

Financial news for our synod

As we ended the year of 2012, congregational contributions totaled \$710,000, causing a shortfall of \$15,000. Furthermore, we have received notice from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation that grant monies for the ELS in this year of 2013 will be 30% less (\$225,000 less) than the previous year. One more item to report is the loss of the Thrivent church-wide block grant (was \$40,000 in 2012) that will take effect at the end of 2013. We recognize the need to trim expenditures. This is occurring. But there still is much to be done as we strive to carry out our “Engage Others With Jesus” plan. Our Board for Home Outreach continues to host the regional evangelism retreats as scheduled. The board also has plans for continued development of exploratory missions, as we seek to advance the Gospel of Christ in more communities across our land. If you are able to consider a special gift for the kingdom work, we urge you to speak with Rev. Dan Basel as to how best to allocate your donation: danbasel@blc.edu (507-344-7311).

Prayers requested

- Please keep Linda and Prof. Erling Teigen in your prayers. Linda was hospitalized January 27, following a severe seizure.
- Also, we ask you to pray for the family of Rev. Glenn Smith. Glenn and Maria's newborn, Matthew, is currently at the University Hospital in Iowa City, Iowa, with heart troubles and appears to be needing surgery.
- Keep Diane and Rev. Ted Gullixson in your prayers. Diane underwent surgery on her leg on January 31st. She will be hospitalized for several days and will not be able to put any weight on her leg for several months.

President's Schedule

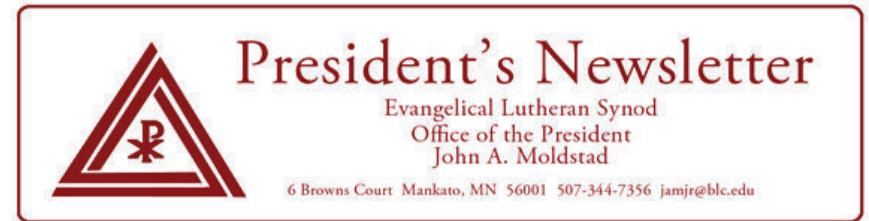
February 8-9 - “Engage Others With Jesus” retreat for Circuits 4 & 5, Madison, WI
February 9 - ELS Historical Society at 9:30 AM
February 11-12 - Board of Regents
February 12 - Board of Trustees
February 15 - Synod presentation at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, MN
February 16 - Appeals Commission
February 24 - preach at Scriptural Lutheran, Cape Girardeau, MO
March 7 - ELS Archives Committee
March 7 - preach in chapel at Bethany Lutheran College

Vacancies

King of Grace (Waukon, IA)
Our Savior (Lakeland, FL)
Position: Evangelism-Missions Counselor
Position: Home Missionary (Weatherford/Hudson Oaks, TX)

Calls

Rev. Andrew Burmeister to Our Savior (Lakeland, FL) (holding)
Rev. Mark Bartels as Evangelism-Missions Counselor (holding)



February 2013

Dear Fellow Workers in Christ's Kingdom:

Fifty years ago this month our synod's Lutheran Sentinel, published an address from Pastor Eivund Unseth (1910–1992) to his Albert Lea, Minnesota, congregation. I share with you a portion of his message as we today consider the task – the loving task – before us: “Workers with God! That is the distinctive description the apostle applies to us. What a marvelous privilege and at the same time what a tremendous responsibility! We have been entrusted with a task more important than any other assignment God has given to his people here on earth. The marching order issued by our heavenly Leader is this, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.’ Every member of our congregation is included in this great commission given by our blessed Savior. And that is one reason why we have banded ourselves together in this Christian fellowship, that by combining our abilities and talents we might better fulfill our task as ambassadors of Christ.” May this voice from the past also help spur us onward!

Blessings in Christ to each of you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John A. Moldstad".

John A. Moldstad

Information Needed

Pastors are reminded that the 2012 reporting form (including statistics) needs to be returned by February 15. This information is important for an accurate view of our synod. Address corrections, for board and committee members, can be sent to elsynod@blc.edu.

Board for Home Outreach News

At its January 27-28, 2013, meeting the BHO issued a call (name yet to be announced) for an exploratory mission to begin in Weatherford/Hudson Oaks, Texas area. Another action of the board was to extend a call once again for the Evangelism–Missions Counselor (EMC) position. The Rev. Mark Bartels of Madison, Wisconsin, is holding this call. Please pray for the Lord's guidance on his decision.

Pray for World Missions

A major part of our work together as a synod is to assist in spreading the Good News of Jesus as Savior to the people living in other parts of the world. We are thankful that God has given us opportunity to assist this way in the countries of India, Peru, Chile, South Korea, Czech Republic, Latvia and Ukraine. Considerable support for the last three countries mentioned



Deaconess Ludmilla evangelizes at the Medical Clinic on Wheels in Ukraine.

has come through what is known as the Mission Advancement Project (MAP, Inc.), a primary funding source for Thoughts of Faith, Inc. Lately we have been informed that the gifts coming annually from MAP will be severely curtailed. Please pray for the mission work going on in all of the countries and remember the need. We trust that God will continue to provide resources and workers in his harvest field.



Gospel workers in the Amazon region of Peru gather for study at the Lutheran Bible Institute of the Amazon Jungle.

Mt. Olive in the Press

Students from Mt. Olive Lutheran School in Mankato, Minnesota, were featured lately in the Mankato Free Press for their igloo made out of milk cartons. The class shown in the photo above (courtesy, Free Press) is that of the second/third grade class with Teacher Miranda Dittmer.



<http://mankatofreepress.com/local/x503824128/Milk-jug-igloo-changes-up-winter-in-Mount-Olive-classroom>

Florida Retreat

The second scheduled synod-wide retreat was held at the Country Inn and Suites (Airport) in Orlando, Florida on January 25-26. Rev. Tim Hartwig is shown here leading the attendees in the first of several sessions. The Engage Others With Jesus retreats (8 planned) continue throughout the ELS, with the next scheduled for Madison, Wisconsin, February 8-9, 2013.



Media and Ministry

Rev. Paul Fries, ELS Communication Director, led an interesting discussion at the Home Mission Seminar, January 30, 2013, on the use of technology in our U. S. missions. He stressed the use of Facebook, since 165 million (53%) of the U. S. population are signed on to this medium.



California Pastor as Donor

Rev. Jeff Smith, a WELS pastor from Petaluma, California, who also serves our ELS congregation in Windsor, California (Christ Lutheran), was featured in the December issue of Forward in Christ. On September 5, Pastor Smith underwent surgery for the donation of one of his kidneys to a stranger. The article states: "His donation was intended to start a chain of six kidney transplants around the country ... In a chain, people on dialysis have willing donors who are not a match. To start a chain, a Good Samaritan donor simply donates to a stranger. Then the willing-but-incompatible donor of that recipient gives to another stranger, and on and on it goes." Smith said: "This is one way I can offer my body as a living sacrifice - by donating to a kidney to someone in desperate need... The Lord has given me this opportunity that not everyone has. Not everyone is healthy enough to take a kidney out of his body and give it to someone else. This is my offering, my worship."



ELS Youth

Plan to attend this year's ELS National Youth Convention. It is being held at Rollins College located in Winter Park, Florida (near Orlando). The dates for the convention are July 25-28, 2013. News for our synod's youth! The information can be found at: <http://www.evangelicallutheransynod.org/2013-lyl-a-convention/> Our convention will include trips to Island of Adventure-Universal Studios & the beach!



Youth gathered for Bible study with Pastor Aaron Hamilton at Hope Lutheran, West Jordan, Utah.

Planning and Coordinating Committee

Each year the synod's Planning & Coordinating Committee meets to discuss long range goals for the ELS and recommends a budget for adoption at the annual convention. This year the committee met on January 14, 2013, and is bringing to the June convention a \$760,000 congregational contribution budget for approval for 2014. The proposal is that inside the \$760,000 an amount of \$35,000 (as excess to the 2012 figure \$725,000) serve as an extra challenge and go toward the work of the Board for Home Outreach.



Synod Convention 2013

The dates for this year's convention are Sunday, June 16 to Thursday, June 20. We will be using as our theme, "Engaging Families With Jesus," and our essayist will be Rev. Don Moldstad, chaplain at our Bethany Lutheran College. Rev. Samuel Gullixson of Bishop, California, has agreed to serve as chaplain. On Wednesday evening, our Communion Service preacher will be Rev. Doyle Holbird, who serves as a professor at our college. For the Synod Sunday afternoon service, Rev. Rodney Flohr from King of Grace in Golden Valley, Minnesota, will deliver the sermon message.