

2014 Convention

The dates for this year's Synod Convention are June 16–19, with our usual Synod Sunday Service on June 15. The essayist this year will be Rev. Thomas Rank of Scarville, Minnesota. Pastor Rank also serves on our ELS Doctrine Committee. The theme we have chosen for that week is: "Engaging Others With Jesus in Times of Trial."

Keep in your prayers

Mr. Al Holman, 83, a former member of our Board for Home Missions, died suddenly at his home in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. Please keep his wife Alice and the Holman family in your prayers as we take comfort in the promises of life eternal through the holy Christ-child.

Mrs Signe Olsen, 96, mother of Lois Jaeger who is the former Director of Fine Arts at our Bethany Lutheran College, died on December 23. Please keep the Jaeger and Olsen families in your prayers.

Upcoming meetings for January

January 5 – Preach at Bethany Lutheran, Princeton, MN

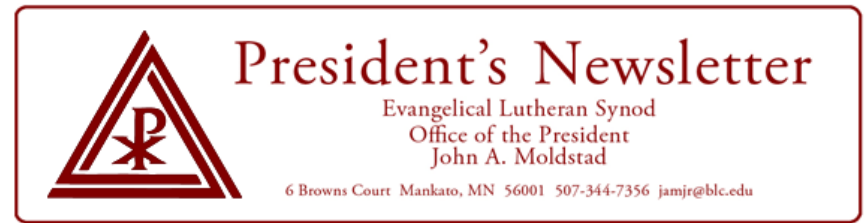
January 9 – Centennial Committee

January 14 – Synod Review Committee

January 21 – Planning & Coordinating Committee

January 22-23 – Board for Youth Outreach

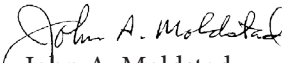
January 30-31 – Board for Home Outreach



January 2014

Dear Fellow Workers in Christ's Kingdom:

You are now entering a work zone. Drive with caution. The signs are meant to catch our attention. We want to be alert. We probably sit up and take notice more efficiently. Does this happen as we "drive into" a new calendar year? What are the dangers?—the opportunities? No matter what is thrown our way in 2014, we know—as the writer of Hebrews stresses—"God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.' So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid...'" (Hebrews 13:5,6). With the free and full salvation God has guaranteed us already through the atoning work of his Son, we can resolutely say: Let's drive ahead!


John A. Moldstad

Seminary Graduation

On Tuesday, December 3, 2013, two men graduated from our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary: Paul Webber, who has vicared at Mt. Olive Lutheran in Mankato, Minnesota, and Michael Willitz, who served his vicarage in Sutherlin, Oregon.



Candidate Assignment

The synod's Assignment Committee met on December 5, 2013, and assigned Candidate of Theology Paul Webber to Hope Lutheran in West Jordan, Utah.

BLC Graduation

Nineteen students graduated at Bethany Lutheran College's midterm ceremony on December 13, 2013. Prof. Mark Harstad, who graduated in 1974 from our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, was the speaker for the occasion.



News from World Missions

Our synod's Board for World Missions reports that early in 2014 the Lutheran Mission-Salvation—India (LMSI) is planning to ordain 14 men into the pastoral ministry. These pastors will be serving in the districts of Rajahmundry and Hyderabad. Please keep these leaders in your prayers as they prepare to shepherd their respective congregations.

The primary partnership for the Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC) is now, as of January 1, 2014, designated as our sister synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). Gift of Life continues to be sponsored by Thoughts of Faith (ELS). At the end of 2013 much political unrest was reported in the country, and we ask all to petition our Lord for protection for the membership of the ULC, as well as for all the citizens of the country of Ukraine.

Release from Call

As of January 1, 2014, Rev. Bruce Schwark has requested and been granted a release from his call at Pinehurst Lutheran in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The request was made for personal and family reasons.

Retirement Announced

Rev. Brad Homan has announced his retirement from his pastorate at Our Saviour's Lutheran in Madison, Wisconsin. The retirement will be going into effect as of February 1. We thank Pastor Homan for his 27 years of service at Our Saviour's.

Clergy Roster Item

Rev. Leonard Buelow no longer is listed on our ELS clergy roster. Pastor Buelow has accepted a call to an independent congregation in the Green Bay, Wisconsin, area.



Sign of What's Ahead

Rev. Brad Kerkow, pastor of Hope Lutheran in Cedar Park, Texas, stands next to the newly erected large sign on the property where the congregation hopes to build some day. Please pray for our home mission congregation in the Austin, Texas, vicinity.

Preschool Visits Bethany Seminary

On December 13, 2013, the Jesus Lambs at Peace Preschool from North Mankato, Minnesota, came for its annual visit to the seminary. Here one of the preschool sections is pictured listening to Pres. Gaylin Schmeling present a devotion ("Candy Cane Sermon").



Planning and Coordinating Committee

Our synod's largest board, the Planning and Coordinating Committee (P&C), will be meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2014. The duties assigned to the P&C are proposing a 2015 congregational contribution budget to be brought for adoption to this year's convention; reviewing and evaluating the synod's work in light of our current strategic plan; and making recommendations to the synod for unified long-range plans.