

Ordination in Sweden

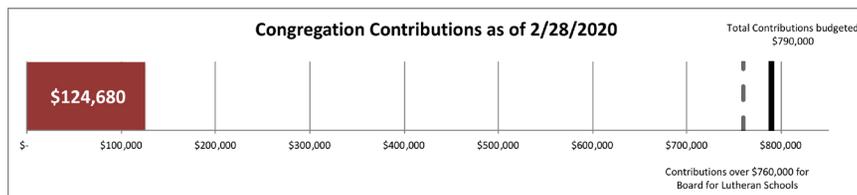
Candidate of Theology Bjarte Edvardsen, who attended classes (both in person and online) at our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, was ordained at a special service on February 1, 2020, in our sister synod, the Lutheran Confessional Church of Sweden



(LBK-Sweden). Bjarte, together with his wife Ingela and children, resides in Umea, Sweden where his new pastoral charge is serving the Immanuel congregation in that vicinity. Pictured for the laying on of hands are: Rev. Egil Edvardsen (Bjarte's father, who serves in Stavanger, Norway), Mr. Richard Lindmark, Rev. Stefan Hedkvist, and Rev. Peter Oman. We rejoice that God has raised up another shepherd to do the work of the Good Shepherd in the lands of Scandinavia.

Service of Thanksgiving

A special service of thanksgiving was held on Sunday, January 19, at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, to mark the congregation's blessing from God in now being debt-free and having the title to its property. Pictured is the ceremony that was held immediately after the service, in which Mr. Jim Bonnell, a member of the ELS Planning and Coordinating Committee, and representing the synod, formally presented the deed to the church, as represented by the children and youth of the congregation. The special service was followed by a presentation on the history of the Redeemer property and by a catered lunch. This event was touted as a reunion/homecoming event, and many former members of the congregation were present for this special occasion. Also present as honored guests were Dr. William and Lynne Kessel. Pastor Kessel was the first ELS home missionary in the Phoenix/Scottsdale area, in 1985-86.



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President's Newsletter



Office of the President

John A. Moldstad

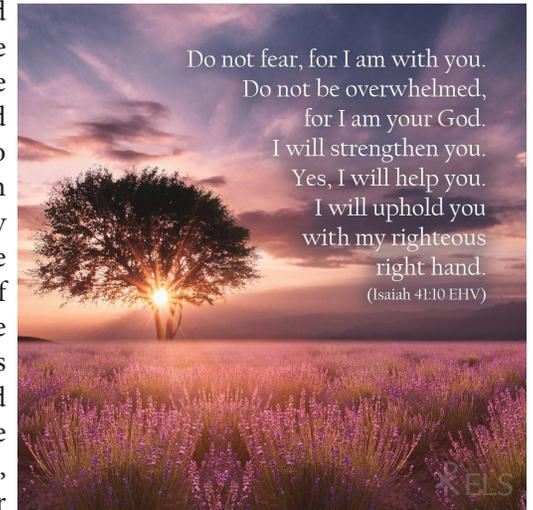
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April 2020

Dear Members and Friends of the ELS:

Our synod's hymnbook, the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (ELH, 1996), contains many wonderful devotional prayers, touching on a wide variety of topics. There are day-by-day morning and evening prayers (pp. 167-171) and there are prayers that deal with disease and death (p. 172). One of the short prayers especially is appropriate as we globally, nationally, and personally cope with the COVID-19 challenges: "Almighty God, You forgive all our iniquities and heal all our diseases, and have proclaimed Your name to be the Lord who heals us and You have sent Your Son to bear our sicknesses: Look in mercy upon Your unworthy servants, pardon and forgive us our transgressions, and of Your lovingkindness remove the plague of sickness which You have allowed to come upon us. This we ask according to Your will, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen." (If you would like to order a hymnbook for your home, please order from our Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore: 1-800-944-1722; email: bookstore@blc.edu)



John A. Moldstad

Resources Available

As we face uncertainty with a spreading COVID-19 coronavirus, we would like to remind you of these resources and devotional materials:

- A reminder that we do not need to fear because God our Father is in control: <https://els.org/2020/03/13/are-you-afraid/>
- A Prayer as We Face the Spread of COVID-19 Coronavirus: <https://els.org/2020/02/25/a-prayer-as-we-face-the-spread-of-covid-19-coronavirus/> and A Prayer for Our Nation During the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic <https://els.org/2020/03/15/a-prayer-for-our-nation-during-the-covid-19-coronavirus-pandemic/>
- Hand-washing is recommended to prevent the spread of the virus. Did you know the Lord's Prayer can help you time 20 seconds? <https://els.org/2020/03/07/panic-not-pray-instead/>
- If your church does not offer a live-streamed service, visit <https://els.org/streams> for a listing of churches offering live services
- Daily Devotions are available on the synod website: <https://els.org/dailydevotions/>, or subscribe at els.org/subscribe
- If you prefer a video devotion: <https://peacedevotions.com/>, or subscribe at els.org/subscribe
- A new devotional booklet was prepared by the Board for Home Outreach, based on the Peace video sermonettes: https://els.org/wp-content/download/evangelism_materials/GoodNewsforYou2020.pdf
- You can view the daily chapel service from Bethany Lutheran College at blc.edu/chapelcast/
- A variety of devotions are also available from our sister synod, WELS: <https://wels.net/serving-you/devotions/>

Following a unanimous resolution from our ELS Doctrine Committee, Pres. Moldstad has asked that our churches suspend public services and urges following the health recommendations and restrictions of our national, state, and local governments. The coming days will be difficult for our pastors and our members. Although we are unable to meet in person for services, the financial needs of the congregation will continue. Please continue giving to the Lord's work during this time. The work of the church will continue, albeit differently temporarily—online worship services, sermons, and Bible classes. We have been in contact with all of our pastors, providing guidance, and will continue to be available to them as needed.

Our Board for World Outreach administrator, Rev. Tom Heyn, and his wife LaRue tested positive for coronavirus on March 15. He had recently returned from Ukraine. May the Lord Jesus watch over and grant healing to Tom and family!

Our Bethany Lutheran College suspended all international and domestic travel and extended the spring break one additional week. Classes resumed online on March 23, and will continue online until the conclusion of the Easter break, April 13.

Note that due to concerns about the coronavirus at this time, the Board of Trustees continues to monitor the situation and will make a decision regarding holding the annual synod convention no later than May 1.

Please remember all those affected in your prayers. May God's mercy and grace be upon us, even as He has given us His greatest gift in the redemptive work of His own Son.

Synod Convention 2020

The 2020 Synod Convention is scheduled for June 21–24 on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College. The theme of the convention is “Served By God's Ministering Spirits,” with the essay by the Rev. Piet Van Kampen.

- Synod Sunday service, Sunday, June 21, 4:00 p.m. – Matthew Moldstad, preacher
- Communion service, Tuesday, June 23, 4:45 p.m. – Joshua Mayer, preacher
- Chaplain Peter Heyn
- Morning devotions: Monday, Peter Heyn; Tuesday, Matthew Behmer; Wednesday, Paul Lange

Please note that due to concerns about the coronavirus at this time, the Board of Trustees continues to monitor the situation and will make a decision regarding holding the convention no later than May 1. **All items for the *Book of Reports and Memorials* (BORAM) still are due on April 1.** Our advice to pastors and delegates is to continue the registration process **by mail**. Checks can be sent to Denise, and if there is a need to cancel convention, the checks will remain uncashed. We have taken down the electronic registration from the website. In sending in the paper registration, you should also include whether or not you need on-campus housing.