

## PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

October 7, 2003

Dear Fellow Workers:

Have you seen the movie "Luther?" While not every aspect of Reformation history or of Luther's life is portrayed as accurately as we might wish (e.g., Luther and the suicide burial), we can safely recommend that people see the film. Probably the most memorable scene is where Martin Luther appears before the Diet at Worms and is asked to recant his writings. One of the writings named is "The Freedom of a Christian" (1520), which Luther wrote to demonstrate that 1) a Christian is—by faith in the Savior—a perfectly free "lord" of all, subject to none, but also 2) a Christian is—because of love for the Savior—a dutiful servant of all, subject to all.

In this early writing of the Reformer, there is an important comment that I wish to share with our October readers. Luther states: "Although I am an unworthy and condemned man, my God has given me in Christ all the riches of righteousness and salvation without any merit on my part, out of pure, free mercy, so that from now on I need nothing except faith which believes that this is true. Why should I not therefore freely, joyfully, with all my heart, and with an eager will do all things which I know are pleasing and acceptable to such a Father who has overwhelmed me with his inestimable riches? I will therefore give myself as a Christ to my neighbor, just as Christ offered himself to me; I will do nothing in this life except what I see is necessary, profitable, and salutary to my neighbor, since through faith I have an abundance of all good things in Christ."

Isn't this the attitude we wish to convey throughout the entire membership of our synod? Since we sinners are saved freely by God's grace through faith in Christ, let us freely serve one another in love and thankfulness. Imagine how many other souls may be led to see Christ!

### **CALLS**

Rev. Kent Dethlefsen to Ulen/Hawley, MN, parish (returned)

Candidate of Theology Christopher Dale has been assigned the call to Our Savior's Lutheran, Hawley and Calvary Lutheran, Ulen, MN, following successful completion of his vicarage.

### **INSTALLATIONS**

- Mr. Joshua Gregovich was installed as teacher of grade four at King of Grace Lutheran Church, Golden Valley, MN, on August 3, 2003.
- The Rev. Thomas Westendorf was installed as pastor of Saved By Grace Lutheran Church, Medford, OR, on September 28, 2003.

### **VACANCIES**

Our Savior Lutheran, Bishop, CA

First Evanger Lutheran, Fertile and Grace Lutheran, Crookston, MN

Bethany Lutheran Church, Port Orchard, WA (associate pastor)

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

- Redeemer Lutheran Church and School, Yelm, WA, celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of becoming an independent congregation on August 10, 2003.
- The North Iowa Bethany Auxiliary celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on September 9, 2003, at Scarville Synod Lutheran Church, Scarville, Iowa. Representative from the college who attended the meeting were Director of Development Art Westphal and Professors

- Janet Moldstad and Paulette Booker who presented information about the college.
- Norseland Bethany Auxiliary, St. Peter, MN, has also observed its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Both auxiliaries were presented plaques from Bethany College in recognition of their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries.
- Bethany Lutheran Church, Princeton, MN, will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on October 26, 2003.
- Parkland Lutheran Church, Tacoma, WA, will celebrate its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary and dedicate its new narthex on October 12<sup>th</sup>. President Moldstad will preach for the occasion.

### **APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS**

Mr. Joel Petersen was appointed as a temporary advisory member to the Board for Christian Service.

Prof. Michael Smith resigned from the Board for Evangelism.

Rev. Cory Hahnke was appointed to the Board for Evangelism.

Mrs. Kathy Sutton resigned as principal and upper grade teacher at Princeton Ev. Lutheran School, Princeton, MN, in September 2003.

### **CONGRATULATIONS**

- Congratulations to Rev. and Mrs. Matthew Crick on the birth of their daughter, Jenna Rose, on August 23, 2003.
- Congratulations to Rev. and Mrs. Glenn Smith on the birth of their son, Philip James, on September 14, 2003.
- Congratulations to Rev. and Mrs. Joseph Abrahamson on the birth of their son John Alfred Christian on September 26, 2003.

### **MISSIONS**

We were interested to see that Missionary Terry Schultz was highlighted in the September issue of WELS Multi-Language Publications Newsletter, *Bringing the Written Word to the World*. WELS is assisting our ELS Board for Foreign Missions in making a doctrinal booklet called "*La Promesa*" available in the appropriate dialect for tribes living along the Amazon River.

### **OTHER NEWS**

**Rev. Martin Doepel** has joined the ranks of the pastors *emeriti* as of the September Circuit Visitors' Conference.

**Rev. Paul Lehenbauer** fainted while he was conducting the liturgy at Grace Lutheran Church in Weston, OH. Vicar John Merseth reports that he is to have surgery on October 6<sup>th</sup> in an effort to correct the medical problems he has been experiencing.

**Rev. Herb Larson** sends this update: "I am a lot stronger now than when I first wrote you; I've pretty much recuperated from the surgery. My oncologist yesterday outlined his proposed plan for chemo treatments spread out over the next six months. There can be no absolute guarantees - "I'm not God," he said - but such treatments would at least reduce the chances of the cancer starting up in vital organs. Thank you and all the brethren everywhere, brothers and sisters in Christ, for the prayers, the greetings, the phone calls!"

### **DEATHS**

We extend our deepest sympathy to Pastor Joseph Abrahamson and his family. Joe's brother was accidentally killed while he was repairing his car over the weekend of September 27<sup>th</sup>. Our sympathy also goes with Pastor Jesse Jacobsen who recently experienced the death of a grandfather.

**NEW ADDRESS** David Meyer, 20 Golden Avenue, Kallangur QLD 4503 Australia

### **COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLION**

Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup> marked the 150th anniversary of our synod when 6 pastors and delegates from 17 congregations met at Luther Valley, Wisconsin, and ratified the constitution of the Norwegian Synod. In remembrance of this event, the ELS Historical Society has produced a commemorative medallion depicting the Communion Service conducted by the Rev. J.W.C. Dietrichson in 1844. Please remind your members of this medallion. They can be ordered from the Bethany College Bookstore at a cost of \$11.95 plus shipping.



Pastor Aaron Hamilton and son at Hope Lutheran, Church, West Jordan, Utah. Aaron reports that he currently has ten people enrolled in an adult information course.

### **TWO ELS CONGREGATIONS REQUEST TO JOIN WELS**

Emmaus Lutheran and St. Mark's Lutheran, both of Chicago, IL, have decided to transfer from the ELS to the WELS. While they cherish their long association with the ELS, they believe WELS may be better positioned to provide a pastor to serve their needs in the inner city.

### **PRESIDENT'S UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

- Oct. 12 — Preach at dedication of new narthex of Parkland Lutheran Church, Tacoma, WA.
- Oct. 16 — WELS/ELS Teachers' Conference, Bethany College.
- Oct. 19 — Preach at dedication of Our Savior's new fellowship hall, Princeton, MN.
- Oct. 25 — ELS Women's Mission Rally at Cottonwood, MN.
- Oct. 26 — Trustees/Home Missions Ad Hoc Committee meeting on debt capacity.
- Oct. 28 — Synod Review Committee, ELS boardroom.
- Oct. 30-31 — Reformation Lectures, Bethany College.

## **REFORMATION LECTURES**

The annual Reformation Lectures will be held in the S. C. Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center at Bethany College on October 30-31, 2003. The theme of the Lectures is *The Legacy of the Norwegian Synod* (on its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary). Lecturers this year are the Rev. Rolf Preus; Pres. Emeritus George Orvick; and Prof. Erling Teigen. Pre-Lectures Event on Wednesday, 7 p.m: Organ Recital/Lecture on the music of Johann Pachelbel by Dr. Wendy Markosky



ELS Circuit Visitors' Conference – Burnsville, MN, September 2003

## **HEALTH INSURANCE**

A subcommittee of the Board for Christian Service has been assigned the task of serving as a clearinghouse for our synod's congregations and boards concerning health insurance for called workers. The committee consists of: Mr. Herb Berg ([hberg@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:hberg@tampabay.rr.com)), chrm.; Mr. Stan Reinholtz; Rev. Richard Fyffe; and Mr. Joel Petersen (advisory). Any ideas for the committee should be forwarded to the email address listed above.

## **INDIA**

Our ELS Board for Foreign Missions is looking into the possibility of sponsoring part of a former WELS mission in India. The group is known as LMSI (Lutheran Mission for Salvation in India). Pastor Solomon, one of the leading pastors in the LMSI, visited our convention this past June. If our synod were to become involved in sponsoring the work in the LMSI, one of the options for the supervision of the work could involve the creation of a new church-related organization. An outside funding source would also need to be secured. The Schwan Foundation has expressed interest in supporting this endeavor. Please pray for the board as it decides what to recommend concerning India to our 2004 convention.

## **SYNOD CONVENTION 2004**

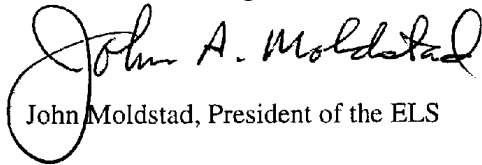
Tentatively the subject for next year's convention will deal with the Christian and government: "Seek the Peace of the Land," Jeremiah 29:7. Our essayist will be the Rev. David Thompson.

## **UPDATE ON SYNOD FINANCES**

Through the month of August \$408,569 has been received from congregational contributions. At this point in the year we are \$101,420 short of our budgetary needs; \$6,088 behind last year's contribution schedule (as of August 31). This year's revenue budget from our congregations is \$765,000; next year's is \$832,000. We ask all of our pastors and members to keep the needs of our synod in your daily prayers.

May the Gospel of Christ, the cause in which Dr. Luther was privileged to serve, motivate us in all that we say, think and do.

In the Savior's loving care,



John A. Moldstad

John Moldstad, President of the ELS

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