

President's Newsletter

March 2, 2004

Dear Fellow Workers:

How is it going out in the frontlines? As we strive to bring the pure teachings of holy Scripture to a world that increasingly shows more and more signs of decadence, let us remember something. We are very privileged to have a God who has equipped us with all that we need. Peter said it this way: *"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and goodness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness."* (2 Peter 1:3) Take heart that God has provided us with the weapon (the sword of the Spirit—the Word), that transforms hearts by the powerful and loving news of Christ Jesus making complete satisfaction for all sin. God bless you as you march forward in his name!

News From Around The Synod

Vacancies

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Bishop, CA

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

Anniversary

Grace Lutheran Church, Hobart, IN, will celebrate its 10th anniversary on March 21, 2004.

Update on Synod Convention Preparations

- Dates: June 20 – 24, 2004
- Theme: *Seek the Peace of the Land* (Jer. 29,7)
- Synod Sunday preacher: Rev. Jonathan Madson
- Sunday evening, Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary graduation service
- Essayist: Chaplain David Thompson
- Communion service preacher: Rev. Anthony Pittenger
- Convention Chaplain: Rev. Thomas Rank
- Devotion speakers: Robert Harting, Wm. Mack, Paul Sullivan, and Fred Lams
- Order of Service for Sunday afternoon and Wednesday evening: Prof. Dennis Marzolf, arrangements
- Tuesday evening: Spaghetti Supper – Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Mankato
- Wednesday evening: Sloppy Joe Supper – Peace Lutheran Church, North Mankato
- Painting by Prof. W. Bukowski

Appointments

Prof. Erling Teigen was appointed to the Synod Review Committee to fill the vacancy created by the death of the Rev. Alf Merseth.

The Rev. Joel Willitz was appointed as a type B member by the Board of Regents. This appointment will require ratification by the convention in June.

ELS Historical Society

The eighth annual meeting of the ELS Historical Society will meet on Saturday, June 11, 2004, at

Bethany Lutheran College. The theme will be: *Understanding Our Heritage through the Stories Handed Down from Our Forebears*. The program for the day will feature the art of storytelling.

Finances for the Synod

Congregational contributions through January/04 totaled \$43,530. This is \$3,367 ahead of last year's giving but \$20,219 behind our monthly contribution goal of \$63,750.

Trip to Ukraine

The chairman of our Board for Foreign Missions, Prof. Adie Harstad, and myself will be traveling in Ukraine from March 4-13 with TOF board members Mark Schwan and Dan Browning. A groundbreaking ceremony is planned for a church building in Sevastopol. Let us continually pray for the work of our sister church body, the Ukrainian Lutheran Church.

India Field Visit

Missions Counselor Steve Petersen and Peru Missionary Terry Schultz visited Lutheran Mission of Salvation, India (LMSI) churches, accompanied by Rev. & Mrs. E. P. Kauffeld (WELS) and Rev. and Mrs. Shawn Kauffeld (WELS). The Schwan Foundation is willing to provide the funding for LMSI, which is comprised of approximately 10,000 souls. Our Board for Foreign Missions is determining if it can serve as "sponsor-supervisor". The report of the field visit indicates encouraging prospects for mission work.



Pastor Richard Waters, his wife Susan, together with Pres. Moldstad and Joslyn Faith Lutheran, Carthage, Missouri: February 15, 2004

News from Florida

The lawsuit against Peace Lutheran Church, Lakeland, FL, that involves a contested past

donation is scheduled for trial in April, Rev. Joel Willitz reports that our Evangelical Lutheran Synod has been dismissed as a co-defendant in the lawsuit. Please keep Peace in your prayers.

“The Passion of the Christ”

We have been hearing much in the press about Mel Gibson and his movie. I had the chance to see the movie last Thursday. Personally, I think this movie—as graphic as it is in depicting the sufferings and death of our Lord—is worthwhile for Christians and all people (except young children) to see and represents fairly accurately the biblical account. More than ever, we want all to know that the suffering Christ endured especially was the fact that he bore the sins of all in his body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24).

We pray that God will use this movie as a witnessing opportunity. It certainly is not anti-Semitic nor anti-Roman nor anti-anybody to portray accurately the account of Scripture on the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, and then to remind all people of the “whoever” in John 3:16. It will be beneficial for people to ask reflectively, “What was the life and death of Jesus all about?” Let’s hope that following the movie, people who are not Christian who will be able to find a house of worship where God’s Word is taught in its truth and purity. The events in the movie are not to be a flash-in-the-pan experience but truly life-changing by means of the Holy Spirit working on hearts through Word and Sacrament.



Rev. Jerome Gernander and his wife, Sue, and family are pictured here at Richland Lutheran Church in Thornton, Iowa. This past year Richland celebrated 120 years.

DEATHS

The Rev. Alf Merseth was taken his heavenly home on February 8, 2004. Christian burial service was held at Lime Creek Lutheran Church, rural Lake Mills, Iowa. The committal was in

the Somber Lutheran Church cemetery.

Mrs. Lorna Unseth, widow of the late Rev. Eivind Unseth, was called to her eternal rest on February 13, 2004. The funeral service was Sunday, February 15, 2004, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (WELS), West Bend, WI. The committal was at the Trinity Lutheran Church Cemetery (ELS), West Bend, WI.

Mr. Victor Settje, father of Pastor Vic Settje was called to his heavenly home on Sunday morning February 22, 2004. Please keep Pastor Settje and his family in your prayers.

Mrs. Elna Teigen, wife of President Emeritus B. W. Teigen, was called to her heavenly home on February 28, 2004. The funeral service will be held at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Mankato, MN, on Friday, March 5th, at 11 a.m. Visitation will be at the Woodland Hills Funeral Home, Mankato, on Thursday evening from 6 – 9 p.m.

President's Activities

- March 1 – Lutheran Elementary School Memorial meeting, Mankato
- March 4 – 13 – Trip to Ukraine
- March 16 – Board for Stewardship, Mankato
- March 21 – Preach at Peace Lutheran Church, Lakeland, FL
- March 22-23 – Doctrine Committee, Mankato
- March 28 – Preach at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Indianola, IA

Bethany Men Capture Regional Championship

Cedric Dildy's 25-footer with only seconds remaining lifted the Bethany Lutheran College men's basketball team past Minot State University-Bottineau 91-90 to two overtimes Monday to claim the NJCAA Region 13 Championship. It was Bethany's first regional championship since 1962. Way to go!!

Address changes:

Correction to the web site for LYA and any current information on this year's trip.

<http://www.evluthsyn.org/youth/lya.html>

New e-mail address

Rev. Kent Dethlefsen pastord@direcway.com

May the Lord keep all of you in his saving grace,

John A. Moldstad
ELS President

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