering plate on Mother's Day or mail it in to the synod office at this address:

ELS World Needs Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Synod
6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

S. Piet Van Kampen is pastor of English Lutheran Church in Cottonwood, Minnesota.



Destruction following tornado in Joplin, Missouri.

Announcing the 95th Annual Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the 56th Annual Meeting of Bethany Lutheran College, Inc.

Convention Theme: **“Created in Christ Jesus for Good Works”**

June 17–21, 2012

Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota

Synod Sunday — June 17

3:00 p.m. — Synod Sunday Service

Speaker: The Rev. Cory Hahnke (Cold Spring, Minnesota)

Liturgist: The Rev. Daniel Faugstad (Belview, Minnesota)

4:30 p.m. — Supper (free will donation)

7:00 p.m. — Seminary Graduation Service

Speaker: The Rev. Gaylin Schmeling (Mankato, Minnesota)

Monday — June 18

9:30 a.m. — Opening Convention Service

Chaplain:

Tuesday — June 19

5:00 p.m. — Anniversary Service

Speaker: The Rev. Steven Petersen (Mankato, Minnesota)

Honorees:

Paul Madson	60 years
Emil C. F. Stubenvoll	60 years
Robert Carter	55 years
Herbert Larson	55 years
Adolph Harstad	40 years
Larry Vinton	40 years
Mark Bartels	25 years
Timothy Buelow	25 years
Robert Harting	25 years
Nathan Krause	25 years
Michael Smith	25 years
Joel Willitz	25 years

Wednesday — June 20

9:00 a.m. — Convention Essay

Essayist: The Rev. Glenn Obenberger (Tacoma, Washington)

5:00 p.m. — Memorial Service

Speaker: The Rev. Craig Ferkenstad (St. Peter, Minnesota)

In memory of:

The Rev. Otto Trebelhorn (1916–2011)
Mrs. Melvina Aaberg (1926–2011)
Mrs. Lavon Buhr (1924–2011)
Pres. Em. Norman Holte (1918–2011)
Mrs. Elizabeth Honsey (1923–2012)
Mrs. Harriet Handberg (1926–2012)

7:30 p.m. — Communion Service

Speaker: The Rev. Timothy Bartels (Gresham, Oregon)

Thursday — June 21

8:45 a.m. — Convention Essay, continued

11:00 a.m. — Unfinished Business

Events concurrent with the convention will include:

ELS Historical Society Annual Meeting: “ELS Involvement in Mission Work in China,” June 16, 1:00 p.m.

Bethany Lutheran College Auxiliary Tea: June 18, 1:30 p.m.

Cross-stitch Presentation: June 18, 7:00 p.m.

Bethany Lutheran College Honor Choir

Rev. Craig A. Ferkenstad, Secretary
Evangelical Lutheran Synod

2012 ELS Convention Preview

Doctrine Committee

The committee report presented a 10-point statement on the term “apologetics” as part of “engaging others with Jesus.” The committee recommends that ELS congregations not use the 2011 NIV Bible translation, but instead use the New King James Version, the English Standard Version, An American Translation, or the New American Standard Bible.

The committee reports that the new health care law contains provisions that “encroach on the religious freedom” of our synod and its members. The committee regards a new ruling of Health and Human Services about health care insurance as a serious moral issue, since abortion is clearly forbidden by Scripture in the Fifth Commandment.

The seventh triennial convention of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) was held June 4–6, 2011, in New Ulm and Mankato, Minnesota. The conference theme, “Unity of Spirit—Bond of Peace,” dealt with the doctrine of the church. The CELC received into membership All Saints Lutheran Church—Nigeria and the Lutheran Confessional Church—Norway, while the East Seoul Canaan Church was given associate membership.

The biennial meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Forum (ELCF) will be held on October 22–23, 2012, in Mankato, Minnesota. Representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod will meet.

Board of Regents: Bethany Lutheran College

The Old Main building is over 100 years old. In August 2011, the original cornerstone was opened and its contents revealed the founders’ views on the importance of Christian education.

The board reports a 2011–2012 enrollment total of 612 full- and part-time students. In December 2011 and May 2012, a total of 99 four-year students received baccalaureate degrees in 18 majors.

Eleven faculty and staff members were recognized for their years at Bethany Lutheran College on January 9, 2012. Mr. Eric Woller was appointed Dean of Academic Affairs.

The board reports that Riverbed Center for Entrepreneurial Facilitation (RCEF), a Mankato-based business development organization, moved to a house on the Beth-

any campus. The board has named places on campus: Sigurd K. Lee Theatre, Ronald Younge Gymnasium, and Milton Tweit Hall (formerly the Communication Center).

Bethany has received grants from the Marvin M. Schwan Foundation, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, and Bethany Lutheran College Women’s Auxiliary. During the year, an estate of \$5,157.20 was received.

Board of Regents: Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary

On February 9, 2012, the seminary observed the tenth anniversary of Michael Smith and the fifteenth anniversary of Gaylin Schmeling as professors at the seminary. Eleven students were enrolled in the 2011–12 academic year: two juniors, three seniors, and six vicars. Various workshops were held for seminary students and their wives.

During the year, the seminary conducted two evangelism classes and a course on Hispanic outreach. A one-day seminar on evangelism and outreach was held by the Board for Evangelism/Home Missions.

On July 25, 2011, a Pastor’s Institute was held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Madison, Wisconsin, taught by Pres. Gaylin Schmeling.

The Reformation Lectures were held on October 27–28, 2011, at Bethany Lutheran College, titled “Lessons from the Laypeople of the Reformation.” The Rev. Jerome Gernander and Dr. David Schroeder delivered the essays.

In May 2012, the seminary will conduct the annual vicar workshop and the call service for six candidates and two vicars. Six candidates will graduate on June 17, 2012.

The seminary received a total of \$134,197.57 in legacies. The Scholarship Endowment Funds and Seminary Endowment Fund continue to be used for students’ needs.

Board for Evangelism/Home Missions

In 2011, the synod combined the Board for Evangelism and the Board for Home Missions to work together in both areas of outreach. The board members worked on creating guidelines for the new board and on strategic planning on evangelism. The evangelism subcommittee is preparing a retreat for fall 2012 and an outreach educational workshop for synod congregations.

During 2011, the board conducted evangelism workshops and produced a DVD titled *In the Dark About...the Bible*.

Concerning home missions, the board called the Rev. Brad Kerkow to conduct mission work in the Cedar Park/Leander, Texas, area. The board oversaw two home missions in Farmington and Rogers, Minnesota, and gave subsidy to three other congregations. The board conducted its biennial home missionary seminar at Faith Lutheran Church in San Antonio, Texas. The board purchased a block of demographic studies for use with existing missions and potential sites.

The board recommended the creation of a full-time Evangelism/Missions Counselor and a 2013 home missionary salary scale. The board thanks Cross-stitch, Thrivent, and the Schwan Foundation for their support of home mission work.

Board for World Outreach

The board reported on the auxiliary organizations that help foreign missions: Helping Hands, Faith Mission Society, Cross-stitch, and Thoughts of Faith. The board also has communicated about missions through the ELS Video Link, Women’s Mission Rallies, and its website <els-worldoutreach.org>.

The board’s report presented information about each of the foreign missions that it supervises in South America, Asia, and Eastern Europe. Mr. Nick Laper reported on the Gift of Life program to Ukraine, which celebrated its 20th anniversary this year.

President’s Report: Committee on Communications

In September 2011, Pres. Moldstad appointed the Rev. Paul Fries as temporary Communications Director. In November 2011, as directed by the 2011 synod convention, Pres. Moldstad appointed a temporary advisory committee of four members: the Rev. Paul Fries, the Rev. James Braun, Mr. David Green, and Mr. Lance Schwartz. Mr. Steven Buelow serves as an advisory member.

The Lutheran Sentinel is being published every other month in a 20-page format with a collection of articles published online in the months the magazine is not printed, called “Lutheran Sentinel Online.” A Facebook page was developed for sharing information about the synod at <<https://www.facebook.com/elslutherans>>.

Lutheran Schools of America

The board hosted a principals’ workshop during the 2011 synod convention led by Mrs. Jennifer O’Brien that focused on

2012 ELS Convention Preview

promoting our Christian Day schools. The board is working with our mission in South Korea to find places for Korean students in ELS schools. The board reports working more closely with Bethany Lutheran College and the education department to promote our schools.

Board for Parish Education and Youth

The 2011 ELS Lutheran Youth Association (LYA) Convention was held on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College, July 28-31, with the theme of "Here I Stand." The total number of youth and chaperones who attended was 205. The 2012 LYA Convention will be held on the campus of Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH, from July 26-29, and go to the Creation Museum.

Several area youth retreats and summer camps were held during the summer. Attendance at all camps was down significantly. The board supports financially the Youth Honor Choir and reports that 90% of those who participate enroll at Bethany Lutheran College.

The board reports that the Hebrews Bible study and the VBS kit "The Armor of God" are available for purchase. The youth magazine "Young Branches" is edited by Rev. Kyle Madson. The board is not officially supporting the Vacation Bible School program in Ukraine.

Board for Christian Service

The board reports that the memorial asking the synod to subsidize health care premiums for congregations under 100 members is not feasible. Donations in 2011 to the Worlds Needs Fund totaled \$23,782.76. As of January 1, 2012, this fund has a balance of \$37,353.42. In 2011, the synod sent \$21,863.66 to various World Needs projects and \$5,000 to individuals dealing with disasters. The synod match for pension funding will be decreased in 2012. The board has helped eight widows in 2011. The board has prepaid Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services for ten counseling sessions to be used by called workers and their families. The board encourages congregations to consider using this agency for Christian counseling of all of its members.

Worship Committee

A specially appointed Committee on ELS Worship (CEW) reported to the Gen-

eral Pastoral Conference (GPC) on October 6, 2011. The committee concluded that worship forms based on the two orders of service in the synod by-laws would be expected to retain the features of Lutheran worship—to set forth the Gospel, to establish a framework of presenting Word and Sacrament, and to instruct God's people to desire Word and Sacraments.

The GPC approved the report and asked that it be sent to the 2012 convention as the answer to a memorial on liturgical worship as it is practiced in the congregations of our Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Equalization Committee

The committee reports income for 2011 at \$26,458.14 and disbursements of \$20,495.28, leaving a balance of \$5,962.86 as of February 29, 2012.

Program and Coordinating Committee

The committee concurs with proposals to call an Evangelism/Home Missions Counselor and to establish a Communications Director, both full-time positions. The committee recommends a 2013 congregational contribution budget of \$750,000.

The committee also recommends that synod convention guidelines be suspended for two years to allow for the development of a shortened convention and writing of new guidelines, with the next convention convening on Monday afternoon, June 17, 2013.

ELS Foundation

Concerning the investments of the synod, the committee reported that investment rate of return for calendar year 2011 was -5.08% and for 2012 the distribution percentage from endowments will be 2%.

Synod Review Committee

The committee recommends guideline changes for the Planning and Coordinating Committee membership, guidelines for a Committee for Communication, a revised Board for Youth, a merged Board for Stewardship and the Office of Giving Counselor, and the merged Boards for Evangelism and Home Missions.

The committee also recommends changes to guidelines for the Lutheran Synod Quarterly, the election procedure, authority to establish subcommittees, and authority for guideline amendments.

Board of Trustees

The board recommends that the Lutheran Synod Book Company be dissolved and its assets be turned over to Bethany Lutheran College.

The Missions Advancement Project (MAP) received a total of \$1,007,000 for seven mission projects for 2012.

The board co-signed a loan with Peace Lutheran Church, Kissimmee, Florida, and made an offer on a building for the mission in Farmington, Minnesota.

Archives: The board agreed to transfer archives items to a separate Bethany Lutheran College archives: the items will remain the property of the synod.

The board reports that the synod received funds from three estates totaling \$12,089.00. A Thrivent Financial for Lutherans block grant of \$50,000 for 2011 will be used for home missions, stewardship, and communications.

The Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation provided a 2011 grant of \$75,000 that was used for missions, communications, and school visitations. The Foundation is providing a grant of \$675,000 for 2012 and the board recommends allocations of 2013 program funds up to \$1,000,000.

Ad hoc Centennial Committee

This committee was organized in 2009 to plan for the observance of the 100th anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The committee is working under the theme "Proclaim the Wonders God Has Done: The Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Our Heritage of Grace," which theme reflects the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the 100th anniversary of the synod."





On the Synodical Scene...

Mission Rally

The Women's Mission Society of Florida held their fall rally at Christ Lutheran Church, Port St. Lucie, Florida, on November 12, 2011. Over sixty people were in attendance. The Rev. Steven Petersen showed a very informative presentation about God's blessings to our world mission work in South Korea, India, Europe, and South America.

The Rev. David Lillegard then spoke about the beginnings of our mission work in Peru over 40 years ago. Through the talents God gave to the missionaries in Peru, He increased the numbers of Peruvians that hear the Gospel.



During the business meeting, Grace Berg was re-elected as vice president and Sherry Duin was elected as the new treasurer. They also resolved to send a mission offering of \$2,600 to Cross-stitch national, to be used where the money is most needed. It was announced that the spring rally would be hosted by Peace Lutheran Church in Kissimmee, Florida.

Reported by Mrs. Ione Lillegard

Our Saviour's Celebrates 125th

On Sunday, March 11, 2012, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Madison, Wisconsin, celebrated its 125th anniversary. The morning service was conducted by the current pastor, the Rev. Bradley Homan; Pres. John Moldstad preached the sermon, based on Psalm 19:14, with the theme, "Praise Be to Our Rock and Our Redeemer!" A luncheon was served after the service.

This congregation was organized in the 1880s at the time of the Election Controversy. Over one-third of the congregations left the old Norwegian Synod because it taught that God elected people "in view of their faith." The members who formed Our Saviour's held on to the biblical teaching that God elected people to salvation only by His grace for the sake of Christ's death without any merit in man. The members erected a church building in downtown Madison in 1897. In 1974, the congregation relocated to its present site.

Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

Mr. Roger Boeker, Madison, Wisconsin, VFW 1318 Youth Chairman, awarded Holy Cross Lutheran School's top three contestants with plaques and a check for \$50.00 each. Congratulations to Arabelle Orvick (8th), Bethany Mahnke (7th), and Brittni Jegerlehner (8th). These three students were all in the top 15 out of 807 Madison, Wisconsin, area students who participated.

The Patriot's Pen program is open to students in grades 6-8. The 2011-2012 theme was, "Are You Proud of Your Country?" Students were judged based on three main criteria: knowledge of the theme, theme development, and clarity of ideas for the 300-400 word essay. We praise our Lord and Savior for their writing talents and abilities.



(L to R) Bethany Mahnke, Arabelle Orvick, Brittni Jegerlehner, and Mr. Roger Boeker

2012 LYA Convention

The 2012 LYA Convention will be held July 26-29 at Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio. This year's convention theme is "From Beginning to End, You Are Mine," which fits in with the convention highlight of visiting the Creation Museum in northern Kentucky.

Registration is now open until June 10, 2012. Registration forms are available through the synod website: <http://www.evangelicalluthेरansynod.org/our-work/youth/lya-registration/registration>

Please contact the Rev. Bernt Tweit (608-249-3101) for travel subsidy information. Remember that the deadline for convention registration is June 10, but deadlines for travel arrangements may be earlier. Non-travel subsidy related questions may be directed to the Rev. Matt Brooks (507-345-4966).

Media Outreach in World Missions Conference

By Dr. Tom Kuster

Director of the Christ in Media Institute at Bethany Lutheran College

The Christ in Media Institute at Bethany Lutheran College is hosting the *Media Outreach in World Missions Conference* October 12-14, 2012 in Mankato, Minnesota.

The Christ in Media Institute, empowered by the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, promotes research and education focused on employing God's gift of mass media to bring the pure Gospel message to vast audiences both in the United States and abroad. It does not engage in media production, but rather aims to develop and gather the expertise required for the effective production and distribution of Christian media in a variety of cultures.

The project embraces the theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and is supported by a grant from the Antioch Foundation.

The Conference aims to advance the effective use of technology for Gospel outreach in world missions. It will bring together individuals with a variety of experience and expertise in a dynamic atmosphere of creative problem solving and innovation, in the expectation that current efforts will be encouraged and extended, and new directions planned.

Expected attendees include:

- **World missionaries** of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), representing a variety of cultural, social, and technological conditions on various continents around the world
- Leaders and members of the **mission boards** of the ELS and the WELS
- Leaders and members of **mission societies** that function within our fellowship
- **Media professionals** of our fellowship, who have experience in production and distribution via a variety of media
- **Students and faculty** from seminaries, colleges, and high schools of our fellowship; many students will present research projects applying their disciplines to mission work
- Interested congregation **members, pastors,** and the **general public**

Issues and challenges to be explored:

A conference session will be devoted to exploring each of these seven challenges. Discussion will be prompted by brief observations, written by Conference leaders and available for reading online in advance of the Conference.



THE CHRIST IN MEDIA INSTITUTE

- **Cultural:** While the Gospel message is universal, its presentation might be tailored to peculiar features of the culture in which it is preached. What kinds of cultural elements should be taken into account, and how can this be done without distorting or weakening the Scriptural message?
- **Technological:** What media are (or will be) available in various mission situations that can be used to reach large audiences with the Gospel message? What means of message distribution are available?
- **Creative:** How can messages be crafted that will deliver the Gospel via technology to large audiences in a way that will draw attention, and will be of the high quality worthy of the task? What form can media messages take, and who will create them?
- **Legal / Political:** What legal and political barriers must be addressed in each nation in order to deliver Gospel messages to large audiences via media? How should risks to life and livelihood be addressed?
- **Teaching:** Since ideally the media messages for a particular culture should be produced by people within that culture, how can local expertise be developed, supported, and encouraged? What partnerships can support these efforts?
- **Stewardship:** management and funding: Since media production and distribution are expensive, how can financial support be obtained, and how can production and distribution be managed in an efficient and business-like manner?

A final conference session will consider "action items," recommendations to appropriate agencies for carrying out proposals that emerge from the discussions.

The Conference will close Sunday morning with an international worship service in Bethany's Trinity Chapel.

Additional information and registration forms can be found on the Christ in Media Institute website at www.christinmedia.org.

2012 ELS Summer Youth Camps

Michigan

Camp Lor-Ray is at Muskegon, Michigan. Please contact Mr. Kenneth Nolte at (269) 429-4941 or gracechurch@qtm.net. For those in grades 9 through 12, the camp dates are **July 6–9**. Camp dates for Kindergarteners through 3rd grade are **July 11–13** with a cost of \$100. For 6th graders, the camp dates are July 15–20 with a cost of \$200. For 9th grade, the camp dates are **July 22–29** with a cost of \$200.

Minnesota

Camp Indianhead—Minnesota will meet at the Lutheran Island Camp in Henning, Minnesota. For information, contact the Rev. David Thompson at (218) 439-6259 or immanuelels@arvig.net. The dates for the camp are **July 15 through July 20**. Camp is for ages 11–16 and the cost is \$240 for the week.



Wisconsin

Camp Indianhead—Wisconsin will be at Pine Lake, Waupaca, Wisconsin. For information, contact the Rev. Bernt Tweit at (608) 249-3101 or btweit@yahoo.com. Camp dates are **July 15–22** for ages 10 (those who have completed 4th grade) through 16. The cost is \$240.

Washington

Camp Lutherhaven meets at Wildcat Lake in Seabeck, Washington. For information, contact the Rev. Tony Pittenger at (360) 876-1300 or tonypittenger@mac.com. The camp meets from **July 14–July 19** for youth ages 9–13. Cost for the camp is \$85 for the first child and \$75 for each additional child.



Camp 4 Star meets near Olympia, Washington. For information, contact Mrs. Nancy Anderson, who can be reached at (360) 458-3136 or amyjodi@fairpoint.net. Camp dates are July 8–14 for ages 10–15. Cost for the camp is \$185 for the first child, \$155 for two children from the same family, and \$130 for children of staff.

Bernt Tweit is co-pastor at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Madison, Wisconsin.



Report on 2011 Camp Indianhead—Minnesota and Iowa

With the summer approaching fast, many youth, ages 11–16, are making plans to attend Camp Indianhead near Alexandria, Minnesota. Last year was my first time attending this camp. I was impressed with the quality of the program and really enjoyed the week spent there. I appreciated this youth camp because it had great fellowship and solid biblical teaching and worship.

Our congregation sent four campers and one Bethany



Lutheran College student, who served as a counselor. Once we set foot in camp, it was non-stop action until we loaded up the van on Friday afternoon to head home. Each of our campers enjoyed the friends, counselors, and

pastors; they all plan to return next year.

Camp Indianhead included a daily Bible study on a section of Luther's *Small Catechism*. In July 2011, we focused on the Ten Commandments; this year we will study Holy Baptism. Morning chapel is led by one of the pastors who attend. Daily activities included swimming, all kinds of field games, crafts, horseback riding, and canoeing. The day ended around a campfire with songs, hymns, and prayers.

If you are a young person, please consider attending Camp Indianhead—Minnesota.

Robert Harting is pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Indianola, Iowa.



Pastor, I Have a Question...

Are Horoscopes Harmless?

Question: *So many of my Christian friends subscribe to a daily horoscope on Facebook, which shows up on the “walls” of all their friends. It is so heartbreaking to see them think that this is an innocent, harmless pastime to help them with their troubles or their future.*

Answer:

Christians will be more than cautious about horoscopes and astrology. In *An Explanation of Luther’s Small Catechism*, published by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Second Commandment is presented: “You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain. What does this mean? We should fear and love God, so that we do not curse, swear, practice witchcraft, lie or deceive by His name, but call upon Him in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks. Question 32, What is practicing witchcraft by God’s name? To practice witchcraft means to try, by the use of God’s name, to do supernatural things such as consulting witches and psychics, speaking to the dead, practicing astrology [emphasis added], and other satanic works.” See Deuteronomy 18:9–14.

Ancient people worshiped gods in nature. They believed in the power of nature. God revealed Himself to His people as the God who created the things that others worshiped. Through Moses, God reported: God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:14–18).

Christians will use creation as God intended. The stars and the planets give us light. They help us keep track of time. While the stars might help us find our directions, they do not control our lives. Those who sincerely practice astrology sin against the First and Second Commandments. We give thanks to God for a day when the sun turned black. It was the time when darkness ruled (Luke 22:53). God put His Son on a cross. God imputed to Jesus the sins of all

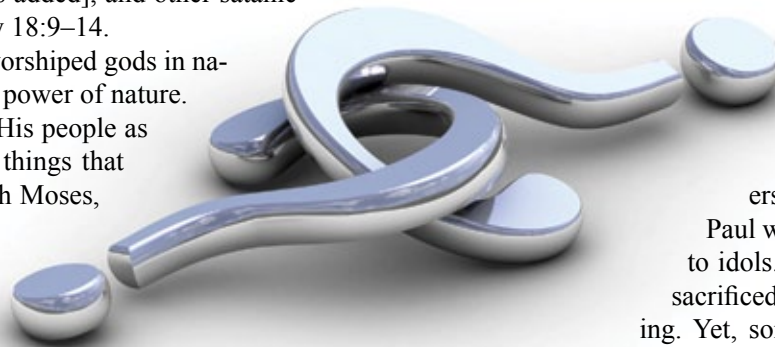
people of all time. The Creator of heaven and earth died in payment of all sin. God, thereby, declared us to be forgiven, justified in His sight. By faith in Jesus, we are eternal. We know and believe that He guides our way. God directs our future (read Psalm 31:15 and Ecclesiastes 7:14). Jesus’ gracious sacrifice extends also to those who believe in and practice astrology, as long as they repent.

Christians who believe that these matters are harmless should remember the power of Satan. A Christian might occasionally read the horoscope for its humor value. What one does in the privacy of one’s home might be harmless. And yet, Satan’s schemes are never harmless.

Christians who subscribe to a daily horoscope online for all to see should remember the effect that even a seemingly innocent activity might have on others. In 1 Corinthians 10:14–33, St.

Paul wrote about eating meat sacrificed to idols. Meat sacrificed to idols is meat sacrificed to nothing since idols are nothing. Yet, some folks took issue with eating such meat. “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved” (1 Corinthians 10:31–33).

God will take care of us. Instead of posting on Facebook a daily horoscope, post the promises God makes to take care of us until Jesus returns.

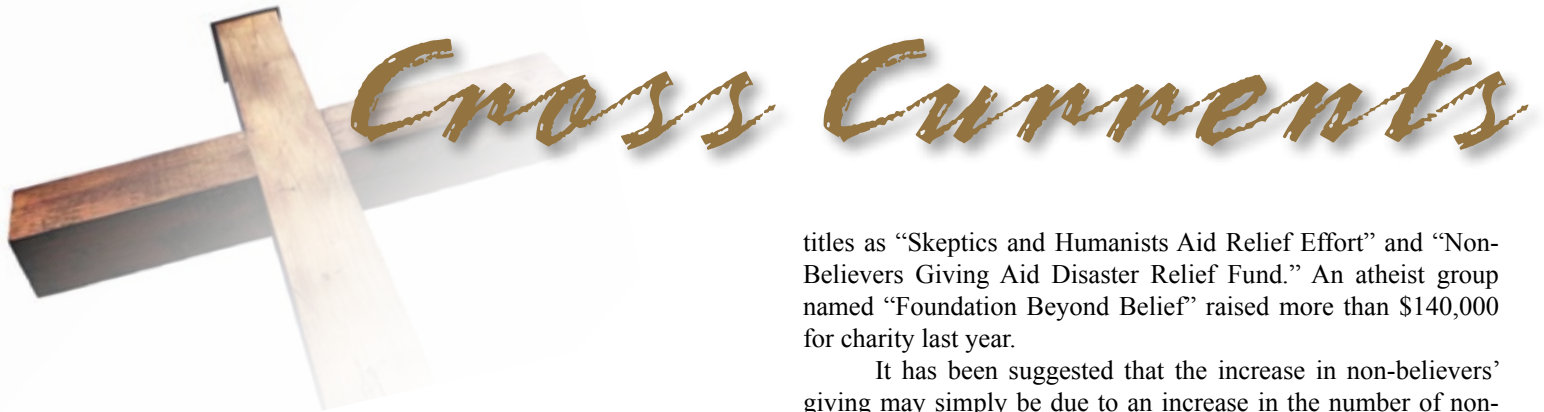


Send your questions to:

Pastor Charles Keeler
117 Ruby Lake Dr.,
Winter Haven, FL 33884



Charles Keeler is pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church in Winter Haven, Florida.



Cross Currents

New Wineskins

Controversy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PCUSA) is not something new. For many conservative Presbyterians the question for the past few years has been whether or not they would leave this denomination of nearly two million members. The somewhat fractured church body had already lost a half-million members in a ten year period leading up to 2009. Similar to the liberal trend faced in other church bodies, such as the ELCA, the Presbyterian Church has become more and more open to ordaining gay clergy. And, as was the case in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), this seems to have been the straw that broke the camel's back for many Presbyterians.

So what have they done about their dissatisfaction with their church's departure from Scripture? That is where the "wineskins" come in. In reference to the passage in Scripture where Jesus says that "new wine must be poured into new wineskins" (Luke 5:38), a new network of Presbyterian churches who are discontented with the PCUSA has formed an organization called the "New Wineskins Association of Churches." The network claims to have about 200 churches with about 100,000 members. Of this network, only 40 churches have voted to actually leave the parent body. Others have decided to remain in the PCUSA "while committing to reform the denomination" from within. Where have we heard this reasoning before?

A spokesman for the "New Wineskins" expressed some dismay that not everybody saw the necessity for taking a stand against the denomination's liberal trend: "Doesn't everybody see the necessity for this? Don't all members find ministry frustrated by their ties to PCUSA?" Sad to say, apparently not everybody does see the need to make a complete break with their erring church body. Meanwhile, there is an ever increasing need for more churchmen shaped in the mold of "new wineskins."

"God-less" Giving

Atheists have not always been known for their generosity. In a related statistic, sociologists have found that there is a six-in-ten chance that a person who never attends church will give money to a secular charity, while the percentage of religious people who do this is eight in ten. It is a generally known fact that in the past 200 years, most of the philanthropic and benevolent giving has been done by religious people.

Facing the public with a rather negative image related to charitable work, atheists are trying to present a better face. They would like to show that they "can be charitable without God." So you will now find charitable groups among them with such

titles as "Skeptics and Humanists Aid Relief Effort" and "Non-Believers Giving Aid Disaster Relief Fund." An atheist group named "Foundation Beyond Belief" raised more than \$140,000 for charity last year.

It has been suggested that the increase in non-believers' giving may simply be due to an increase in the number of non-religious people, or perhaps because of global internet access to information. Whatever the reason, there is an increase. However, it must be noted that atheist giving is not necessarily benevolent giving. Much of their giving is for activist causes, such as funding for an anti-Christmas billboard, etc. That is not exactly what one would call "benevolent." And even in charitable giving, the atheist does not have the motivation that the Christian has. One aspect of the difference is seen by Dr. Alex McFarland, an expert on religion and culture: "The basic premise is that since people are made in God's image, all humans have inherent worth, value, and dignity. When you see humans as a mere product of evolution, there is less incentive to invest in benevolent causes because human life is cheapened." Suffice it to say, that in view of the atheists' support for charitable causes, there is such a thing as "God-less" giving.


"Stories" or History?

The Bible will ever be under attack from those who would seek to discredit it. These attacks are ever increasing, as seen by Christian apologist Ken Ham, particularly against the account of Genesis. He maintains that it is not just the usual battle between creationists and evolutionists anymore, but that "now it has gone into battle over a literal Adam and Eve, their literal fall." He sees the opponents getting more intense in their challenges to the teachings of Genesis, for instance, rejecting the teaching that Adam and Eve were real people. If there are no literal Adam and Eve, Ham asks, then what happens to the teaching of sin and why did Jesus die? He correctly concludes, "Once we reject Adam and Eve, the rest of the scriptures fall like dominoes."

It is Dr. Ham's opinion that speaking of accounts in the Bible as "stories" is not helpful. Our churches do use that terminology, of course, and perhaps we could be more careful to explain that the Bible "stories" are not to be understood as just fables. It should be made plain that it is the "real stuff." Dr. Ham would like to see that the Bible is taught as history: "This is history, it's not just stories." Point well taken. When teaching the truths of the Bible, one can never be too clear or precise.



Paul Madson is a retired pastor living in North Mankato, Minnesota.



Youth Notes

Building a Life Worth Living **Building Trust**



Trust is a critical ingredient in your relationships with other people. It comes hard and it can be lost quickly. Trust me (no pun intended), I speak from experience!

If I were asked to teach a five-minute lesson on how to build trust, I would highlight the following three points:

- 1. Do what you say you're going to do.** Even with small things. Every time you say you're going to do something and you don't do it, trust is eroded or cancelled.
- 2. Tell the truth.** When you tell lies, even small lies, you put doubt into other people's minds as to whether or not you can be trusted.
- 3. Keep secrets.** If somebody tells you something in confidence, don't betray that confidence by sharing private information with others.

Even Jesus' disciples had to learn to trust their Master. I know there were times they doubted what Jesus said, but their trust was bolstered every time He came through in the clutch. This relationship of trust climaxed when Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to them in Jerusalem, just as He said He would!

To see if Jesus deserves your trust, apply the points above to your personal relationship with Him.

Does Jesus do what He said He'd do?

Has He loved you? Has He provided for you a family, friends, food, clothes, and shelter? Has He been present in your life on a daily basis? Has He forgiven your sins?

Does Jesus tell the truth? He has given you His own words in the Holy Bible. As Lutheran Christians, you know by faith that the words of Scripture were inspired by God Himself and written down by handpicked prophets and apostles. Everything you need to know to be saved and to live a Christian life can be found within the pages of the Bible.

Does Jesus keep secrets? When you confess your sins to Jesus, He keeps those sins private and issues forgiveness for all of them. How can He do that? Well, He paid for them already by dying on the cross. Now He grants you an unlimited supply of forgiveness for the simple reason that He loves you.

Your trust in Jesus will be validated once and for all when you get to heaven. It's going to be an indescribable reunion with all Christians who trusted in Jesus and died in faith. Until then, be trusting *and* trustworthy!

Daniel Madson is a former school teacher and a member of Abiding Lutheran Church in Cottage Grove, Wisconsin.





Treasurer's Report

Summary of Income from Congregations

Budget	Actual	Balance
\$725,000	\$164,960	\$560,040

Contributions for March 2012:

Congregations - Budget \$80,110

Designated Contributions

Synod Fund	\$1,058
Home Missions	\$1,438
India	\$1,460
Peru	\$30
Korea	\$1,000
Lutheran Schools of America	\$350
Cross-stitch	\$3,527
Lutheran Schools of America	\$350
Thoughts of Faith	\$15,088

Other

Registrations	\$2,165
Publications	\$36
Salary Reimbursement	\$10,603

Total \$116,863

Keith Wiederhoeft, Business Adm./Treasurer
6 Browns Court Mankato, MN 56001

Memorials for March 2012

Gifts Received for the Synod in Memory of Memorial by

Laurine Anderson

Louise Rieger - Mankato, MN
LuAnn Sting - North Mankato, MN
Silas & Mary Born - Mankato, MN

Norma Tostenson

Sigurd Lee - Mankato, MN

Mert Schuhmacher

Our Savor's Ladies Aid - Albert Lea, MN

Lucille Swing

Silas & Mary Born - Mankato, MN

Michael Smith

John E Smith - Shawano, WI

Cel Peterson

Steve & Kathy Petersen - North Mankato, MN

Gifts Received for the Seminary in Memory of Memorial by

Laurine Anderson

Arthur and Elizabeth Silverstein - San Diego, CA
Paul and Gretchen Swenumson - New Hampton, IA

Cleopatra Galakatos

Ronald and Gay Rose - Salinas, CA

Michael Smith

John and Sandra Smith - Shawano, WI

Esther Stege

Aurora Christian School - Aurora, IL

Gifts Received for the Seminary in Honor of Given by

Fred and Sylvia Bull's 50th Wedding Anniversary

Kenneth and Jocyie Welkener - San Antonio, TX

ELS Historical Society — Sixteenth Annual Meeting:

Saturday, June 16, 2012

ELS Involvement in Mission Work in China: Featuring the Career of the Rev. George O. Lillegard and His Wife Bernice
1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. (new time)

Bethany Lutheran College in Honsey Hall, Mankato, Minnesota

- 1:00 – 1:39 p.m.** — Registration and Social Time
1:30 – 1:45 p.m. — Opening Devotion by the Rev. David Lillegard
1:45 – 3:00 p.m. — Presentation Part I: David Lillegard and Deborah Blumer
3:00 – 3:30 p.m. — Mid-afternoon break
3:30 – 4:45 p.m. — Presentation Part II: David Lillegard and Deborah Blumer
4:45 – 5:00 p.m. — ELS Historical Society Business Meeting
5:15 p.m. — Banquet

Scheduled Speakers:

The Rev. David Theodore Lillegard, ELS pastor and foreign missionary emeritus, son of George and Bernice Lillegard
Deborah Lynn (Lillegard) Blumer, daughter of David Lillegard, publisher of *Called According to His Purpose: Missionary Letters from China* (a collection of letters, documents, and pictures)

REGISTRATION WITH THE MEAL (\$20) MUST BE PREPAID by June 1, 2012. Registration with no meal is \$10. Checks are payable to: ELS Historical Society. Send to: Ottesen Museum - 6 Browns Court - Mankato, MN 56001. Because of our obligations with Pioneer Food Service we will NOT be able to accommodate meals for those who do not pre-register and prepay. For further information, contact **Mark Harstad** or **Becky DeGarmeaux** (507-344-7421).

FROM THE EDITOR...

God Works the Details

Paying attention to little details plays an important part of most endeavors. For example, a programmer failed to convert metric units into English and caused a multi-million dollar satellite to crash into Mars. People often judge from the details whether or not a product, music or art is well or poorly done.

Almost any profession, vocation, or worthwhile endeavor requires experience through practice, education, and training in order to notice the important details that make the work easier and better. Painters of art need experience mixing colors and learning brush strokes. Players of musical instruments need years of practice to perfect musical techniques and interpretation. A physical scientist must take very exacting measurements and account for many variables.

Church work also goes well when details are not ignored. The organist must not only practice but also understand the theme of each Sunday. The Sunday School teacher needs to study the Bible lesson and know how it relates to Jesus. The altar guild members should understand the detailed liturgical practice of the Church. The pastor needs to be aware of the details in Scripture—Law and Gospel and its original languages—in order to faithfully present God’s message of salvation. Paying attention to the details of the church year and the liturgy is important to help people in their worship.

The point of this comparison is that we do not always see what the artist, musician, scientist, teacher or pastor does to accomplish his or her task. In a similar way, we do not see what things God does to help us in our lives, to provide for our needs, to keep us on the path of eternal life. Yet God is able to influence the events of history so that “all things work together for good to those who love God” (Romans 8:28).

When God sent His Son into the world as its Redeemer, Jesus had to carry out the exacting work of our redemption. When Jesus was born under the Law, one tiny mistake or one evil thought would have ended

His ability to save the world. God’s justice required a most exacting payment for sins. Jesus carefully fulfilled every detail of God’s prophecies in order to fulfill all righteousness and complete the salvation of the entire world of sinners. The Holy Spirit carefully inspired the words of Scripture so that Jesus and His work of salvation are revealed absolute truth.

Concerning our salvation, God took care of every detail so that no human effort is needed. For St. Paul says that those whom God predestined, “These He also called, whom He called, these He also justified, and whom He justified, these He also glorified” (Romans 8:30). With regard to our conversion, the Holy Spirit works through His Means of Grace—Word, Baptism, Absolution, Lord’s Supper—to call, gather, enlighten, sanctify, and keep the whole Christian Church in the one true faith.

God has dealt with every detail of our salvation. Nothing depends on our actions or deeds and nothing was left undone. God’s attention to detail is very comforting because we can be assured that if God has worked our salvation, it is complete and sufficient.

Appreciate the attention to detail that God continually shows—in preserving our life, in giving us the Means of Grace to sustain our faith, and in leading us through the pitfalls of life to the home Jesus is preparing for us.

**GOD HAS DEALT
WITH EVERY
DETAIL OF OUR
SALVATION.
NOTHING
DEPENDS ON
OUR ACTIONS
OR DEEDS AND
NOTHING WAS
LEFT UNDONE.**

Theodore Gullixson is pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Madison, Wisconsin.



Grace Bartel Receives “Care of the Soul Leadership Award”

The Lutheran Home Association (TLHA) in Belle Plaine, Minnesota, handed out “Care of the Soul Leadership Awards” to three retired teachers: Grace Bartel of Madison, Wisconsin, Emily Armstrong of Belle Plaine, Minnesota, and Kathy Augustine of Goodhue, Minnesota. These awards recognize those who provide leadership in the area of special ministries.

Grace leads a Jesus Cares Ministries (JCM) program at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Madison, Wisconsin, that reaches out into the community. After each JCM class, the volunteers leave saying, “What a great day!” These “great days” began in 2004, when Grace “almost single-handedly motivated and organized Holy Cross to be involved in JCM. She has faithfully led this effort ever since,” according to the person who nominated her.



Grace Bartel

Grace’s work includes recruiting, training, and communicating with the volunteers. She also oversees the planning. She and her husband, Fred, arrive early on the days there is a JCM class and make sure the facilities are open, ready, and set up.

They find or provide rides for any students who need them and have befriended the students.

Grace also does a fantastic job as a teacher. She has gotten the students involved in playing simple musical instruments, which they love to do.

Grace also recruits students for the class. One time Grace was at a concert at a nearby mall and was holding a JCM brochure with a picture of Jesus on it. She reports, “A woman noticed the picture I was holding, her eyes lit up. She has been a faithful member of our JCM class ever since.”

Grace’s mother was first involved with classes for people with developmental disabilities in the 1960s and later with a JCM program in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Grace’s parents nurtured her interests of sharing God’s Word and music. She and her six sisters all played string instruments and were encouraged to “use the music for God’s glory.” Grace has also taught string instruments for many years and plays them at her church.

Over the years, Grace has also worked with hearing impaired students, she has written articles for *The Junior Northwestern* and the *Lutheran Educator*, written a music course for multi-grade classrooms and written plays, such as “Martin Luther” and “J.S. Bach.” She continues to write plays for her church’s JCM classes.

Grace enjoys her JCM work immensely. She said, “I love it, and I know the students are learning to grow in their faith through our classes. There are so many of Jesus’ lambs who need to know more about their dear Savior. What a privilege and joy to do something for Jesus! And besides, it’s fun.”



(L-R) Michael Klatt, Arvid Schwartz, Emily Armstrong, Kathy Augustine

PERIODICAL

Postmaster return to:
Lutheran Sentinel
P.O. Box 185
Albert Lea, MN 56007