INDEPENDENT LUTHERAN CONGREGATION JOINS LCMS AND THE SELC DISTRICT

by Rev. Dr. Carl Krueger, SELC District President

Christ Lutheran Church, Portland, Maine joins the SELC District on Epiphany, January 6, 2014 in a special evening worship service where members of Christ Lutheran Church will sign the Constitution of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

The Congregation had submitted their Constitution for review by the SELC Constitution Committee, and the Committee recommended approval at the October meeting of the SELC Board of Directors. Christ Lutheran Church of Portland then officially requested to become a member of the SELC District and the LCMS, which was also approved by the SELC Board of Directors. The culmination of the process will be the special worship service on January 6.

Rev. Hugh Pillsbury, former Pastor of the SELC Congregation, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Wilkes-Barre PA, retired and then moved to Portland Maine, where most of his family resides. Having very few Lutheran Churches in the State of Maine, a number of Missouri Synod Lutherans began getting together for Bible study and worship. As their number grew through personal witness and invitation, they decided to form a Lutheran Congregation, but had not affiliated with any Synod. They asked Rev. Pillsbury to provide Pastoral services, to conduct worship and Bible study, and to teach adult and youth Confirmation classes. Through this process, the Congregation became interested in becoming members of the SELC and the LCMS.

Presently Christ Lutheran Congregation is using the facilities of Holy Spirit Episcopalian Congregation for their Sunday morning worship service and some weekday activities. SELC President, Rev. Dr. Carl Krueger, will conduct the special Epiphany service and welcome the new SELC Congregation.

Visit our District website for up-to-the-minute news and check out the Beacon in full color
www.selc.lcms.org
Teenagers
I once overheard a conversation between two Slovak mothers. They both agreed the teen years were the “shialene roky” (the crazy years). Slovak culture understood the tendency for instability among teenagers. I remember a teen at a youth group meeting once saying, “I sometimes feel like running away from home; yet other times I love it there.” Normally, teens, like fledgling birds, are eager to fly on their own. Others, like some birds, are afraid to leave the nest and have to be pushed to fly.

The teen years are times of transition from childhood to adulthood. Concrete concepts are beginning to include abstract ones. Former ideas and values are challenged and tested whether to be accepted, revised or rejected. Peers at times mean more than parents. Teens require parental understanding, patience and loving guidance. It’s a blessing that Lutheran catechetical instruction takes place at the right time just prior to the critical years of teen transition.

Lutheran Youth Gathering
Approximately 25,000 Lutheran youth, adult leaders and others attended the 12th triennial “National LCMS Youth Gathering”, July 1-5, 2013, in San Antonio, Texas. About 2,143 youth completed a poll. Their top five concerns were: Friends, College, Environment, Faith and Family. Poll data regarding family relationships and church life proved quite positive. It was great news that about 1,000 are planning a career in church work. Poll responses, however, regarding social issues were mixed:
> 55.7% agreed that homosexuality is wrong according to God’s Word. (2007 - 75.8%)
> 24.9% approved same sex marriage between gay couples. (2007 - 9.1%)
> 73.4% reported being pro-life and against abortion. (2007 - 71.2%)
> 71.6% stated they never engaged in sexual intercourse. (2007 - 54.7%)
> 92% reported never smoking; 94.5% never using drugs; 71% never drinking alcohol.

Some percentage changes from 2007 to 2013 seem to reflect current trends in society influenced by the media and secular culture.

Non-Christian Youth
What about young people who show relatively little interest in spiritual matters - the ones not against God or religion, but have no spiritual moorings? “Pew Research Studies” reports such account for about one third under age 30.

Many are plagued with moral-social issues:
> Confused moral reasoning
> No absolutes
> Routine intoxication
> Materialistic gods
> Regrettable sexual experience
> Disengagement from civic and political life

A “Youth Ministry Symposium” will be held in St. Louis, MO, Jan. 9-11, 2014, to explore the world of young adults and what can be done to reach those without a religious base. Every congregation should be asking, “What can we do to witness Christ to non-Christian youth?”

What can Parents Do?
Christian parents are stewards of their children. As spiritual caretakers they should heed God’s mandate: “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it.” (Prov. 22:6)

Preparing children for their coming teen years should begin when they are still toddlers. Parents should pray with them; read picture illustrated Bible stories; take them to church. Later, Sunday School and Catechism Class are musts. Church youth groups offer Christian peer influences. When the “Shialene roky” arrive, it’s essential parents continue to practice God-like “agapay” love which unconditionally forgives and forgets and does good to those who don’t deserve it. Parental teen conversations should consist of respectful discussions rather stern, authoritative, vindictive persuasions.

Positive reinforcement of what’s good and gentle encouragement to correct what’s wrong is the way to go. Parents should be beacons of Christ’s love-light brightly beaming their personal Christian faith and moral values. Example is a dynamo of influence.

RELATED RESOURCES
www.sclc.lcms.org - Personal Stewardship
“Family Communication”
“Parental Stewardship”
Chun Lin Hu, once a political activist in Communist China, present at the Tiananmen Square massacre, who immigrated to Montreal, and by God's grace, was "captured" by the writings of Martin Luther, the clarity of the Law/Gospel division, and the principles of the Reformation: Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone, is scheduled to be Ordained as the SELC District's first Specific Ministry Pastor on Sunday, January 5, 2014, in a special morning worship service at Ascension Lutheran Church, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Chun Lin enrolled in the "Specific Ministry Pastor" (SMP) program through Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne IN. The SMP program is a new endeavor by the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod to raise up spiritually mature men in their "home" Lutheran Congregation, receive distance-learning education, be mentored by their "home" Pastor, plus receive several weeks of intensive classes on site at the Seminary each year. The SMP program was designed for men who could not leave their home area and move to the Seminary for 3 years of study, plus one year of Vicarage - a process that can place great strain on finances, family, and certain Congregational ministries.

A Congregation must be the "driving force" in the SMP program: choosing a spiritually mature man, committing itself to the 4-year education program, accepting the man as a Vicar in the Congregation, supporting the man with prayer and financial assistance, allowing and assigning the Congregation's Pastor as Mentor and Supervisor, and committing itself to Call the man, following the completion of the SMP program. A special feature of the SMP program is that the man is Ordained when he completes the full program, so that he is authorized to "Consecrate the Elements" to Baptize and to Conduct Communion Services.

Vicar Chun Lin has been working with Rev. David Godkin, the resident Pastor of Ascension Lutheran Church, Montreal. In particular, Vicar Chun Lin has been instrumental in the establishment of a Chinese speaking Congregation that is a "daughter" Congregation of Ascension Congregation. Vicar Chun Lin has been very effective in reaching out to the many Chinese immigrants in the Montreal area, and been a "virtual" missionary through the internet to bring the message of Christ to groups of people still living in Communist China. Between Montreal and China, Vicar Chun Lin has been instrumental in the Baptism of more than 100 people in the last 3 years!

The SELC District has been very supportive of both Ascension Lutheran Church and Vicar Chun Lin in their combined efforts to reach out to the immigrants in Montreal. For many years, the SELC District has been providing financial support for Pastor Godkin and Ascension to maintain a "hospitality ministry", providing free "English as a Second Language Classes" and encouraging Pastor Godkin and Ascension members to visit in the homes of as many immigrants as possible. The SELC District has also provided some financial support to Vicar Chun Lin for tuition and personal expenses.

SELC District President, Rev. Dr. Carl Krueger is scheduled to conduct the Service of Ordination; Rev. Paul Hoyer, SELC Mission Executive, is scheduled to preach of the worship service, and Rev. David Godkin and the newly ordained Pastor Chun Lin Hu will conduct the Communion Worship Service.
On a sunny November Sunday 50 years ago, Pentecost Lutheran Church of Racine, WI dedicated their new house of worship, a house that Rev. Martin Cizmar referred to as “the most beautiful church you’ll ever see”. On that same day—Nov. 17—50 years later, the congregation came together to rededicate this beautiful house to the Lord.

Under the theme “Christ is our Cornerstone — Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow”, the service began with the same opening sentences and opening hymn (Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty) as the original dedication service in 1963. Austin Honore served as cross bearer; Collin Honore’ and Haley Pilcher as acolytes; District President Rev. Dr. Carl Krueger, Jr. as preacher; Rev. Luke Jacob as liturgist; Rev. Emeritus Rev. Milan Babel, and teacher Rev. Karl Luchterhand as readers.

Readings for the day included Psalm 118:19-29 (The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone); Ephesians 2:19-22 (We are being built together); and Matthew 16:13-18 (Upon this Rock I will build my church).

The worship service included a beautiful variety of music. Joyce Hasko served as organist and choir director, and Karen Luchterhand led the Praise Team. Dan Hasko accompanied the Sunday School song. The following musicians also participated: Trumpet – Tom Hasko, Dan Hasko, and Scott Hensel; Baritone – Dave Graves and Allie Graves; Flute – Courtney Jacob and Jenna Geyer; Clarinet – Tim Hasko; Guitar – Karen Luchterhand, Tom Hasko, and Dan Hasko; Bass Guitar – Scott Hensel; Percussion – Ian Barclay; and Vocalists – Genevieve Barclay, Tim Hasko, Sue Murcek, Karli Luchterhand, and Karen Luchterhand. The Pentecost choir also performed two songs, inviting all of the former members in attendance to join the choir for their longtime favorite “Love Grows Here”.

Rev. Carl Krueger, Jr. based his sermon titled ‘Beth-El’ on Genesis 28:10-22. He began by singing in Slovak the blessing from the liturgy of the old Slovak service. He reminded the 150 in attendance that what made this building a house of the Lord was the reading of Scripture, teaching, and sacraments that are shared here. Pastor Krueger’s preaching seemed to keep us safe from the many tornado warnings that took place during the service!

For the children’s message, Joyce Hasko presented all of the children with a felt bookmark that resembled the church’s cornerstone. The bookmark featured a pocket where the children could store something special. She explained to the children the importance of a cornerstone in the architecture of a building, and how the cornerstone reminds us of Jesus because He is strong and we build our faith on Him.

Beth (McGregor) Bitner designed the banner for the service, which included a replica of one of the church’s stained glass windows. The design of the original window was based on the Epistle reading for the day.

Altar flowers were donated by the Piehler family in memory of their grandmother, Christine Sadlon, who was the longest living charter member, passing away at age 101; and in memory of their mother, Millie Piehler, whose 88th birthday would have been that day.

The whole service, along with hymns and a brief history of the church was contained in a special keepsake bulletin, which included a stunning drawing of the church building and cornerstone by church member Ian Barclay.

Many former members and special guests attended the service, including the sainted Rev. Martin Cizmar’s daughters, Mimi Hynek and Kathy Hagemann. Pastor Cizmar served Pentecost from 1950–1965, and was pastor at the time of the building dedication in 1963. Three representatives for the Groundbreaking on March 21, 1963 were also present for

[ Pentecost-continued on Page 5]
Pentecost-continued from Page 4

the service: Chris (Piehler) Vance who served as the Sunday School rep; Kathy (Cizmar) Hagemann who represented the Luther League; and Mary Ann (Koretchko) Graves who represented the Ruth Circle. Five members of the Finance and Building committees are still living and members of the church: Milan Alusic, Janis (Mikusch) DeKeuster, Bill Hasko, Richard LaFave, and Eleanor (Paluch) Mahdik.

Following the service, an outstanding gourmet brunch was served under the direction of Robert Barclay, with assistance from John Hansen, Jack Maloney, Art Preuss, and Bob Winterle. It featured egg strata with ham and tri-colored peppers, bacon and chive cream cheese on petite pancakes, biscuits and sausage gravy, swedish meatballs, smoked salmon, a chocolate fountain, tasty kolaches, and many other delicacies. Most of the ingredients were donated by congregation members, and all of the food was prepared by congregation members.

The fellowship hall was uniquely and beautifully decorated for the banquet by Sue Murcek, Sheri Hansen, Genevieve Barclay, and Jennifer Boedecker. Table centerpieces included a carved out pumpkin filled with autumn flowers. Placemats and table settings were in fall colors. Napkin holders were made by the Sunday School children.

In honor of the service, the cornerstone of the church building was removed, and the contents were displayed for all to see. One of the most interesting pieces of memorabilia was a letter written in 1912, which was likely in the original cornerstone of the first church building on DeKoven and Howe streets.

The letter was signed by John Kollar, who was born in Austria Hungary in 1860, his wife Anna, son John F., and daughters Julia and Rosie.

John Kollar is the grandfather of current congregation member Eleanor (Paluch) Mahdik. Other memorabilia included a 1912 list of charter members; a 25th Anniversary of the church building “Pamatnik” book written in 1937 in Slovak; a Lutheran Beacon, Svedok, and Luther League Courier all from 1963; services from the 50th Anniversary and Groundbreaking; coins and currency from 1963; and the local newspaper.

Pentecost Lutheran Church was organized in the year 1908 on Pentecost Sunday, under the name “Soslanie Ducha Svateho”, which translated means “The Descending of the Holy Spirit”. The congregation officially changed their name to “Pentecost Evangelical Lutheran Church of Racine, WI” in 1955. In 1912 the first church building was erected on the corner of DeKoven Avenue and Howe Street. The congregation met in that building for 50 years, endeavoring to build a new spiritual home for which ground was broken on March 21st, 1963; the cornerstone was laid on May 26th, 1963; and the building dedicated on November 17th, 1963.

We are thankful to the Lord for blessing our congregation with a beautiful building, whose architecture itself testifies to the Lord. We are reminded that like Jacob in the Old Testament, it is the Lord alone who has prospered us. We can truly say, as in Psalm 118:22-23:

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”

5
I’ve heard it said that only one thing stays the same – and that is that everything changes! Praise God that we serve an unchanging, ever-present God who promises, “I am with you always, even unto the end of the earth.”

On December 1st I began the daunting task of moving most of my office to a room in the Education Building at Holy Cross Lutheran Church. My new address is: 780 Sun Drive, Lake Mary, FL 32748. My desk phone is now: 407-333-0797, Ext. #103. I am ever so grateful to Pastor Paul Hoyer and his staff for not only offering me this wonderful space, but also for making me feel so welcome! I am blessed.

I am still contracted to serve Lutheran Haven and will be there just one day a week – usually Wednesdays. Mail will still reach me there, but it might take a week for me to see it. I am sharing Donna Dwyer’s office. My desk phone there still works, and you can leave messages: 407-706-1168. However, please remove my former cell phone from your directory.

As an employee of the LCMS Foundation, I have been humbled and blessed by how valiantly our Senior Vice President for Gift Planning, Allen Helms, and the Director of Counselor Performance and Training, Rich Paul, have advocated for me, assisting in establishing new supporting constituencies for me in Central Florida. My work as Gift Planning Counselor will continue for both the SELC churches in Florida and the churches of the Florida/Georgia District.

I will not be traveling as much in this restructured role, but that doesn’t mean that either the SELC District or I am abandoning you, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. My travel, however, will need to be much more deliberate and focused, and will require a formal request for service. That request must be approved by both President Carl Krueger and Allen Helms at the LCMS Foundation. There will be District grants to cover travel expenses for approved trips; individuals or congregations must now provide room and board during my stay. Clear expectations, both for your congregation and for me, will be laid out prior to the trip.

I continue to marvel at God’s goodness in allowing me to participate in this ministry of Gift Planning, serving His Kingdom by assisting His people to uncover the Lifetime Plan for Giving He placed in their hearts at their baptism.

Breathless with anticipation to see what this New Year brings, I remain your friend in Christ,

Robin E. Paris, CDE
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Slovak Bake Sale in Cudahy
by Rev. Carl Krueger

Each year, the Dorcas Society of St. John Lutheran Church, Cudahy WI sponsors a December Slovak Kolache Bakery Sale. Up to 45 Volunteers – men, women and youth - gather at Church to make the special egg-dough, roll the dough into balls, then roll out the dough balls, fill them (with walnut, prune, or apricot filling), bake and then package the Kolache for sale on the first Saturday in December.

The Dorcas Society of St. John was formed in the 1940’s as a group for the “English speaking women” to join for fellowship and to volunteer for service projects. The Slovak Ladies group known as the “The Ladies Aid Society” continued until the 1980’s, but due to the age of the members, the Society ended. The Dorcas Society took it upon themselves to preserve the Slovak heritage through the annual Kolache sale. The Dorcas Society uses the Slovak Kolache Sale as this group’s annual fund raiser. The the ladies use the funds to support Church repair projects, to purchase of special items for the Church, and to support community charities.

This year volunteers made 175 lbs. of Kolache, and sold them for a profit of $2,200. Some of this money will be donated to St. John Congregation for replacing the stairway entrance to St. John Day Care and the replacement of the Christian Education Wing roof.

Lutheran Haven Continues Tradition of Christmas Seals
by Donna Dwyer

Christmas Seals have been a long-standing tradition in our country, borrowed from the Danish, who started the tradition in the early 1900s. Seals are typically used on postal cards and other mail to raise both awareness and financial support for charitable organizations. Lutheran Haven celebrated its 65th year of service to retired pastors, church workers, and other faithful Lutheran seniors, and to celebrate this anniversary, residents selected their favorite seal from years past. The seal used in 2013 made its debut in 1991.

While the seals have changed over the years, the mission of the Haven has not. Lutheran Haven continues to be a loving community, enabled by God, which provides housing and health care in a wide variety of venues to an even wider variety of people. Some of those served outlive their resources—and Haven Christmas Seals help supplement expenses for their basic needs and services. One hundred percent of the proceeds from the Christmas seals, and for designated gifts are used for benevolent assistance.

Thank you for helping us secure the future for those we love, and who need our help. As Solomon wrote: Never walk away from someone who deserves help. Your hand is God’s hand for that person—Proverbs 3:27, The Message.
There’s No Time Like Snow Time!
SELC District Western Circuit Youth Ski Trip
Feb. 15 & 16, 2014
Theme: “Cast Away”
Theme Verse: Psalm 55:22
“Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous fall.”

Join us for day skiing at Wilmot Mountain in Wilmot, WI. Wilmot offers skiing and snowboarding, as well as tubing. Then travel back to Pentecost Lutheran Church in Racine, WI for dinner and a lock-in with a Youth Ministry Team from Concordia University WI. Breakfast will be served Sunday morning, followed by the worship service and a closing devotion by the CUW team. Registration materials will be e-mailed out shortly. Hope to see you there!

Looking Ahead:

SELC District “Luther League” Youth Gathering
July 10—13, 2014

Host Congregation: Family of Christ LC, Tampa FL

Theme will be announced soon. Watch the website www.lutherleage.com and Facebook page for future announcements. We hope you can be there for fun in the sun, and fun in the Son!

This is your newsletter . . . Articles & Photos are welcome! Send submissions to:

e-mail: gailpete37@yahoo.com
Questions? 321-752-5519 or 954-401-8452

Deadline for the February issue is January 12th

Looking forward to hearing from you . . . Gail Peterson
Praying the Liturgy: One Christian Pilgrim's Evolving Journey
by Pastor Ken Ballas, EM

Picture the scene. You are sitting in church quietly listening to pre-service music and preparing to worship. Momentarily you hear the familiar words, “In the Name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit!” In response to our risen Lord’s command to baptize and, yes, teach student-disciples of all ages, the Trinitarian invocation (often accompanied by the sign of the cross) becomes another reminder of the ongoing blessings of our Christian Baptism into Christ’s death and resurrection.

Meaningful God-pleasing worship requires conscious effort on the part of every believer. We (I) easily forget that the Psalms, for example, are prayers as are our most beloved hymns. “Liturgical” portions of the service designed to give the Divine Service some semblance of order and predictability are additional reminders that our God hears and deeply cares about us sometimes forgetful pray-ers.

Because the overall content of our Lutheran worship service is so unfathomably rich in meaning, no two portions of what we are privileged to do service together Sunday after Sunday will ever be read or sung in exactly the same manner (witness also perhaps the number of extraordinarily beautiful musical settings of the mass or communion liturgy).

To that end, the idea of “praying the liturgy” may on occasions result in holding a bit longer than usual the pronoun “you” in the connecting Alleluia verse following readings from the Old Testament and Epistle just before the reading of the Gospel – “YOU have the words of eternal life!”

Similarly, the Kyrie leading into a trinitarian ascription of praise and which, remember, follows the service of confession and absolution reminds us in effect, “YOU LORD” are the only One strong enough or powerfully loving enough to have mercy on us sinners as Christ alone embodies “the words of eternal life” (which also include the Scriptural basis for Holy Baptism as well as the Sacrament of our Lord’s Body and Blood in Holy Communion).

A new thought or two perhaps. The God we regularly confess in the Church’s creeds exists “before all worlds.” The Son “with the Father” also created the universe before redeeming us with His innocently shed life-blood. Comforting assurance is given to troubled believers in the words, “HE suffered and was buried!” -- the same Jesus whose Kingdom will have no end who also on the very same night in which He was betrayed took bread etc. ever remains the sacrificial Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Affirming that we believe “in the Church” means we do our “best believing” in company of like-minded people gathered in praise of Him who deserves our very best!

Moreover, in reflecting on the phrase “God of power and might” in the “Sanctus” of the communion liturgy, would you ever consider not singing those words (as well as the seemingly self-evident phrase “shouts of thanksgiving” in the post-communion canticle, “Thank the Lord and Sing His Praise!”) with less than full voice? Do not these moments in the service fairly beg us to “turn up” the volume of what might otherwise suggest a mindless level of concentration regarding what we are to be about during our otherwise seemingly staid but potentially dynamic “traditional” Lutheran worship?

We may even forget that Our Lord’s Prayer in which we are thankfully encouraged to pray to our Heavenly Father for needed “daily bread” and “daily forgiveness” is also part of our liturgy! The purpose of this article also is simply to encourage “singers and non-singers” alike to ponder anew what the Almighty can do (and has already done!) by prayerfully reflecting on the time-honored words of the Church’s liturgy with something more than a cognitive grunt, whimper or whisper! (Psalm 100; Luke 23:46)

Acknowledging that this side of heaven, we all at times “fall short” not only during a formal “worship hour” but regarding what our God has every right to expect of us as a “lifetime of worship.” Thankfully, we do not need “a second chance” in order to “get things right” because our Brother-Savior Jesus Christ has already more than adequately mediated between us and His (and our) Heavenly Father! Yes, our God could not possibly love us more than He already has in sending His only Son -- more than ample reason for a lifetime of responsive reflection both inside and outside His House of Prayer as the fruits of what our Brother-Savior Jesus Christ (and He alone) has perfectly accomplished in our behalf extends to all eternity!

[Scripture references for the above include Psalm 100; 116:12-13, 17-19; Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 6:9-13; 26:26-28; 28:19; Mark 10:47; 14:22-24; Luke 2:14; 22:19-20; 23:46; John 1:3; 1:29; 6:68; 20:19-23; Romans 6:3-4; 8:26-27; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25; 15:3; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 1:4; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:2; 10:25; 13:15; 1 Peter 1:18-20; 3:18; 1 John 1:8-9; Revelation 5:12-13. Having admittedly written on closely related topics in the past, the writer affirms no liturgical bias as he again only wishes to call attention to the biblical basis for what is indeed occasionally appropriately referred to as the Divine Liturgy, kmb]
As treasurer, I’d like to update you on the status of our mission grants. National has sent funds out to four groups. Voice of Care Ministry to the Developmentally Challenged was paid their requested $50,600 to the ministry in West Chicago, Illinois. These funds will be used for office technology update, one such way is for multi-media presentations to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the places where the developmentally challenged live and work.

Bible Story Books in Sign language and Written Text received a partial payment of $50,000. These mites will help Mill Neck – Lutheran Friends of the Deaf in Mill Neck, New York to fund the publication of Bible story books for distribution to deaf in places such as Kenya and India.

Also receiving a partial payment was Christ-Centered Tutoring Through Rebecca’s Garden of Hope. Located in Orlando, Florida, has a ministry to improve academic grades along with successfully bringing families to Christ.

Mission Outreach at St. Paul Community Lutheran Church in Pontiac, Michigan, also received a partial payment. The $28,400 will be used by Rev. Dietrick and Rebecca Gladden to further develop the youth ministry and add needed staff to reach the community around St. Paul Lutheran Church in Pontiac.

On the district level, our next grant to receive money is the mission church of the Cross East Lake in Mount Dora, Florida. By the end of the year, we should have the $3,000 to send to them for use for outreach/evangelism, Bibles, chairs, paraments, and Audio/Visual equipment for the church.

We have received just over one half of what we need to be able to fulfill our grant requests. Our biennium will end on of March 31, 2014. We need at the very least $4,500 to pay those who had requested funds. Please help in anyway you can. Check with your LWML church society for where to send the mites.

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“To the Ends of the Earth”

Acts 1:8 You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and Judea, in Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

The women of the SELC LWML

Invite you to attend our District Convention

May 16-18, 2014

At St. John Lutheran Church in Massillon, Ohio

Banquet Speaker — Humorist Elaine Bickel

Honored Guest – National LWML Pres. Kay Kreklau

Lodging: A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hampton Inn & Suites, Canton OH
Free hot breakfast daily; free high speed wireless internet; indoor pool & spa;
fitness room; and coin operated laundry.

Mark your calendar now!
January
5   Ascension Lutheran Church, Montreal, Quebec Canada - Ordination of Specific Ministry Pastor, Chun Lin Hu
6   Christ Lutheran Church, Portland Maine, special service of membership in the SELC District and the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod
6*  Deadline for submitting requests for grants for the fiscal year 2014 SELC Budget. Requests for grants must include current financial report and projected budget, along with details for the use of the grant. Also deadline for submitting written reports to be included in the SELC Board of Directors agenda.
13  9am - SELC Fiscal Committee to complete initial 2014 Budget
    1pm - SELC Board of Directors meet at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Lake Mary FL. Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, President of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod is scheduled to attend the SELC Board of Directors meeting, along with one of the Synodical Vice-presidents. This is part of the LCMS Convention mandated visitation of all 35 LCMS Districts by members of the LCMS Presidium (the Synodical President, plus the 5 Synodical Vice-presidents)
14  SELC Board of Directors, Lake Mary FL
15  SELC Board of Directors, Lake Mary FL (til noon)
15  Lutheran Haven Finance Committee and Long-Range-Planning Committee meetings, 3pm, Oviedo FL
16,17 Lutheran Haven Board of Trustee meeting, Oviedo FL
20--29 SELC District President, Rev. Carl Krueger and his wife, Dianne, along with 12 other District Presidents and their wives, travel in Israel.
    *Please note that during this time when Rev. Krueger is out of the United States, all questions and correspondence should be directed to Rev. Andrew Dzurovcik, SELC First Vice-president, Zion Lutheran Church, Clark NJ 07066, phone: 732-535-0096.

February
4,5  Western Circuit Pastoral Conference, Zion Lutheran Church, Norridge IL
16--21 LCMS Council of Presidents meeting, Phoenix Arizona
25, 26 Intentional Interim Pastors Committee, Board of Directors, Ann Arbor MI Rev. Krueger is the LCMS COP representative on this Board.

March
1    Deadline for submitting requests to the SELC Office for Vicars or Pastoral Candidates
19--21 East Coast Common Endeavor meeting, one of the 5 regional groups of the Council of Presidents, Orlando FL. (Because of the non-geographical nature of the SELC District, the SELC "belongs" to two regional groups of the COP)
Celebrating our 20th Anniversary!

ST. LUKE’S CONCERT SERIES 2013-14

Orlando Concert Band
Sat. - January 25, 2014 - 7pm
(OPTION: Open Dress rehearsal - Friday, Jan. 24 - 7pm)

FREE admission to both!!

Celebrating America’s musical landscape with composers and melodies which are as iconic as the Grand Canyon and the Liberty Bell.

The concert program will feature Aaron Copland’s “Hoe Down,” a lesser known piece by John Philip Sousa, Morton Gould’s “Yankee Doodle” and “American Salute,” as well as the works of Leonard Bernstein, Leroy Anderson and other treasured American composers.

America, the Beautiful!

Musician Photos: courtesy of Oviedo Photo Club

A gift to the community from ST. LUKE’S LUTHERAN CHURCH 2021 W. SR 426 Oviedo, FL 32765

St. Luke’s Concert Series 2013-14 is made possible by the generous donations of individuals and corporate sponsors, as well as support provided by Seminole Cultural Arts Council, Inc.

Visit: stluke-oviedo.org/concert-series to request emailed program updates during the 2013-14 season. Info: 407/965-3408
November 10th 2013

Dear SELC family,

It was very nice to visit with many of you at the PCWC in October. I have also enjoyed the wonderful hospitality and outpouring of support that I have received from several of our parishes and families in our SELC District.

I am still on the road, seeking further funding to completely cover the cost of my mission work. Lord willing, I will be visiting West Africa and the seminary in Togo in January and February. After this initial visit to the region, I will consult with the LCMS Africa team and the seminary leadership about further programs and education to prepare me for the African ministry context.

I will submit a newsletter article to the Beacon every other month so that the SELC family can keep track of this great work our Lord is doing. If you would like to receive a pdf of this newsletter sent to you for inclusion in your parish newsletter, please send me an email at Jacob.Gaugert@lcmsintl.org

Also, if your parish has decided to include my mission work in your 2014 budget, please communicate this with our District Financial Secretary and with Mission Central.

SELC Financial Secretary
Mr. Larry Schulz
1566 Bushkill Center Rd.
Bath, PA 18014
(570) 957-5580
selcfinancialsecretary@selc.lcms.org

Mission Central
Mr. Gary Thies
70718 Hwy E 16
Mapleton, Iowa 51034
(712) 882-1029
Gary.Thies@lcms.org

Thank you again for your support and prayers. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or just to see how things are going with my preparation.

In Christ,

Jacob W. Gaugert

And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest”. -Luke 10:2
Peace in the Power of Christ

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

- Ephesians 6:10-12, ESV

Dear friends in Christ,

It has been remarked that the best trick the Devil ever pulled was to convince the world that he did not exist. In our developed Western society the devil has certainly played this trick well. We look around at the things that happen in society, government, families, our bodies and the church and simply attribute maladies and problems to natural or societal causes. If someone is sick – the cause is simply germs or bad genes. If there are divisions in church or politics - that is simply a clash of opinions and personalities. But the Scriptures make it clear that the Devil and his demons are hard at work in practically every aspect of our lives. The hymn Lord God, to Thee We Give all Praise expresses this:

A roaring lion, round he goes,
No halt or rest he ever knows;
He seeks the Christians to devour
And slay them by His dreadful power. (LSB 522:6)

The existence and work of the devil is not as easily overlooked by our friends in Africa. For generations the Evil one has kept whole families, tribes, and nations in deceit and unbelief. Many of them live in constant fear of the tricks of demons and spirits. They believe that to honor or dishonor their deceased ancestors may mean receiving blessings or curses. Some people deprive themselves and their living family members of food and large sums of money, which they offer instead to appease and entice these false spirits.
Pray:
Thanksgiving for baptisms in the mission field

That the Lord would call fit and dedicated young men to study at the seminary in Dapaong, Togo

For the necessary gifts and resources to acquire books and materials to train pastors and church leaders

The followers of these traditional religions do not only miss out in daily, physical comfort, but – more importantly – from the peace of God which surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:7). Thanks be to God that faithful Christians, pastors, and evangelists are sharing the gospel message of freedom and service without fear (Luke 1:74). People who once sat under Satan's darkness have been washed and called into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9) to declare and share the hope and joy they have in the Holy Spirit.

We have also been washed and saved by Jesus Christ who is victorious over the Devil by His cross and resurrection. Just recently there has been a curious change in the way people identify evil in our culture. It used to the the case that vampires and werewolves were always the "bad guys" in any storyline. But now these figures have become romanticized "good guys". Our TV sets are abuzz with zombies, ghost hunters and spiritualist shows. We must be on guard against the temptation to dismiss the Devil as entertaining, silly and fictitious when in fact, he is real and very dangerous. However, we have no need to fear. Our Lord sends his holy angels to guard over us (Psalm 91:11). We in faith are under the power of the Holy Spirit. We receive forgiveness, life and salvation, through God's Word, preaching, baptism and the Lord's Supper – to give us eternal peace and joy in Jesus Christ.

But watchful is the angel band.
That follows Christ on every hand
To guard His people where they go
And break the counsel of the foe. (LSB 522:7)

In Christ,
If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter please call the support phone numbers listed below.

Ministry Information:

Rev. Jacob W. Gaugert
W 701 Herr Rd.
Sullivan, WI 53178

Have you or your congregation decided to support this ministry in your 2014 budget? If so, please contact us at the numbers listed below to help us make plans for this upcoming year.

Make checks payable to LCMS and note “Gaugert # A106198-69350” in the memo line. Please send to:

Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod
PO Box 790089
St. Louis, MO 63179-0089
1-888-930-4438

Or contact:

Gary Thies
Mission Central
40718 Hwy E 16
Mapleton, IA 51034-7105
712-882-1029

To give online:
www.lcms.org/gaugert

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AT HOME

Read the Seventh Petition of the Lord's Prayer in Luther's Small Catechism.

Did you know that in many languages the word “evil” in this petition is capitalized to refer to something more specific? Who or what could this be? How does he work (see meaning)? What does the meaning of this petition promise us?

"Through toil and tribulation and tumult of her war she waits the consummation of peace forevermore." - LSB 644:4

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MEET

Rev. Kolani Lambon Lare

Pastor Lare is the president of the Lutheran Church of Togo (ELT). He takes particular interest in faithful, Lutheran education of students at the CLET and pastors who serve in congregations throughout Togo. Thank the Lord for the fine dedication and leadership of Rev. Lare.