

PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

January 8, 2004

Dear Fellow Workers:

A blessed Epiphany to all of you! This season of the church year puts the focus on the divinity of the holy Christ-child and how this God-Man Savior is for the entire world. It is a time for special reflection on the two natures of Christ and what this wonder means for our personal forgiveness and our future. Dr. Luther's famous quotation hits it on the mark: "We Christians must know that if God is not in the balance, and gives the weight, we sink to the bottom with our scale. By this I mean: If it were not to be said, **God** has died for us, but only a man, we would be lost. But if '**God's** death' and '**God** died' lie in the scale of the balance, then He sinks down, and we rise up as a light, empty scale." (This quotation is found in the Formula of Concord, VIII, par. 44); it is also in *LW* 41:103-104) As we hear, read, preach and teach on the Epiphany texts, may our hearts resound: "Thank you, dear God, for having our salvation depend on nothing less than the merits of Him in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily!"

VACANCIES

Our Savior Lutheran, Bishop, CA

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

Faith Lutheran Church, Clara City, MN

VICAR

Seminary student Sam Piet Van Kampen began his vicarage this January at Bethany Lutheran Church, Port Orchard, WA.

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION

Candidate of Theology Christopher Dale will be ordained and installed as pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church, Ulen, Minnesota, and Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Hawley, Minnesota, on January 18, 2004. The service will take place in the Calvary Church, Ulen, at 3:30 p.m.

RETIREMENT

The Rev. Carl Wosje has announced his plans to retire from the active ministry this month, January 2004.

OTHER NEWS

Mrs. Frances Anderson, widow of the late Rev. Beauferd Anderson, died Sunday, January 5. A memorial service will be conducted at Parkland Lutheran Church on Saturday, January 10. She had surgery on her carotid artery on Tuesday, went home on Wednesday, and Saturday it ruptured, and as a result she suffered a massive stroke.

PRAYER REQUESTS

One of our pastors suggested that we supply the e-mail addresses right along with the prayer requests so that you will be able to let the family know you are praying for those in need and thinking of them. We will do that when there is an e-mail address available.

Dr. B. W. Teigen was hospitalized on Saturday, January 3, after inadvertently being given a 5 mg dose of Glyburide, a medication for diabetics. He is not a diabetic. He is now recovering and has been released from the hospital.

A recent report on Pastor Arlen Dethlefsen states that scar tissue has begun to grow in his eye. This is not good. The doctor said the next three weeks are critical. If the scar tissue continues to grow it will probably cause another retina detachment. Please continue to remember Arlen and Elizabeth in your prayers. dethlef@polarcomm.com

HEALTH INSURANCE

The special committee continues to meet. Tentative arrangements are being made to have a presentation at this year's convention where people can ask questions and receive current information on health care insurance for our called workers.

SYNOD FINANCES

The treasurer's books will be open until January 8, 2004. Any contributions that have been received by this date will be credited to the 2003 year. Our adjusted budget for 2003 was set at \$765,000. The budget for this current year has been set at \$839,000. Please pray for our synod as it continues the important work of spreading the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

YOUTH RETREAT GRANTS

Our ELS Board for Education and Youth reminds you that we have grants available for area youth retreats which involve teens from at least two of our ELS churches. Contact Pastor Donald Moldstad for further information.

OBSERVATION FROM UKRAINE

January 6th is the date of Christmas in our sister church body, the Ukrainian Lutheran Church. Rev. David Jay Webber, who serves as rector at the seminary in Ukraine, recently emailed an interesting observation as he noted the beautiful singing in the services of our congregations in Ukraine. He writes in his email:

“In the officially approved [read: infiltrated and compromised] Russian Orthodox churches, which used only Church Slavonic in their worship, these much-loved Ukrainian-language songs would also have been forbidden. But the Christian families of Ukraine kept them alive in the secrecy of their home worship on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. They were careful not to sing them too loudly, but sing them they did, for several decades, as they waited for the day of God's deliverance. That day came in 1991. Since then, in ever-greater strains, these songs have once again been sung in public. And the joy of the people as they sing them is palpable.

As I looked around the congregation this morning, I also thought about the backgrounds of some of the other people there, who are now members of the congregation in Ternopil where I worship. In the old days some of them were card-carrying Bolsheviks. Under the old system, such people were the persecutors of the others, who were keeping these songs - and the faith of these songs - alive. But here's the thing, and I think everyone is conscious of this. They were keeping these songs alive not just for themselves and their families, but FOR THOSE BOLSHEVIKS, who have now been converted by the Savior who is praised in the songs, and who have now been embraced as brothers and sisters in the fellowship of the church by the forgiving guardians of those songs.”

A church
Service in
Kiev,
Ukraine



Pastor and
Bishop of the
ULC:
Vyacheslav
Horpynchuk

A NOTE TO OUR PASTORS

Could you consider putting the following announcement in your bulletin or church newsletter?

“Interested in receiving (free of charge) via email each month the **PRESIDENT’S NEWSLETTER** by our ELS President, the Rev. John Moldstad? If you would like to be included, please send your name and email address to: Melvina Aaberg (maaberg@blc.edu).”

Many of our synod’s lay people are now included in the distribution.

STEWARDSHIP

Our Board for Stewardship has sent to each of our congregations materials for the “Tell the Praiseworthy Deeds of the Lord” stewardship emphasis. If your church desires help in implementing the materials, please contact Pastor David Russow (dprussow@yahoo.com).

NEW ADDRESSES:

Effective January 15th the following new e-mail addresses will be in effect for Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Waterloo, IA, and the parsonage. Church: pilgrimlutheranchurch@juno.com
Home: greg.haugen@mchsi.com Church website: www.pilgrim-lutheran.net

Christopher Dale, PO Box 326, Ulen, Minnesota 56585

Ph: Home (218) 596-8761 Office Office (218) 596-8623 e-mail: <christopher.dale@blc.edu>



The new addition at Abiding Word in Bowling Green, Ohio, was dedicated last spring.



Pastor Ken Mellon serves our home mission in Bowling Green, Ohio.



Pastor Matthew Crick serves our home mission in San Antonio, Texas. Faith Lutheran is in the planning stages of an extensive building program.

PRESIDENT'S UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

January 9 – Visit the Dalles, OR
January 11 – Preach at Saved by Grace, Gresham, OR
January 13-14 – Attend Pacific Northwest Pastoral Conference
January 25 – Preach at Peace Lutheran, North Mankato, MN
January 22-23 Board for Foreign Missions, Mankato
January 30 – Board for Home Missions, Mankato
February 2 – Planning & Coordinating Meeting, Mankato
February 3 – Board of Trustees, Mankato
February 9-10 – Board of Regents, Mankato
February 15 - Preach at Faith, Carthage, MO
February 22 – Board for Publications, Onalaska, WI
February 29 – Preach at Richland Lutheran, Thornton, IA

PCM

The six member Presidium's Committee on Ministry is scheduled to meet again on January 16th. The committee indicates that healthy progress is being made toward producing its statement on the doctrine of the public ministry. Let us continue to pray for the committee's valuable work.

In the light of the holy Gospel of Christ our Savior,

John A. Moldstad
President
Evangelical Lutheran Synod