

Notice from our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary

There still is a need for vicarage requests this year. The vicar year in our ELS is the final year (fourth) in the seminary training cycle. If your congregation may be interested in the possibility of having an assigned vicar, we urge you to contact President Gaylin Schmeling (507-344-7855). The congregation is expected to reimburse the seminary (\$20,000) and provide total housing. Each vicarage is expected to cover a time span of eleven months.

Statistics

Statistical Reporting for 2019 is due February 15. You can complete the reporting form online: evangelicallutheransynod.org/statistics/.

Grateful for Gifts From our Congregations

We thank God for having moved the hearts of members in our ELS congregations to bring forth offerings for the year 2019, surpassing our budget for the calendar year. Our congregational contribution portion of the budget for the synod was \$780,000. The total contributions as of January 10, 2020, came to \$821,889. The excess amount has gone toward our Bethany Lutheran College for use in the religion department.

Upcoming Events

February 3–4 – ELS Board of Regents

February 5–6 – Board of Trustees

February 8 – Historical Society

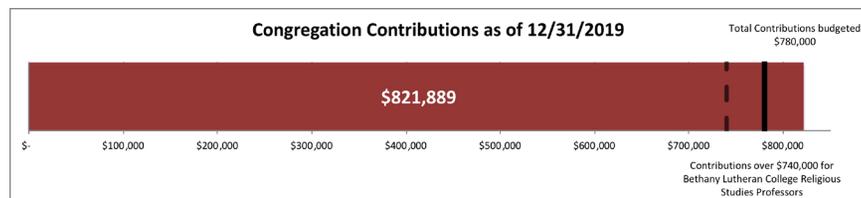
February 18 – Planning and Coordinating Committee

March 5–6 – Board for Home Outreach

March 16–17 – Doctrine Committee

March 20 – Synod Review Committee

March 22 – Mission trip to Kenya planned



President's Newsletter



Office of the President

John A. Moldstad

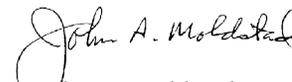
6 Browns Court Mankato, Minnesota 56001

507-344-7356 jamjr@blc.edu

February 2020

Dear Members and Friends of the ELS:

A major dichotomy between Christianity and the religions of the world is this: Religious systems of the globe depict human beings seeking after god, while Christianity presents *God* seeking after human beings. The Christian faith tells of the great news for all sinners that God, in the Person of Jesus, has done everything necessary for our forgiveness and salvation. It even tells how the faith necessary for obtaining eternal life is worked in individuals entirely by God the Holy Spirit. Therefore, every aspect to salvation is a *free gift* from God's grace! What a loving and assuring message this is for not only you and me, but for so many around us who question God's love or who doubt their standing before the Maker of the universe. Is it not the plan of our Lord to use you and me, ones already so blessed, to touch another needy soul?



John A. Moldstad

Norseland Lutheran Sanctuary Rededication

On Sunday, January 12, 2020, Norseland Lutheran Church (St. Peter, Minnesota) rededicated their recently restored sanctuary. The floor-to-ceiling project is already debt-free thanks to several large legacies and the generous gifts of the membership. God grant that this historic house worship continue to direct hearts and minds for years to come toward the Savior who gathers and sustains His own there.



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News from our Board for World Outreach

We are thankful for a grant that has been received enabling the start of a preschool in the Peruvian Amazona village called Parinari. This gift should assist with recruitment for the school currently competing with a public school that attracts students away from the village. Also, in the Amazon region, we understand that certain Shawi villages have suffered from recent flooding. At this point in time we have no updates on how this has impacted our current congregations.



Pictured here are children from the Paranari village in front of the church, where plans are being made for the nearby preschool building. With the group are the Rev. Matthew Behmer (left) and the Rev. Jaime Cortez (right).

Australia Request

Our Redeemer Lutheran in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, served by the Rev. Dan Finn has requested the establishment of a relationship with our synod's Board for World Outreach. The congregation is an independent church in fellowship with our synod, but it desires a stronger connection with our board for the purpose of outreach and mission planning. There are no plans at the present to request any funding from the board. Concerning the recent fires in Australia, we are pleased to report that none of the members in our church(es) were directly affected, even as we do pray for the citizens of that nation in the recovery efforts.

Board for Home Outreach News

We are pleased to hear that Hope Lutheran in Farmington, Minnesota, now records a membership of 127. Average worship attendance in the month of December was 70 compared to 55 in 2018. Currently there are people in adult instruction. Pastor Dan Oberer serves the Hope church.

Colloquy

We welcome the Rev. Lee Kuhns to our ELS clergy roster. On January 16, 2020, the Colloquy Committee resolved to acknowledge Pastor Kuhns as successfully completing his colloquy into the ELS. At present, Lee and his wife Pam, who reside in El Campo, Texas, are communicant members of our Hope, Leander, Texas, congregation. The Rev. Kuhns is now eligible to receive a pastoral call to one of the vacancies in our synod. His application for permanent membership in the synod will be brought forward for ratification at our June convention.



Pictured are: Greg Costello, John Petersen, Thomas Rank, Lee Kuhns, John Moldstad, Gaylin Schmeling, Keith Wiederhoeft. Not pictured: Glenn Obenberger.

Installation in Ohio

The Rev. Kurtis Friemuth was installed at Peace Lutheran, Deshler, Ohio, on Sunday, January 19, 2020. Rev. Paul Lange preached the sermon for the occasion; Rev. Patrick Ernst served as liturgist; and the circuit visitor, Rev. Paul Schneider, performed the rite of installation. Other pastors (WELS) who participated



in the service were (pictured in second row, left to right): Rev. Matthew Nowak, Rev. Alois Schmitzer, Rev. Thomas Meissner, and Rev. Robert Krueger.