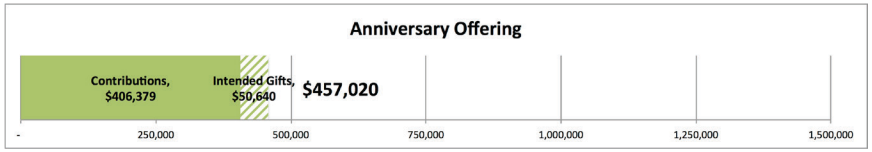
Anniversary Offering Update

Black Friday is upon us. Merchants give huge discounts hoping to draw us into their stores and onto their websites to make those holiday purchases. But we know the true Holy Day is when our Savior was born as the Savior of the world. No greater gift can anyone give than Christ, the one and only Savior from sin and death. His coming to be one of us is an act of pure love for you and for me.

Will you help us this Holy Season to spread the one all-sufficient joy found only in the Gospel? Please consider the generosity of our Lord and give a gift to the Anniversary Offering in support of the missions of our synod. Visit us at els.org/offering to learn more or to give online. Feel free to call 507-469-9656 if you need assistance.

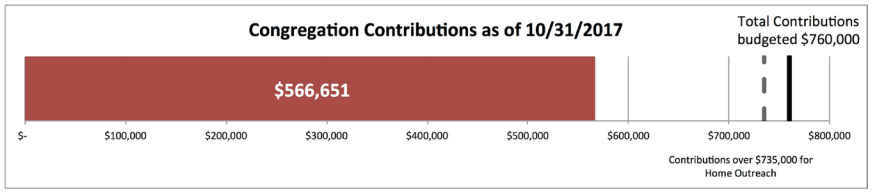
Our prayer is that we can, at the very least, reach the $500,000 mark in cash gifts and promised gifts by New Years Day! As you plan your giving, prayerfully consider that we would like to reach the $1,000,000 mark by the end of next year, 2018.

Here is the latest update on our giving to date for the offering:



Upcoming Events

November 28–30 – Informal meetings with LCMS
December 4–5 – Doctrine Committee
December 4 – Doctrine Committee meets with Doctrinal Commission of the WELS Conference of Presidents
December 12 – Synod administrative staff meeting
January 16 – Planning & Coordinating Committee
January 21 – President preaching and presenting at Hartland and Manchester, Minnesota
January 25–26 – Board for Home Outreach



To receive this newsletter directly to your email visit els.org/subscribe

President's Newsletter

Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Office of the President
John A. Moldstad
6 Browns Court Mankato, Minnesota 56001
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December 2017

Dear Fellow Workers in Christ's Kingdom:

Christmas is the most peaceful time of the year! … Or, is it? Of course, it should be. So many activities on the calendar, so many preparations, so many rehearsals for services and programs can be anything but calming. Yet, the real rest of Christmas is not a sleepy snooze in front of a chestnut-roasting fireplace. It is a deep rest and peace emanating from that little sleeping Child in the manger who is the Son of God come into our world to bring us the peace of God that transcends all human understanding (Philippians 4:7). No greater rest comes for any one of us than knowing with absolute assurance that our sins—though they are many and are as scarlet—have been whited out by the entrance of God into our sin-laden world. He came to take our place in order to earn for us the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life! The bustle of getting ready for gatherings may sap our energy. But the joy and excitement we have over the greatest gift from God ever given to you and me and the entire world penetrates our souls through Spirit-worked faith and carries us day by day closer to a sinless and timeless bliss with our dear Savior! Have a meaningful celebration of the birth of the Prince of Peace!

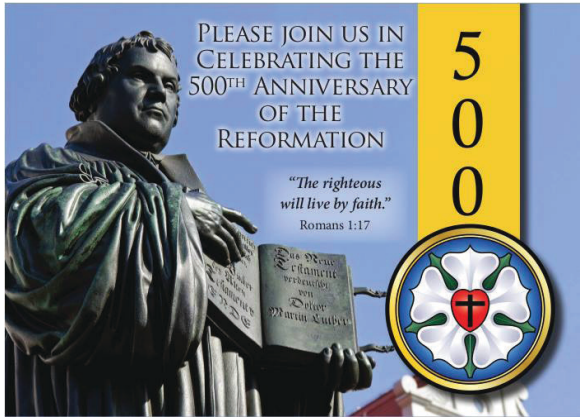
Blessings in the holy Christ-child,

John A. Moldstad

John A. Moldstad

Veterans Day Parade

Members of Divine Mercy Lutheran in Hudson Oaks, Texas, participated in a November 11 parade honoring men and women who serve in our military. Pastor James Kassera is the new pastor of this mission congregation. Our prayers go with Divine Mercy in all of its gospel outreach efforts.



Reformation Celebrations Held Throughout the World

A special Reformation celebration was held October 27–28 by our mission in Peru. The celebration included a pastors' conference, sporting events between the Martín Lutero and Jesús Redentor schools, choral ensembles, artistic presentations, and a festival service with communion.

Pastor Antonio Vilcez Garcia conducted the liturgy, and Pastor Segundo Gutierrez preached the sermon for the festival service in Lima.

The three ELS pastors of northwest Ohio hosted a joint ELS Reformation Service in Bowling Green. Each pastor preached a sermonette on one of the three "Solas" of the Reformation. Pictured (at right) are Pastors Paul Lange, Peter Heyn, and Richard Tragasz.

On October 29, 2017, at Bethany Lutheran in Ames, Iowa, your synod president had opportunity to preach a Reformation Day sermon and to present on the work of our synod. Pastor Marty Hoesch (wife Catherine) serves the Bethany congregation. On that previous Saturday, the congregation joined other ELS and WELS people in the Des Moines area for a joint Reformation festival at Beautiful Savior Lutheran (WELS) in West Des Moines, Iowa. That congregation is now served by former ELS pastor, the Rev. Greg Sahlstrom.

Quilt for Seminarian's Family

On November 19, the women from Immanuel Lutheran Church at Audubon, Minnesota, presented second-year Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary student Karim Yaghleji with a specially-made quilt. The quilt was intended for his daughter, Amira, and it depicts the story of Noah's Ark. Karim is originally from Syria and was at the congregations of Immanuel Lutheran in Audubon and Calvary Lutheran in Ulen for a presentation on Gospel outreach.

Parade in Indianola, Iowa

One of the outreach activities for members of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Indianola, Iowa, was participating in a local parade this fall. The congregation was established in 1999 and currently is served by Vicar Christian Walz.

Synod Centennial

As a Christmas gift this year, consider giving the ELS history book, *Proclaim His Wonders: A pictorial history of the ELS.* If you already know the synod's history, the 400 photographs will illustrate the stories that you know so well. If you do not know the synod's history, this book will introduce you to our ELS family. Order from the Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore for $20 plus $5 shipping (700 Luther Drive, Mankato MN 56001 or 800-944-1722).

Another possible Christmas gift is the three-inch anniversary ornament (pewter finish) of the ELS anniversary logo. We thank the ELS Historical Society for producing this ornament. Order from the ELS Ottesen Museum for $15 (or $10 dollars for members of the ELS Historical Society) plus $2.50 shipping (6 Browns Court, Mankato MN 56001).

Heritage Hymns

For the ELS centennial in 2018, our synod's Worship Committee has produced an "ELS Heritage Hymns" resource. Hymns of Scandinavian origin were selected for congregational use throughout the year, and summaries are provided for each hymn. This resource along with a file of the hymns can be downloaded at http://els.org/els-100/.