

President's Newsletter

News from Peru

At its November 12 meeting, the Board of Trustees authorized a four-year loan of \$100,000 to the Board for World Outreach at 0% interest in response to a request for the stated amount to be used for purchase of land by the “Dios Es Mi Fortaleza” congregation in Chimbote. This is part of a concerted effort by the congregation to do gospel outreach in a nearby vicinity.

Bethany Lutheran College

At the November meeting of the ELS Board of Regents, and authorized by our Board of Trustees, a resolution was approved to refinance the college's existing loan of \$10.4M using tax exempt bonding at a rate of 2.5% for ten years. This action will greatly assist the college in the next decade as it continues to meet its financial obligations.

Year-End Synod Offerings

The Giving Counselor has sent out envelopes to all our congregations for the challenge of meeting the \$780,000 congregational contribution budget for 2019. Especially note that all funds over \$740,000 are designated for Bethany Lutheran College. Pastors and lay leaders, please do encourage your congregation to make use of the synod giving envelopes. If you have any questions or if you need more envelopes, contact Pastor Dan Basel at the synod office (507-344-7311).

Upcoming Events

December 2–3 – Doctrine Committee

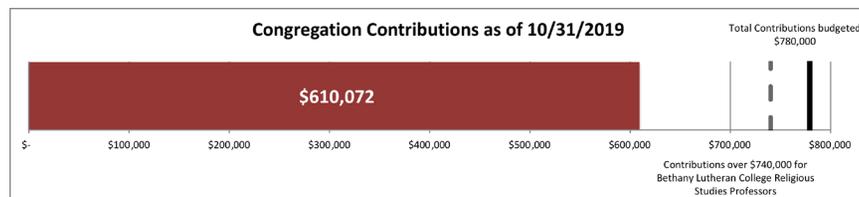
December 9–10 – Continued informal discussions with LCMS

December 10 – Open House at the Ottesen Museum

January 23 – Committee for Archives and History

January 24 – Synod Review Committee

January 27–28 – Board for Lutheran Schools



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Office of the President

John A. Moldstad

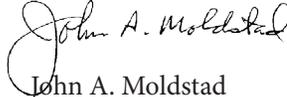
6 Browns Court Mankato, Minnesota 56001

507-344-7356 jamjr@blc.edu

December 2019

Dear Members and Friends of the ELS:

We are in the “stirring” time of the year. This is not a reference to baking. Nor do we have in mind the political proceedings. While we may find calendars busy with all kinds of activities, this too is not why we speak of the season upon us as “stirring.” Interestingly, *Advent* in the church year has a number of short prayers, or collects, used in our church services that begin with the words, “Stir up...” For example, we have this prayer that asks God to have us be “stirred” or moved or motivated in our faith-life, repenting of our sins and welcoming the salvation we have received from God’s grace through our Savior Jesus who has come in the flesh: “Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, so that by His coming we may worship You with pure minds; through the same, Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. Amen” (ELH, p. 147). May we all be stirred, not with turmoil and anxiety, but with sincere and joyful pondering of all the blessings we have through the miracle of the incarnate Son of God entering our world for each of us!


John A. Moldstad

Groundbreaking

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on November 11, 2019 (Veterans Day) for a new military monument commissioned by the



Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The monument will be built on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College, in Mankato, Minnesota. For more information on the monument project visit: els.org/monument



Dedication at Mount Olive

On November 10, Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Mankato, Minnesota, held a dedication of their new organ and church addition, as well as the laying of the cornerstone. President John Moldstad preached for the occasion on Psalm 103, with the theme “Praise God for All of His Goodness.” The building project has included a spacious narthex, office facilities, a new kindergarten room, and space for youth activities. Seventy years ago, the congregation moved from Bethany Lutheran College to its location at Marsh and McConnell and erected its first sanctuary. Today Mt. Olive is our synod’s largest congregation and is served by Pastors John Petersen and Luke Ulrich.

Appointment of Advisory Member

At the request of the Board for World Outreach, Rev. Herb Huhnerkoch is being appointed as an advisory member to the board. Herb, together with his wife, Barb, recently fulfilled a three-month encouraging and mentoring trip to our sister church in Chile. This advisory appointment is for a two-year term.

Pastor in Colloquy Program

Rev. Lee Kuhns successfully completed Part I of his pastoral colloquy on November 21. Arrangements are being made to move into Part II early in 2020. Lee is a former pastor of the AFLC (Association of Free Lutheran Congregations). He and his wife, Pam, reside in El Campo, Texas. Members of this Colloquy Committee are: President G. Schmeling, Prof. Thomas Rank, Vice President G. Obenberger, Pastor John Petersen, Mr. Greg Costello, Mr. Keith Wiederhoeft, and President J. Moldstad. Any pertinent information for the colloquy should be directed to the office of the synod president.



Flood Relief in India

Our Board for World Outreach recently sent substantial assistance to leaders in the LMSI which has been of help to residents of India as they recover from devastating flooding. In the photo we see members of our congregations distributing shawls and blankets to those in need.



Change for Hope Lutheran in Leander, Texas

For the last couple of years, our mission congregation in the Austin, Texas, area has been served by two pastors: Rev. Brad Kerkow and Rev. Dan Ruiz. This was part of a two-pastor approach suggested and supplemented by the Board for Home Outreach as the new building was being erected. That plan worked well. Today the congregation has 138 members and an average attendance listed for the month of September as 82. Now, Pastor Ruiz has accepted a call to Faith Lutheran in San Antonio, Texas. His installation is set for December 15. We thank Dan for his co-pastoring at Hope, and we pray God’s continued blessings will be with both of our congregations along the I-35 corridor.

News from Chile

As noted above, Pastor Huhnerkoch was in Linares lately, providing pastoral services and giving guidance to the congregation in that city, which is about 200 miles south of Santiago where other congregations of the Christian Church of the Lutheran Reformation of the Republic of Chile are located. We are pleased to report that a member from Linares, Mr. Jon Gross, is currently in an online instruction program with our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary as he prepares to become the pastor of the congregation. May God bless his training, and also the church members at Linares.