

The Disciple

November 2014

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Where Thanksgiving Comes From

By Pastor Chris Ongstad

A family that enjoys a combination of travel and history will most certainly enjoy a visit to the "Plymouth Plantation", which overlooks the Massachusetts coastland not far from where the pilgrims first landed. But the trip to this historic spot is not as adventurous as that of those first families to set foot on the New World shores. They found themselves fighting for their very lives.

The Pilgrim's principal harvest that first winter was struggling not to die. Expecting the warmer weather of Virginia, weakened by two months' confinement in the hold of the "Mayflower," they landed in wintry New England in the middle of December. Only three married couples survived that first winter. Of eighteen wives, only five remained alive. The children fared better than their parents, but only because their mothers had often made the supreme sacrifice on their behalf. In short, only half of the ship's original roster still lived at the time of the first Thanksgiving meal.

When we picture the Thanksgiving meal of the Pilgrims we think of a great store of food surrounding a group of festive people. But it was just the opposite. The first feast was essentially an act of Thanksgiving for a little bread in place of none, for a slim hold on life in place of no life, for a little hope in the face of a hard and uncertain future. Remember, the pilgrim didn't own the Mayflower. They chartered the ship and all its supplies from the English. It would take a long time to pay them off, and it was only years later that Governor Bradford could at last write to a friend that they "never felt the sweetness of the country till this year."

Perhaps you would expect to hear from me, "in comparison to all this poverty and hardships of the Pilgrims, you ought to be grateful for all that you have."

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But, in fact, well-being and affluence do not inspire gratitude. Affluence of itself doesn't produce gratitude. Affluence often produces attitudes just the opposite of gratitude. We can see the fruits of affluence in our nation wherever we turn. Because our nation has so much more than many nations of our world you would think that America would contain a host of people overflowing with the spirit of gratitude. Instead, we see a nation characterized more by a mood of anxiety and uneasiness.

Just having things doesn't produce gratitude. It doesn't speak to individuals personally. For instance, if we say that we should be thankful for our countries' great affluence what does that mean to a man who is unemployed with a family to feed? What does this mean to a young person, who having graduated, can't find his first job?

We can talk about general health conditions compared to those of the pilgrim in their hardship years. But when health quickly ebbs away, as it so often does, what

happens to thankfulness? Perhaps death doesn't reign in our community like it did for the pilgrims, but of what comfort is that when there is a chair that remains unoccupied? What happens to thankfulness then?

Furthermore affluence can lead to the fear that what one has may be lost. The more a man has, the more he can want and the more he can become anxious or disturbed by the thought of losing it. Who of us will deny that much can be possessed while at the same time the center of life can remain void and barren except for fear?

Objectively observing the reactions of people to the blessings they have makes it clearly evident that gratitude does not come from what we have but arises out of what we are.

Whether life consists of prosperity or hard times, the Christian heart finds an unending supply of gratitude in the unchanging love of God. The Christian knows that His life here and life here after are secured by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. St. Paul knew where the

source of thankfulness lies. He wrote, "Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content...in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in Him who strengthens me."

The spirit of gratitude does not come from a recitation of how you are in a more healthy or wealthy position than others. Gratitude doesn't originate from what you have but from what you are. What you are ultimately rests on the assurance of God's steadfast love for you. His love has come down for you and the world in the gift of His Son Jesus Christ for the salvation of all.

*There is always,
always, always
something to be
thankful for.*

Stewardship Prayer

Almighty and ever-faithful Lord, gratefully acknowledging Your mercy and humbly admitting our need, we pledge our trust in You and each other. Filled with desire, we respond to Your call for stewardship by shaping our lives in imitation of Christ. We profess that the call requires us to be stewards of Your gifts. As stewards, we receive Your gifts gratefully, cherish and tend them in a responsible manner, share them in practice and love with others, and return them with increase to the Lord. We pledge to our ongoing formation as stewards and our responsibility to call others to that same endeavor. Almighty and ever-faithful God, it is our fervent hope and prayer that You who have begun this good work in us will bring it to fulfillment in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

EVANGELISM & PRAYER

By Billie Salzman

Evangelism: Speaking to others about God. Prayer: Speaking to God about others.

Acts 2: 42 : *“The fellowship of the believers devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to PRAYER.”*

With our prayers, God works through us. Jesus set us an example to pray. It was His habit to go to a solitary place to pray, sometimes spending all night in prayer. If Jesus, being the Son of God, needed to spend so much time in prayer, how much more do we need to spend time with God.

St. Paul, in Colossians 4:2-6 tells us: *“Devote yourselves in prayer, being watchful and thankful. Pray for us too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of*

every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

Let us pray for our growth in faith and for our personal evangelism; for conversational opportunities in the course of our day and for lost friends and family members.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, Lord of the harvest, all around us are men and women, boys and girls who do not know you. Have mercy on them and awaken us to their need. May we as a church, and as individuals, reach out to them in love and with the message of the Gospel. In the power of your Holy Spirit, may we do this in many right and appropriate ways. Make us a generous and open community, loving and serving both old friends and newcomers so that Jesus may be glorified and many souls added to His Kingdom. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

COMING EVENTS

DECORATING FOR ADVENT

The Altar Guild would like to invite you to participate in the decorating of the church for Advent, **Nov. 26 at 9 a.m.** Questions? Talk to Carole Vrshek.

DINNER CLUB

In November the Dinner Club will be going to Rocco's Little Italy Restaurant located at 7907 W. 159th Street in Tinley Park. The date will be Saturday, November 22 at 5:00 p.m. There is a menu for this restaurant on the bulletin board along with a sign-up sheet. For more information, please see Faith Schulz.

75TH ANNIVERSARY

November 9, 3 p.m. is the time for our celebratory communion worship service in grateful thanksgiving to God for blessing Holy Cross with the ministry of grace for 75 years! Please join us for worship. The banquet will be held at 5 p.m.

THANKSGIVING EVE WORSHIP

Wednesday, Nov. 26, 7:30 p.m.

ADVENT WORSHIP

Remembering the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God for us in Bethlehem, receiving His continual coming to us in love and grace through God's Word and the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and anticipating His return again on the Last Day begins Sunday, Nov. 30 and with special mid-week Advent worship Wednesdays, Dec. 3, 10 & 17.

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTE HIGHLIGHTS

September 8, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

- ◆ The meeting opened with prayer.
- ◆ Motion made and approved to accept the August minutes with corrections.
- ◆ Thrivent will donate up to \$1,000 towards the 75th Anniversary expenses.
- ◆ The General Fund is not doing as well as it was earlier in the year.
- ◆ The 75th Anniversary donations stand at \$5995.
- ◆ Motion was made and approved to accept the Treasurer's report.
- ◆ Motion was made and approved for Tom Griffin to call AAA snowplowing regarding the new contract and to see if "salt upon request" could be inserted.
- ◆ 50 people attended the church picnic.
- ◆ Motion made and approved to hire a new part time church secretary. A non-member, two 4 hour work days a week at \$10 per hour with no benefits.
- ◆ Adult Bible studies have started Sunday, Monday and Tuesday on the subject of Stewardship. Sunday School has started.
- ◆ Ivy Bradley is the new Sunday School superintendent.
- ◆ Sunday School teachers include Ivy Bradley, Theresa Boltz and Pam Rutkowski.
- ◆ VBS program for 2015 was ordered. Joyce Ongstad is overseeing VBS with Pam and Barb.
- ◆ Social Ministry– 20 families are coming to the once a month Tuesday Food Pantry. Many people are coming to the every Saturday Food Pantry. 35 people attended the Community Meal.
- ◆ 75th Anniversary tickets are available for \$20 for those 5 years and older. 5 years and under are free.
- ◆ The new carpeting for the church will be installed Oct. 6.
- ◆ Motion was made and approved for the Food Pantry to use the Fellowship Hall on Saturdays.
- ◆ Motion was made and approved to participate in Worth Township's "Year Round School Supplies" for children in our area per the Township's request. A box for collecting the supplies will be put out.
- ◆ Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. with prayer.

ELDERS SPONSORED FOOTBALL GAME

Sunday, Nov. 23 at Noon in the Fellowship Hall & lunch provided.

**Watch the game projected life size between
the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Chicago Bears**

All are invited. Sign up today!

THE FOLLOWING ESTABLISHMENTS ARE REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS TO HOLY CROSS'S COMMUNITY MEAL

Demon Dawgs

Labriola Baking Company

George's Restaurant

G&L Auto

Walt's Food (Tinly Park)

Pappas Restaurant

Family Dollar (111th St.)

Please support these businesses.



WWW.SELC.LCMS.ORG

THE LUTHERAN BEACON

Let your light shine . . .



Published by the SELC District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

NOVEMBER 2014

Follow me ... as I follow Christ

The SELC General Pastoral Conference was held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Lake Mary, FL on October 6th-8th with the theme "Follow me ... as I follow Christ", based on 1 Corinthians 11:1. Sixty pastors and guests were in attendance for this year's conference.

The conference featured worship, large group presentations by Reverends Jon Trinklein, Phil Hissom, and Pete Mueller on Monday, followed on Tuesday by small group interactive sessions with the presentors. The themes for the presentations and sessions all revolved around the personal spiritual growth of the Professional Church Worker.

Holy Cross prepared a wonderful program, with several special fellowship events including a riverboat cruise, a barbecue supper (hosted by Rev. Paul and Betty Hoyer) and a golf outing.

A contemporary Communion worship service, led by Holy Cross Senior Pastor, Rev. Matt Wallis, opened the Conference on Monday. A special Service of Repentance and Forgiveness based on a liturgy for Yom Kippur, led by SELC President Rev. Carl Krueger, closed the Conference on Wednesday.



SELC Pres. Rev. Dr. Carl Krueger

"We got to see presentations regarding service in the community, personal spiritual life, and how to live life as a Disciple," explains Rev. Matt Walls, Senior Pastor at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Lake Mary. "I enjoyed listening to presenters that each brought something new and interesting to my ministry. As always, we got to spend time with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, hearing about each others ministries and supporting and encouraging one another."

The SELC is currently accepting invitations from SELC Congregations to host the next SELC General Pastoral Conference. The SELC District Convention will be held April 9 -- 12, 2015 at Zion Lutheran Church, Clark, New Jersey.

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*A
Blessed
Thanksgiving
To
You
All*

*"Give thanks to the
Lord, for He is
good; His love
endures forever."
Psalm 117: 1*

Thanksgiving
Food Baskets



*We, who are blessed, should
remember those who are in need.*

ONE FAITH - ONE FAMILY - ONE ENVELOPE

by Rev. Thomas Soltis, SELC Stewardship Director

Multiple Funds

Some congregations provide multiple envelopes for various needs. One congregation actually placed one extra envelope per month in the monthly newsletter to support seminaries, Armed Services Commission, Lutheran Haven, World Relief, etc. In addition various funds were formed to support organ upkeep, the Altar Guild, soup kitchen, youth, Sunday School, etc. Multiple fund solicitations can sometimes become a hassle for givers to decide whether to or how much. In addition some important causes might be shortchanged. The practice may also detract from the principles of Biblical giving by focusing on "needs" rather than a motivating love for Christ and proportionate (percentage of income) giving from personal financial resources.



After a 65 year history of a multiple fund envelopes system, St. Luke Lutheran Church, Cabot, PA, Rev. Barry Keurulainen, Pastor, decided to engage a one envelope system based on a unified budget. All funds supported in the past were placed into the church budget to be funded via one envelope. After studying the Scriptures regarding Biblical giving, the congregation's stewardship committee proposed the change which took effect July 1, 2014. It was generally well received.

Questions

Q. Can I still give to the food pantry or other special causes I support?

A. With a one envelope system, you will still be supporting the pantry and other personal choices. They will be budgeted line items in the budget.

Q. What would be the advantage in changing to a one envelope unified budget system?

A. Biblical giving is simplified. In January, simply project a percentage of your anticipated annual income to be contributed (hopefully a 10% tithe). Then divide by 52 weeks and regularly place the amount in the weekly envelope, knowing that your church, other important causes and your personal choices will be supported.

Biblical Giving

- > Love Motivated - 2 Cor. 8:8
- > Proportionate (% of Income) - 1 Cor. 16:2
- > Tithe (10% of income) - Matt. 23:23
- > Regular (Every Sunday) - 1 Cor. 16:2
- > Cheerful (Exuberant) - 2 Cor. 9:7
- > First-fruit (Funding God First) - Prov. 3:9
- > Willing - 2 Cor. 8:12
- > Thankful - 2 Cor. 9:12
- > Generous - 2 Cor. 8:2; 2 Cor. 9:11

Financial Reporting

Some congregations print a brief report in the Sunday bulletin comparing receipts to the budget. Again, the practice encourages "need" as a motivator when love for Christ should be the only motivator. Needs are simply indicators of where to express one's love for Christ. Bulletin financial reports, if negative, could produce depressed, defeatist, perhaps even conflicting feelings among members. If the reports prove positive, members could be tempted to reduce their giving. Some congregations also publish the amounts of special gifts in remembrance of departed loved ones, wedding anniversaries, birthdays, etc. The names of donors and special occasions should be printed. But not the amounts. (Matt. 6:3) Years ago some congregations printed an annual "scandal sheet" listing names and amounts. Thankfully, this has generally been replaced by a "contribution analysis report", consisting of two columns - one listing the number of members and the other weekly amounts contributed in \$10 increments. Not knowing who gave what personally, nurtures a sense of equality and oneness among parishioners and prevents bad feelings regarding importance.

Wrong Motives for Giving

- > Pride: Giving for self recognition
- > Embarrass Poorer Givers into Giving More
- > Selfishness: Giving to earn forgiveness or favors
- > Greed: Giving to get material gain

RELATED RESOURCES

www.sclc.lcms.org - Stewardship

Personal: "Haphazard vs. Biblical Giving"
Cong. Helps: "Reporting Contributions"

SELC General Pastoral Conference Presenters [continued from Page 1]



Rev. Jim Guelzow has spent his entire pastoral ministry in the Fl/Ga District. Nine years at Peace Lutheran, Okeechobee, Fl, and the last 31 years at Messiah, Tampa, where he retired from this past May. He currently serves the District as 2nd Vice-President. He married his wife Lynn of Wausau, WI in 1972. The Guelzows are blessed with two married children. Son/Pastor Nathan with wife Erin and two grandsons, Josiah and James, live in Downers Grove, IL. Daughter/Principal Heidi with her husband Scott Jerry live in Little Rock, AR.

Phil Hissom holds a Master of Divinity degree and prayerfully engages in the Mission of God by creating helpful resources for the Church. He hails from a ministry family that has been involved in urban mission work for four generations. He and his wife Jennie relocated to Orlando in 2005 and founded the Polis Institute – a non-profit dedicated to improving well-being in the city with research, training, and community building.



Rev. Jon Trinklein, a graduate of Concordia Universities, Ann Arbor and Chicago, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO currently serves as Lead Pastor at Shepherd's Gate Lutheran Church, Shelby Township, MI. He has served as an inner city pastor in Los Angeles, church planter in Little Rock, AR and Discipleship and Executive Pastor of King of Kings, Omaha, NE. Hundreds of members of Shepherd's Gate serve outside the walls of the church through serve events and ongoing acts of love and compassion. He has led mission teams to Russia, Africa, Israel, China and England and is leading his seventh team to Israel in November 2014. His passion is to multiply disciple-making disciples through missional living and relational discipleship groups such as triads and home groups.



Rev. Pete Mueller takes 'adventure' seriously: he loves to backpack, climb rocks, and ski the trees. An Iowa boy at heart, Pete still loves to eat corn-fed beef and fresh sweet corn. After re-launching a Mission Congregation in west Austin in early 2009, he now serves the mission of ACTS Church Lakeway primarily through vision-casting, communication, and leadership development. The ACTS Church Network is currently gaining momentum, with Spirit-fueled plans to start 25 churches in the greater Austin area by 2025. By God's grace, ACTS Church Leander was launched in September 2013 and now joins ACTS Church Lakeway in its strategy of "Multiplying Followers, Leaders, and Churches". Prior to leading the Community of ACTS, Pete was on staff at St. John Lutheran Church in Ellisville, Missouri, where he served for thirteen years as a teaching pastor and strategic leader.



Pentecost Organist Celebrates 50 Years

by Tim Hasko

Under the theme "When in Our Music God is Glorified", Pentecost Lutheran Church in Racine, WI celebrated 50 years of service for organist Joyce Hasko at their September 14th, 2014 worship service. The bulletin cover was designed by congregation member, Ian Barclay. Musicians from 6th grade through 80+ years participated in the service which included many of Mrs. Hasko's favorite hymns and choir song "Love Grows Here". A children's message was presented using baritone, trumpet, and flute in four-part harmony to demonstrate how the church has many parts which form one body. Pastor Jacob's message "Let Us Rejoice" was based on Luke 2:8-20, which includes the angels praising God and the shepherds rejoicing. District President Dr. Carl Krueger, Jr., Rev. Milan Babel, and Rev. Luke Jacob presented Mrs. Hasko with a certificate on behalf of the SELC District and a plaque on behalf of the congregation. Many special guests attended, including Mrs. Hasko's sister from Rhinelander WI; former coworkers from Concordia Lutheran School; and friends from around the city and state, Minnesota, and Texas. The fellowship hall was beautifully decorated for a reception. In Mrs. Hasko's 50 years as organist at Pentecost, she's played for services in three different languages (English, Slovak, and Spanish) during the tenure of five pastors (Revs. Cizmar, Kovac, Babel, Biber, and Jacob).

Joyce (nee Vick) Hasko was born in Bemidji, MN and grew up in Duluth, MN. Her mother decided she should take piano lessons to help her "carry a tune". Joyce confesses she didn't appreciate the lessons then, but has been grateful since! Joyce started playing organ in junior high because her church was a very small mission congregation and needed an organist. Joyce was in 8th grade when she started playing for Grace, Duluth. She accompanied the children's choir which made her want to do more. While in high school, Joyce visited Concordia College – St. Paul, MN. That visit, along with accompanying the children's choir, made her want to become a Lutheran School teacher. Her home congregation later merged with St. Stephens and became Christ the King Lutheran Church. Joyce continued to play there until leaving for college.

Joyce's first call as a Lutheran School Teacher in 1960 was to St. John's in Racine, WI and included playing the organ as needed. In 1964, Pastor Martin Cizmar called Joyce to play at Pentecost since the organist was getting married and moving away. She told him she could do it until he found someone else. She originally shared organ duties with another teacher at St. John's so she could attend there sometimes since she was still teaching there. One day when Joyce's car broke down, Mrs. Cizmar made special arrangements for a ride home for her – with a man named Bill Hasko. Mrs. Cizmar was very happy later when her plans to have Bill and Joyce together worked out and they were married!

Originally playing for the English services, Joyce also played for the Slovak service when the organist moved away. She played for the Spanish services when they first started up in the late 1960's, and helped out periodically when Primera Iglesia Luterana moved to their own building.

Mrs. Hasko has many favorite memories as Pentecost's organist, including playing for the ordination of Rev. Tom Konz and Rev. Carlos Puig; seeing her own children and grandson begin to play for services; and in general being able to work with all the different instrumentalists, soloists, and choirs. She reflects at how much fun it has been to watch the young kids grow in their musical abilities.

"Let every instrument be tuned for praise!
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise!
And may God give us strength to sing always:
Alleluia!"
(When in Our Music God is Glorified, LSB 796 v. 5)



A Rare and Unforgettable Moment

(A Minuscule Example of God's Creative Genius as Reflected in the First Article of the Creed)

by Pastor Ken Ballas, EM

Picture the scene – a beautiful June morning at the edge of Mill Stream Reservation in Cleveland's Metro Parks Emerald Necklace. Pausing briefly to observe a small flock of Cedar Waxwings enjoying ripening honey-suckle berries, I turned down a well-defined trail beneath rows of electric power lines. Having hardly advanced more than a few paces and with the rising sun at my back, a flurry of bird activity in a small nondescript dead tree abutting the trail stopped me in my tracks. Expecting perhaps to see a member of the flycatcher family on one of the exposed branches, I initially beheld instead a number of Robins including several recently fledged spotted juveniles. Perfect light conditions quickly alerted me to the realization that these thrushes were not alone as a female Northern or Baltimore Oriole, Gray Catbirds, Black-Capped Chickadees, and, yes, a female Cardinal busily engaged feeding a young Eastern Cowbird nearly the size of its foster parent were also present in the aforementioned tree.

Following the Cardinal's every move, the hungry Cowbird hopped from branch to branch as additional species flew in and out of the already crowded tree some perching but inches away from birds of an entirely different species. Practically unnoticed during these proceedings was the presence of a tiny female Ruby-Throated Hummingbird perched at the tip of one of the branches before a brilliantly plumaged male hummer whizzed by only moments later.

Meanwhile far above the steel power line towers, a Red-Tailed Hawk was being pursued by a solitary bird which upon closer inspection proved to be a male Oriole. Could this colorful blackbird have been the heroic mate of the female Oriole perched in the small tree in front of me? Because a Red-Tailed was much less of a threat to birds than certain other hawks, was it possible that instead of hiding from this familiar raptor at least some of the occupants of that heavily populated tree may have felt more secure maintaining a clear line of vision on the proceedings above them from their unobstructed vantage point? Finally, why did subsequent visits often find this particular tree occupied with multiple bird species with or without the presence of some bird of prey?

As if these unexpected combined sightings were not enough to take in simultaneously that morning, alighting in a bush between me and this amazing tree

was a Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher holding tightly in its beak a dragonfly-like insect nearly half as long as itself. Oblivious to my presence, he was preoccupied with figuring out how to ingest its "super-sized breakfast," a formidable task this little feathered sprite finally managed to accomplish before elegantly scraping the side of its beak on a napkin-like twiglet and darting off into the underbrush next to the trail. Gnatcatcher, indeed!

Clearly this was one of those "rare moments" literally overflowing with opportunities for experiencing firsthand in highly concentrated form common yet seldom observed samplings of avian behavior. The female Cardinal's compliance in satisfying the appetite of a ravenous young Cowbird recalled the wonderment of a summer scene decades earlier in Connecticut where I chanced upon two adult Cowbirds with a fully grown streaked-breast juvenile perched on the same branch between them. What primeval instinct motivated that still only days-old Cowbird to bond and with this parasitic duo (supposedly the fledgling's biological parents) who would likely "mentor" this youngster in propagating their race by victimizing scores of other potential foster parent species in a wide variety of habitats?

The fascinating display that materialized that morning in a matter of minutes was repeated to a slightly lesser degree the very next day as by walking the same trail in the opposite direction during an early evening stroll along with my wife and granddaughter resulted in a nearly equally amazing influx of species in the very same tree including in addition to multiple Robins and Catbirds, Common Flicker Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwings, Yellow Warbler and Song Sparrow.

That other hikers (some with leashed dogs) passed within a few feet of these perching birds without diminishing the steady flow of winged creatures from entering or leaving the exposed branches of what most would quickly dismiss as an unsightly seemingly useless candidate for a fireplace but which for a privileged few proved to be an unusually welcoming arboreal gathering place providing a veritable visual feast of what I choose to refer to as "God's birds" -- reason indeed to echo not only an ecological concern of "Woodman, spare that tree!" but also from a theological perspective paralleling the psalmist and hymn-writer's, "My God, how great Thou art" (cf. Psalm 104:2).

With the passing of Canadian and American Thanksgiving observances (and in the absence of any single day in our liturgical calendar to acknowledge the manifold blessings of creation and preservation) in anticipation of the sights and sounds of yet another spring, this article is intended not only to help us endure another harsh winter but also to serve as yet one added reason to praise our good and gracious God.

FAMILY FALL FESTIVAL DRAWS CROWDS TO ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST (EMPORIA VA)

by Anna Bocklegge

Making good use of our campus of eight-plus acres, our Evangelism Board planned a day of fun, festivities and fellowship, showing the love of God by sharing our blessings and resources with our neighbors.

The Family Fall Festival was born with one of the main components being a blood drive to honor the memory of two of our children who, within a period of 17 months, died accidental deaths. As we mourn the earthly loss of these children, we take comfort that Avery Drew Swenson and Mason Bayne Taylor knew Jesus as their Savior. These two cousins would have celebrated their tenth birthday this past summer. The families of Avery Drew and Mason were on hand at the festival to receive donations toward Memorial Scholarship Funds set up for each of the children and Virginia Blood Services reported a total of 32 life-giving units of blood collected.

The first Saturday in October was a gorgeous, sunny day. An awesome line of classic cars and antique tractors on the front lawn along U S Hwy 58 attracted local residents as well as other motorists.

Kids had a great time getting their faces painted, playing lots of games, enjoying wagon rides and train rides, and romping in a corn crib. Older 'kids' enjoyed the sounds of The Bracey Junction Band, whose members play both traditional Gospel and Gospel bluegrass music. Many strolled the grounds, checked out the vehicles from Virginia Wheels and Southside Virginia Antique Tractor Club and enjoyed hot dogs and homemade ice cream. The local rescue squad was on hand with coloring books and other handouts for the kiddies. St. John L.C. brochures, tracts, copies of The Gospel of John and pocket crosses were offered to the neighbors of our community. Stacked hay bales, brightly colored mums, pumpkins and signs with God's Word made for great photo opportunities.

The events of the day concluded as everyone gathered at the foot of the cross in front of the church. Pastor Stephen Bocklage led the group in prayer prior to a balloon ascension in celebration of the lives of Avery Drew Swenson and Mason Bayne Taylor.

The Family Fall Festival was funded largely by members' donations of money, food, signage, and supplies. Corporate sponsors who helped were McDonalds, Hardees, Sadler Oil, Veliky's Service Center, and Marc Bric Displays. Many volunteer hours of planning and work went into this labor of love.



We hope to make this festival an annual event, on the first Saturday each October

NEWS . . . NEWS . . . READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Dr. Doug's Disaster Corner

We had the privilege to attend the LCMS International Disaster Response Conference at the Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN, from September 23rd– 26th, 2014.

We heard the following reports:

- A. Refugee Relief efforts in Lebanon
- B. The 2014 Chilean Earthquake and City Fire
- C. The 2014 Typhoon Response in the Philippines
- D. The continuing Hurricane Sandy Recovery Efforts on the East Coast.
- E. The Pilgrim, NE, Tornado Response
- F. The Flood Response in Pensacola, FL.

The overall theme through all the reports was the effect of the Gospel in the lives of those affected by the disaster. Again and again we heard that sharing God's love and mercy with those who are suffering, along with the relief supplies, gave those individuals affected by the disaster the hope they needed and wanted in their time of trial. The love of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ has a very strong comforting and healing power.

In the Lord's Service,
Doug & Nona Schipull
SELC– DDR Coordinators

What Have Our Selc Youth Been up To?

Luther Leaguers Adopt Vitor and Joao Paulo!

At our district youth gathering at Family of Christ, Tampa FL this past summer, we adopted two needy children in Brazil as our mission project for the year. You will learn more about brothers Vitor and Joao Paulo in the months ahead.

With the help of Jenna Geyer, SELC Luther League Mission Director, the Racine youth group prepared Christmas and birthday cards to mail to Vitor & Joao Paulo and their family members.



CALENDAR UPDATES

2014

SEPTEMBER

- 20-23 Council of Presidents
- 22-25 Districts' Executive Assistants

OCTOBER

- 6-8 SELC General Pastoral Conference
- 8-9 SELC Board of Directors
- 16-17 Council of Presidents
- 16-17 Regional Gathering for Great Plains and Great Lakes Regions

NOVEMBER

- 5-7 Lutheran Haven Board of Trustees
- 13-14 Dispute Resolution Process Training
- 16-20 Council of Presidents
- 21-23 LCEF Annual Meeting

2015

JANUARY

- 24 SMP Ordinations, Family of Christ, Tampa FL
- 25 SMP Ordinations, Holy Cross, Lake Mary FL
- 26-28 SELC Board of Directors
- 4-6 Lutheran Haven Board of Trustees

FEBRUARY

- 10-13 Council of Presidents

APRIL

- 25 Assignments of Vicars and Placement of Candidates

A LEGACY FOR THE LORD'S WORK

by Robin Paris, Gift Planning Counselor

Sometimes it takes suffering to make us strong in our faith, and we can use it for good. We all would prefer that life would be simple, pain free, and happy. But if we are realistic, we take heed to Christ's words: *In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.* John 16:33

He suffered – and died for our sins. Praise God, He rose again...for us. Because he loved us so much, he was willing to bear the ridicule, the beatings, the crown of thorns, the brutality of the crucifixion. How dare we think our lives should be trouble-free?

Paul wrote in II Corinthians 1:4, "He comforts us when we suffer, so that when others suffer, we are able to comfort them by the same comfort we have received from God." We now can reach out and share from an honest perspective...reach out with love, compassion, a listening ear, and with gifts to ministries close to their hearts and ours.

One widow who had lost a daughter, a grandchild, and a son-in-law reflected, "I'm grateful that I can help people through their own hard times. I want to be generous in ways that give me the peace of mind to know that my money will be used to do the Lord's work.

She goes on, "The main thing I tell everyone is DO IT TODAY. You are not promised tomorrow. I've included the ministries I love in my Lifetime Plan because I know I can leave a legacy that will continue far beyond my life, and there's great comfort and solace in that. My heart truly believes in the mission and outreach of our Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and I have confidence that the LCMS Foundation will carry out my wishes."

Are you peaceful that your plans are in order? Robin Paris, our Gift Planning Counselor, is ready to assist you with that, at no cost to you. Email her at Robin.Paris@lfnd.org or call her at her office: 407-333-0797, Ext 1103. You can also call her cell: 937-477-9713. It may be as simple as a beneficiary change on a contract, or as complex as re-doing decades-old documents or gifting out-of-state assets.

As Paul says, "Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He is the Father who is compassionate and the God who gives comfort."

This is your newsletter . . . Articles & Photos are welcome!

The Lutheran Beacon - Gail Peterson

email: gailpete37@yahoo.com

Please submit articles as separate attachments in the program you write in. [e.g. Word Perfect, Word, etc.], **NOT** as part of your e-mail.

Photos must be submitted as *separate attachments* [NOT as part of your article--JPEG format preferred.] You *may* send multiple photos in one email.

DEADLINE FOR THE DECEMBER ISSUE IS NOVEMBER 12TH

For up-to-the-minute news and to view *The Lutheran Beacon* in full color
Visit the SELC Website: www.selc.lcms.org

The SELC District Convention
Hosted by Zion Lutheran Church, Clark NJ
Thursday, April 9 - Sunday, April 12, 2015
(This is the weekend AFTER Easter)

Thursday, April 9 -- Travel day

Afternoon:

Board of Directors pre-Convention meeting
Convention Committees
Registration of Delegates & Guests

Evening:

Opening Worship Service with Holy Communion

Friday, April 10 --

A.M. **Circuit Forums**

P.M. District & Synodical Reports; Election of District President

Saturday, April 11 --

Finances: 2016-2019 Work Program; *Elections of all other Offices*

Sunday, April 12 --

Memorial Service and Installation of Officers

NECESSARY DEADLINES (revised and simplified):

Tuesday, November 18, 2014

SEND TO SELC SECRETARY: Rev. Chris Ongstad, 4041 W. 120th St., Alsip IL 60803

1. Credentials and Registrations for each Congregational Pastoral and Layperson Voting Delegate (plus alternate layperson delegate)
2. Nominations for Circuit Visitor (Counselor)

SEND TO SELC DISTRICT PRESIDENT: Rev. Carl Krueger, 6240 S. Elaine Ave., Cudahy WI 53110

1. All reports by Officers and Committee Chairmen
2. Congregational or Circuit Forum generated Overtures (Resolutions).

Tuesday, January 20, 2015

SEND TO SELC SECRETARY: Rev. Chris Ongstad, 4041 W. 120th St., Alsip IL 60803

1. Nominations for District President and District Vice-presidents

Tuesday, February 17, 2015

SEND TO SELC SECRETARY: Rev. Chris Ongstad, 4041 W. 120th St., Alsip IL 60803

1. Credential Forms for all Advisory Delegates
(Any Rostered Professional Church Worker who is not a Voting Delegate)

SEND TO SELC DISTRICT PRESIDENT: Rev. Carl Krueger, 6240 S. Elaine Ave., Cudahy WI 53110

1. Nominations for ALL District Elected Positions (other than DP or VPs)

PLEASE NOTE:

SELC CONGREGATIONS should hold a Voters' Assembly this Fall 2014 to:

- Elect a Voting Delegate (and Alternate), who is able to attend the Circuit Forum, the District Convention, and *potentially* the LCMS National Convention (if elected to represent the Circuit), to be held in Milwaukee WI. July 9-16, 2016
- Include in the Congregation's 2015 Budget
 - o \$2/Communicant as a District Convention Assessment
 - o Travel, food, and lodging expenses for Congregation's Delegate

SERVANTS IN WORSHIP - NOVEMBER, 2014

DATE	TIME	USHER	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	LECTOR	ACOLYTE	ALTAR GUILD	COUNTER	GREETER	PROJECTIONIST
02	8:00 am 10:30 am	Martha Stevens Tom Griffin	Jim Boltz	Donna Judd Donna Meilahn	Onen Simenon Kaitlyn Shelton	Barbara Plekosz Jeanne Simovic	Terry E. Carole Vrshek	Joy Maddox Carole Vrshek	Mike Meilahn Theresa Boltz
09	8:00 am 10:30 am	Martha Stevens Tom Griffin	Ron Weidner	Faith Schulz	Chris Caban Carly Potts	Barbara Plekosz Jeanne Simovic	Dorothy Lux Doris Kraehl	Joy Maddox Carole Vrshek Martha Stevens Donna Judd	Mike Meilahn Theresa Boltz
16	8:00 am 10:30 am	Martha Stevens Tom Griffin	Bob Long	Joy Maddox Sue Wilczynski	Geno Caban Kaitlyn Shelton	Barbara Plekosz Jeanne Simovic	Donna Meilahn Faith Schulz	Joy Maddox Carole Vrshek	Mike Meilahn Theresa Boltz
23	8:00 am 10:30 am	Martha Stevens Tom Griffin	Bob Schultz	Aimee Wilczynski	Onen Simenon Carly Potts	Barbara Plekosz Jeanne Simovic	Dorothy Lux Doris Kraehl	Joy Maddox Carole Vrshek	Mike Meilahn Theresa Boltz
26	7:30 pm	TBD	Bob Schultz	Pamela Rutkowski	Kaitlyn Shelton	Barbara Plekosz Jeanne Simovic	Pam Rutkowski Marye Meyer	Barbara Plekosz	Theresa Boltz
30	8:00 am 10:30 am	Martha Stevens Tom Griffin		Liz Wilczynski	Chris Caban Carly Potts	Barbara Plekosz Jeanne Simovic	Pauline Griffin Nancy Felber	Joy Maddox Carole Vrshek	Mike Meilahn Theresa Boltz

*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do,
do it all FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.*

1 Cor. 10:31

NOVEMBER 2014

Church Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm, 708.597.5209 hclc@hc-lc.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 All Saints Day 10:00am Musicians
2 Food Pantry Sunday 8:00am Worship (C) (Traditional) 9:15am Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30am Worship (Contemporary) MOVE CLOCKS BACK 1 HOUR	3 4:30 PM Ladies Bible Class 7:30 PM Southwest Chorus	4 4:30 pm Food Pantry 7:30 PM Lifelight Bible Class ELECTION DAY	5	6 9:00am Srs. Group	7 Pastor's Day Off	8 10:00am Musicians
9 75TH Anniversary 8:00am Worship (Traditional) 9:15am Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30am Worship (C) (Contemporary) 3:00pm Anniversary Worship (C) 5:00pm Anniversary Banquet	10 4:30 PM Ladies Bible Class 7:30 PM Southwest Chorus 7:30 pm Church Council	11 5:00 PM Comm. Meal 7:30 PM Lifelight Bible Class Veterans' Day	12	13 9:00am Srs. Group	14 Pastor's Day Off Emma Claessens (b) 6:30pm Wedding Rehearsal	15 10:00am Musicians 3:00pm Vazquez/Wedster Wedding
16 8:00am Worship (C)(Traditional) 9:15am Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30am Worship (Contemporary)	17 4:30 PM Ladies Bible Class 7:30 PM Southwest Chorus	18 7:30 PM Lifelight Bible Class	19 Edna Wendt (b)	20 9:00am Srs. Group 1:00pm Altar Guild 3:00pm Evangelism 4:00pm NEM Nancy Fehser (b)	21 Pastor's Day Off	22 9:30 AM Bd. Of Education 10:00AM Musicians
23 8:00am Worship (Traditional) 9:15am Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30am Worship (C) (Contemporary) Disciple Items Due	24 4:30 PM Ladies Bible Class 7:30 PM Southwest Chorus	25 7:30 PM Lifelight Bible Class	26 Joyce Ongstad (b) 7:30pm Worship (C)	27 9:00am Srs. Group	28 Pastor's Day Off	29 10:00am Musicians 11:00am Elders
30 8:00am Worship (Traditional) 9:15am Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30am Worship (C) (Contemporary) First Sunday In Advent						

Get TIME on Your Side

8:30

Manage TIME God's Way