

LUTHERAN LIFE

The Newsmagazine of the
Florida-Georgia District
of The Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod

2012 | Volume 3

PRE-CONVENTION EDITION | LAKE MARY, FLORIDA | JUNE 22-24, 2012

2012 CONVENTION
Preview & Voting Slate

District Realignment
Key Business Issue

Stewards
of God's Grace





Every congregation is a church in mission, and every member is a missionary; with all of us working together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, empowered by His Gospel to share His love. Lutheran LIFE is the official communications instrument of the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Lutheran LIFE is designed to inform LCMS church and school members of the activities, the personalities and resources offered by the Synod and the District. Lutheran LIFE may also provide a forum for Lutherans to express their views and ideas on a wide range of topics. We welcome and encourage editorials, emphasizing that the views and opinions expressed are not necessarily shared by Synod or District personnel or by the editors, churchworkers or personnel of the Synod's or District's congregations or schools. Lutheran LIFE is published bimonthly. Editorials, news items and photos are encouraged and should be received at our publication offices no later than the 10th of the month prior to the publication date. We make every attempt to use all submitted information in the next issue of LIFE, space considerations prevent us from guaranteeing that stories will be used immediately. Advertising is welcome; rates and information is available from Lutheran LIFE's office. Changes of address including e-mail changes, additions or deletions should be directed to our production office.

Lutheran Life Publishing:
2840 NW Boca Raton Blvd. Suite 205
Boca Raton, Florida 33431

www.LutheranLifeOnline.com

E-Mail photos and news to:
LutheranLife@aol.com

Communications Director, John List
Editor-in-Chief, Eileen Bishop

Florida Georgia-District LCMS
Lutheran Ministries Center
7207 Monetary Drive
Orlando, Florida 32809-5724
www.flga-lcms.org

District President, Greg Walton
School Ministry, Mark Brink
Mission & Outreach, Doug Kallesen
Finance/Administration, Dan Reichard
Congregational Services, Dave Weidner

CAPSULES by Greg Walton District President

CALLING CONGREGATIONS

Trinity/Albany, GA Pastor
St. Paul/Boca Raton, FL DCE
Trinity/Delray Beach, FL Discipleship Pastor
Estero Mission/Estero, FL Pastor
Grace/Jacksonville, FL Principal
Holy Trinity/Kingsland, FL Pastor
St. Paul/Lakeland, FL Pastor
Oak Road/Lilburn, GA Pastor
Redeemer/Melbourne, FL Pastor
Good Shepherd/Sarasota, FL Principal
Holy Trinity/Tampa, FL Pastor
King of Kings/Jasper, GA Pastor
St. Mark/Tucker, GA Pastor
Redeemer/Vero Beach, FL Sole Pastor

CALLS ISSUED

Ascension/Casselberry, FL
to Rev. Thomas Eggebrecht Sole Pastor
Gloria Dei/Davie, FL
to Gordon Stoneburner..... Principal
Grace/Jacksonville, FL
to Sean Martens Principal
St. Johns/Ocala, FL
to Rev. Mark Jurkowski..... Sole Pastor
Holy Trinity/Tampa, FL
to Rev. Scott Burmeister ... Sole Pastor
St. Marks/Battle Creek, MI
to Rev. John Roth Pastor
Trinity/Delray Beach, FL
to Rev. Vince Putnam..... Senior Pastor

CALLS ACCEPTED

Rev. Thomas Eggebrecht
to Ascension/Casselberry .. Sole Pastor
Rev Mark Jurkowski
to St. Johns/Ocala Sole Pastor
Rev. Vince Putnam
to Trinity/Delray Beach ... Senior Pastor
Rev. Christopher Bodley
to Michigan District Missionary at Large

CALLS DECLINED

Rev. Scott Burmeister
To Holy Trinity/Tampa Sole Pastor

TRANSFERRED TO OTHER DISTRICTS

4/25/2012 | Rev. Paul Deterdin, Ordained,
to Missouri District

TRANSFERRED FROM OTHER DISTRICTS

2/1/2012 | Rev. Henry E. Baum, Ordained,
from English District
8/24/2011 | Rev. Stephen Zehnder
from English District

ORDAINED/COMMISSIONED MINISTER

Initial Assignments
4/15/2012 | Rev. K. Anthony Durante
Concordia Seminary/St. Louis
Pastor.....to Trinity/Delray Beach, FL

ORDAINED COMMISSIONED MINISTER INSTALLATIONS

3/4/2012 | Rev. Henry R. Baum,
Interim Pastor
Faith/New Port Richey, FL
3/25/2012 | Rev. Ernest R. Houppert
Interim Pastor
LC of the Holy Trinity/Macon, GA
4/15/2012 | Rev. Tony Durante,
Pastor
Trinity/Delray Beach, FL

CALLED TO GLORY

4/20/2012 Fred E. Lietz
4/9/2012 Rev. Norman R. Springer

CHANGE OF STATUS WITHIN THE DISTRICT

3/21/2012 Sharon A. Nesman
from Active to Candidate
3/22/2012 Janice Peterson
from Active to Candidate
10/28/2011 Debra Blackwood
from Active to Candidate
7/31/2011 Ralph Utech
from Active to Non-Candidate
4/25/2012 Rev. Robert Davis
from Active to Candidate
5/1/2012 Michelle V Pitts
from Active to Candidate
5/1/2012 David Gieseeking
from Active to Candidate
5/4/2012 Rev. Joseph Cockey
from Active to Candidate

LUTHERAN LIFE NEWS Flash!



We need sponsors in order to grow! Would you consider becoming a Florida-Georgia District sponsor of our Newsmagazine? We want to continue to bring all the good news from the congregations, schools and ministries around the Florida-Georgia District and the Lutheran Church-

Missouri Synod to our pastors, teachers, vicars, deaconesses, students and parishoners. Please contact John List at 561-212-2112 or by email at JohnList@aol.com for more information or sponsorship opportunities and ideas.

Fred E. Lietz Remembered for Pioneering Spirit, Enthusiastic Leadership



Fred E. Lietz, the first executive leader of Church Extension for the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and former Florida-Georgia District Director of Finance and Church Extension, died on April 19 at the age of 95.

Family, friends and colleagues filled Ascension Lutheran-Casselberry, FL, for his April 26 memorial service. Rev. Gerald Seaman, Ascension Pastor Emeritus, was the liturgist. Rev. Gerhard Michael Jr., President Emeritus of the Florida-Georgia District, was the preacher.

A native of Illinois and a graduate of Concordia-River Forest, Lietz was an educator and principal from 1939-57. He was then called to serve in a wider capacity as executive secretary of the Church Extension Fund of the LCMS. In that capacity, he was instrumental in the growth of the entity from an LCMS department to its 1978 incorporation as the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) - Missouri Synod.

When he retired in 1979, the Missouri Synod reportedly was

the only denominational lending and investment fund that had met requirements of all 50 state securities agencies, and it had helped some 85 percent of all LCMS congregations with site or facilities financing for churches or schools.

The LCEF's annual Fred E. Lietz Mission Project Award commemorates and honors his years of service for the Church.

"Fred was a true visionary," said LCEF President/CEO Rich Robertson. "The contributions he made to this organization were immeasurable so that we are able to meet the capital needs of the LCMS. He was a great man, a man of God and one who will be greatly missed."

Lietz moved to the Florida-Georgia District in 1979 to accept the position of Director of Finance and Church Extension. He served with Florida-Georgia President Lloyd Behnken, Mission Executive Erdmann Frenk and

School Executive Ben Eggers — a foursome described by Florida-Georgia President Greg Walton as "the original District 'dream team,' now reunited in heaven.

"These valiant, valued leaders were instrumental in our District's growth and visioning, working to connect people to Jesus."

In 1983 Lietz retired from full-time work to shift his attention to volunteer service. From 1984-90 he was a director of the four-county Area Agency on Aging, serving as chairman for four years. During this time, he continued to serve an advisory capacity with the Silver Eagles of LCEF.

Lietz was a member of Ascension-Casselberry, where he was leader for a senior ministry.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Carolyn, daughters, Gene, Sue, and June, and their husbands, six stepdaughters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. ■



Former Florida-Georgia leaders (seated) President Lloyd Behnken, (standing, l-r) Ben Eggers, Erdmann Frenk and Fred Lietz.

The column headline proclaims the theme for the rapidly approaching 31st Triennial Florida-Georgia District Convention. It has been an exhausting and humbling process to work toward this event. Without our supportive and knowledgeable staff it would have been nearly impossible. We are indeed blessed as a District.

I also thank each of you, Florida-Georgia members, for your patience and support during this term. Our workers and congregations have been so supportive, even during times of stress and difficulties. So thank you, one and all.

Now we look to the future as stewards of God's grace, empowered by His Word. We have been given so

much through the sacrificial death and glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. What a joyous message we have to share with the world.

However, having it and sharing it are entirely different things!

A Focus on Revitalization

There is much work to do if we are to be faithful to Jesus' call to connect people to Him. We truly believe that in Him alone are life and salvation, forgiveness of sins and eternal life. We have what the world needs, but we have to be willing to share it.

This, in part, is why our focus will be on revitalizing District ministries. To revitalize means to restore vitality or renew the focus and aim of ministry.

We have many awesome ministries doing tremendous things, impacting hearts and lives for the Kingdom of God, but still with room for renewal. The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 12:2, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — His good, pleasing and perfect will."

We want to focus on that transformation, moving from churches that maintain their membership to churches with a passion to see people connected to Jesus.

With all that in mind, the verse that guides our time together at the convention comes from 1 Peter 4:10: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

We are a blessed people because we know that Jesus is our Savior. Among the approximately 28 million residents of Florida and Georgia are many who either don't know Jesus as their Savior or

who have left the church for any number of reasons. The fields all around us are ripe for harvest, and God is calling us to get our spiritual houses in order. Obviously there is a very personal and individual application to this, but it also applies to our congregations.

As I've traveled across the District I have been privileged to see some beautiful, well cared for facilities. I've also seen my share of clutter and buildings in disrepair, because of economics or apathy or simply because it's gone unobserved.

Whatever the reason or cause, it speaks loudly to those not churched who may wander in to one of our facilities.

Beyond that, we need to revitalize our attitudes. Someone has said that everyone thinks that their church is friendly, but they aren't coming in as someone completely unfamiliar with the people and the place. Imagine not knowing anyone in your church and going there to worship. It can be daunting under the best of circumstances, but even worse when people are so busy visiting with their friends that they ignore the visitor — in reality the true customer. It is easy to be lulled into believing that we who attend worship on a Sunday are the customer. We come certainly to be built up, but we also come as servants who have the privilege of sharing the good news with those who may never have heard.

Yes, we want to plant new missions, but the fact is, healthy congregations plant healthy missions. New mission starts ought to overflow out of our love for those whom Jesus loves. Revitalized congregations, with a clear vision and a desire to connect people to Jesus, will

start new missions because of the recognition that without Him people will die eternally.

Key Convention Issues

While the Convention is packed with much that goes beyond District business, there are very important items we will need to handle. Perhaps most important will be the restructuring of our regions from four to five along with a slight change in the makeup of the Board of Directors. (Please see story in this issue for more information.)

As the District continues to grow, these changes will help us manage that growth and provide us with better lines of communication in each region. Please note that if delegates have questions or concerns, it would be great to have you bring them to the open hearings of the floor committees prior to the Convention opening.

Another major piece of business will be approval of the District Charter and Bylaws. This really surrounds two parts which we will need to approve, and which will be clearly highlighted. The first part which will need approval are those changes necessitated by the LCMS Committee on Constitutional Matters. By and large, these changes revolve around things which have been suggested to us to bring us into compliance with the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

The other aspects that will need approval are contingent on the restructuring issue and all the bylaws that would need to be updated to accommodate those changes. In addition to these, there are several other resolutions that are summarized elsewhere in this issue of *Lutheran LIFE*.

We also look forward to some special Convention presentations and guests. Dr. David Benke, our Essayist, will talk about our stewardship of revitalizing our congregations. Dr. Victor Belton will share with us from God's Word. Gretchen Jameson will be doing a presentation on branding the church in a post-church world. Rev. Jonathan Frusti has put together our worship, and the service that will be offered to all congregations, including a sermon outline!

There will be time for fellowship and worship as well. LCMS President Matthew Harrison will preach at our Sunday morning communion service. Rev. Daniel Preus will represent the Synod throughout our convention with several special presentations. We will honor some special servants of Christ and celebrate our life together under Jesus, who continually works to revitalize our personal faith, so that we will work together to revitalize His church!

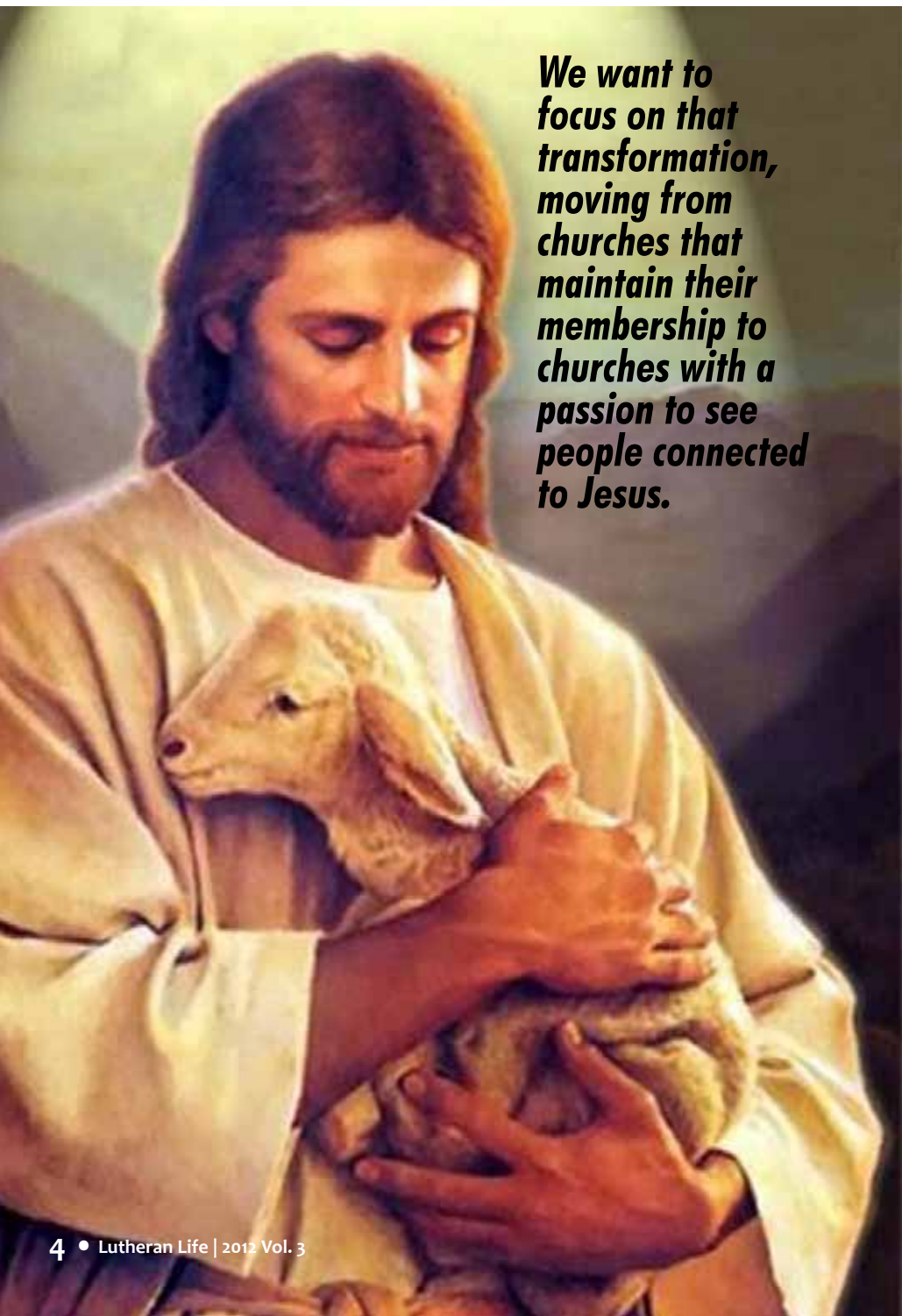
We are blessed to be part of the Florida-Georgia District, and it has been my honor to serve you and to serve with you. May God grant us the power of His Spirit as we look to the future, equipped, empowered and engaged... connecting people to Jesus! Please keep the Convention and the business before us in prayer as we work together to proclaim Jesus!

In His peace,

Greg



We want to focus on that transformation, moving from churches that maintain their membership to churches with a passion to see people connected to Jesus.





For much of its history, the Florida-Georgia District has been divided into four regions. Region 1 covers the State of Georgia plus a large portion of North Florida; the balance of the Florida is divided into Regions 2, 3 and 4.

This structure “was likely put into place to reflect the balance of congregations,” said District President Greg Walton. “However, over the past 60 years we’ve seen God’s blessings moving northward.”

“It makes it very difficult for the pastors and other workers to gather together as a region.”

Delegates to the 31st District Convention will decide if that structure remains or if a proposed realignment from the Board of Directors is implemented.

“Without moving any congregations from the current circuit structure, or changing Regions 2-4, Region 1 would be divided along current circuit lines,” Walton elaborated. “Then the other three would be renumbered.”

“It’s pretty simply, and would make travel not only more equitable, but manageable.”

Another significant decision facing delegates is the composition of the Board of Directors.

“It was determined that it might be wise to change slightly the Board makeup,” Walton said. “Instead of a Vice President from Florida, a Vice President from Georgia and regional pastoral representatives, each region would have as its pastoral representative a regional Vice President.”

“We would add two lay representatives from the new region so that each of the five regions would have two lay representatives, and keep the current structure of three commissioned ministers at large.”

Other resolutions to be considered will be presented by two floorcommittees.

Church in Mission

Floor Committee 1, chaired by Rev. Stephen Wipperman of Our Savior-Lake Worth, focused on issues dealing with “The Church in Mission.” Committee members included Maggie Bowles, Peace-Naples, FL; Rev. J.R. Jones, St Paul-Boca Raton, FL; Willean Presley, Our Savior-Sanford, FL; Karen Smith,

Peace-Okeechobee, FL; and Roger Walker, Grace-Winter Haven, FL.

Resolutions include:

- **To Encourage Continuing Education for Church Professionals.** The District President would oversee the development and implementation of a system for life-long learning for Florida-Georgia professional church workers.

- **To Encourage Congregations to Engage in Foreign Mission Work.** This involvement would include prayer, identification and encouragement of missionaries, financial support and hands-on activities such as mission trips.

- **To Endorse Work of the Luther Institute of Southeast Asia (LISA).** Congregations would be urged to support the program through prayers, encouragement and financial gifts. (Please see page 6 for more information on LISA.)

- **To Support the Work of Mission Haiti.** If passed, resolution would encourage the continued partnership between the program and the District and urge congregations to pray for and support the ministry’s work.

- **To Bring the Gospel to Muslims in Our District.** Congregations would be asked to investigate Islam and its local impact and to establish a “Task Force on Witnessing to Muslims” in association with People of the Book Lutheran Outreach and/or Lutherans in Jewish Evangelism.

- **To Affirm the Importance of Campus Ministry.** If passed, this resolution would direct the District President to appoint a task force to propose how to strengthen existing campus ministries and develop new programs.

- **To Commend the Work of Lutheran Social Service Agencies within the District.** Lutheran Services of Georgia and Lutheran Services Florida both have long histories of service in the District.

Church in Action

Floor Committee 2, which dealt with resolutions addressing “The Church in Action,” was headed by Rev. David Brighton of Mount Calvary-Warner Robins, GA. Committee members included Pedro Diaz, Lamb of God-Lithia, FL; Jean Gillis, St Paul-Weston, FL; Rev. Keith Lingsch, Grace-Naples, FL; Magda McKay, Messiah-Tampa, FL.

In addition to motions “To Change the Regional Structure of the Florida-Georgia District and Board Representation” and “To Approve Charter and Bylaw Changes in Compliance With the New Regional Structure in Conformity with the Protocol of the Synod,” Committee 2 resolutions to be considered include:

- **To Move Grace-Arcadia from the Sarasota Circuit to the Heartland Circuit.** Grace has requested the move because it “has much more in common with the Heartland Circuit in terms of culture and geography.”

- **To Move the Heartland Circuit from Region 3 to Region 5 (or Region 2 to Region 4).** This shift requested by the Heartland Circuit was recommended by the Board of Directors as it “does not impact the Circuit structure and will likely result in greater participation from the congregations and pastors.”

- **To Promote Harmony, Unity and Koinonia Among Synod Presidents.** Encouraging the Synod to invite past LCMS presidents to the national convention and asked to participate in installation of new national officers.

- **To Seek to Clarify the Ministry of the Work in Connection to the Laity.** Another resolution directed to the national Synod requests that the current LCMS Administration “clarify what role laity are to play and what opportunities they have to serve in the church’s task of ‘Witness.’”

- **To Allow E-Meetings for Voting by Circuit, District and Synod.** This motion seeks permission for entities to hold “valid meetings” for voting and asks that they be encouraged to consider this option “when their use may save substantial resources.”

Floor Committee 2 declined an overture to rank District regional vice presidents for succession. ■

Worship & Fellowship Paramount at Lake Mary’s Convention

In addition to devotions and Bible study, four Convention worship events are planned: Opening Service; a Memorial Service; Holy Communion and the Closing Worship. District President Greg Walton will preach at the Memorial Service, and LCMS President Matthew Harrison will be in the pulpit for the Communion Worship.

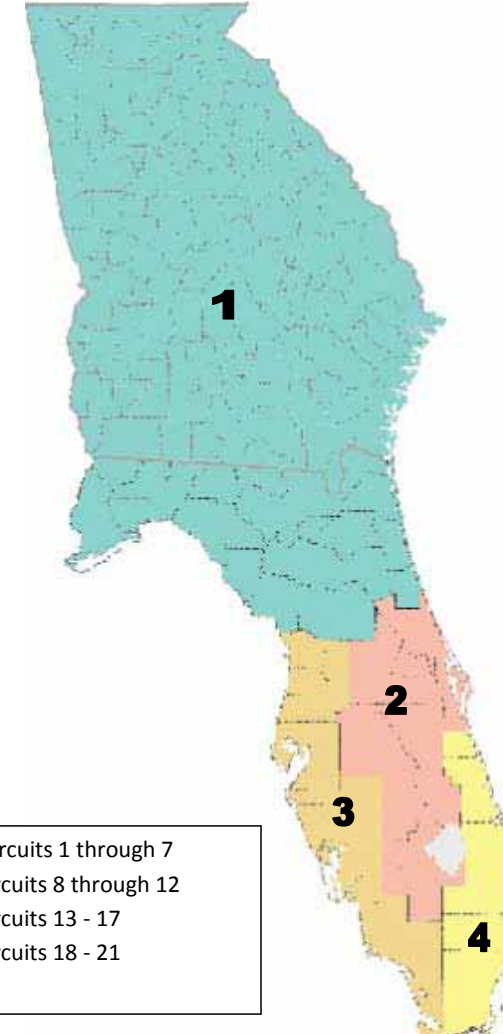
Convention worship leader will be Pastor Jonathan Frusti of Grace-Winter Haven, FL with Pastor Victor Belton of Peace-Decatur, GA serving as the Bible study leader.

Convention essayist will be Atlantic District President Rev. David Benke.

DWWelegates, guests and exhibitors will have the opportunity to socialize at meal breaks, during free time before and after business sessions and at the President’s Reception on June 22.

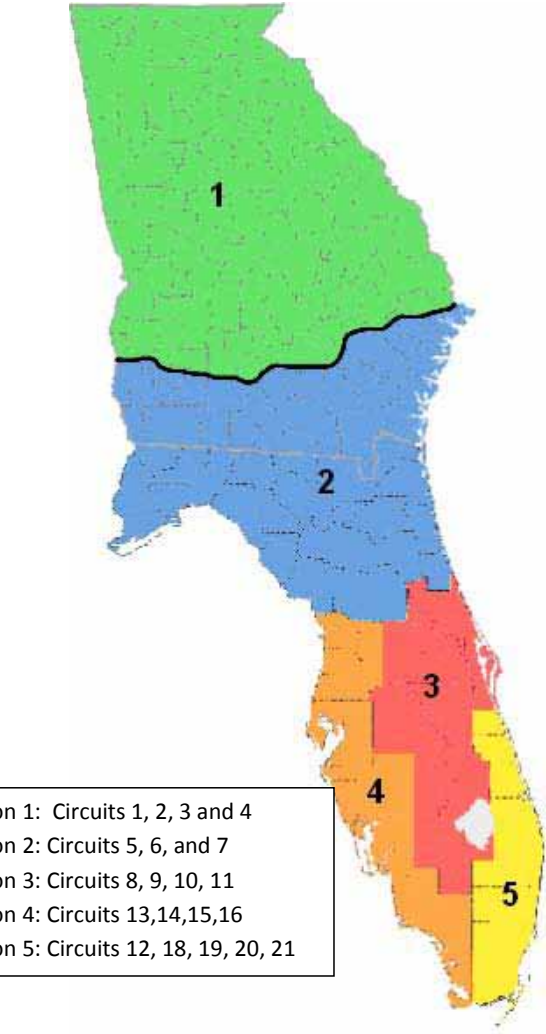
A tentative Convention schedule is posted on the Florida-Georgia District website – www.flga-lcms.org – under the convention link. Convention updates will be posted on that site to update activity at the three-day gathering.

CURRENT REGIONS



Region 1: Circuits 1 through 7
 Region 2: Circuits 8 through 12
 Region 3: Circuits 13 - 17
 Region 4: Circuits 18 - 21

PROPOSED REGIONS



Region 1: Circuits 1, 2, 3 and 4
 Region 2: Circuits 5, 6, and 7
 Region 3: Circuits 8, 9, 10, 11
 Region 4: Circuits 13,14,15,16
 Region 5: Circuits 12, 18, 19, 20, 21

Slate for Convention Elections

Florida-Georgia District Slate of Candidates
CURRENT STRUCTURE OF FOUR REGIONS
Nominated candidates as of April 30, 2012

President	Rev. Greg Walton*
Vice President	Rev. David Brighton* (Georgia) Rev. Jim Guelzow (Florida)
Secretary	Rev. Jay Winters Rev. Randy Winkel
Board of Directors/Region 1 Pastor	Rev. Frank Marshall* Rev. John Roth Rev. Gregory Michael
Layperson	William Gaik* Jay Wendland Lois Schaeffer Dennis Cerny Donald Kaufman Jessica Harrison
Board of Directors/Region 2 Pastor	Rev. Brian Kneser* Rev. Clarence Reinke
Layperson	John Brazee* Karen Smith* Sonia Tellez
Board of Directors/Region 3 Pastor	Rev. James Guelzow* Rev. Michael Thurau Rev. Paul Burtzlaff
Layperson	Maggie Bowles* Jeff Richards*
Board of Directors/Region 4 Pastor	Rev. Steve Wiperman*
Layperson	Diana Geiger* Nancy Volz* Karen Smith**
Commissioned Minister of Religion	Bill Patrick Robert Ziegler* Lois Ford Nick Moss Jon Wareham Tamara Worthington John Westol James Webb Jerry Bispring
District Nominating Committee Pastor	Rev. Jeffrey Jordan Rev. Dana Brones Rev. Gregory Michael
Minister of Religion, Commissioned	Saraya Trugill Jerry Bispring Bill Patrick
Layperson	Dennis Cerny Chuck Moss Jim Ingersoll Ellen Jugar

* Incumbent candidates nominated to return to same office.
** Representing Circuit 12, which will move from Region 1 to Region 4 if Resolution 2012: 2.3 passes

Florida-Georgia District Slate of Candidates
PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF FOUR REGIONS
Nominated candidates as of April 30, 2012

President	Rev. Greg Walton*
Secretary	Rev. Jay Winters Rev. Randy WinkelWorship,
Board of Directors/Region 1 Pastor Vice President	Rev. David Brighton**
Layperson	William Gaik* Jay Wendland Dennis Cerny
Board of Directors/Region 2 Pastor Vice President	Rev. John Roth** Rev. Frank Marshall**
Layperson	Lois Schaeffer Jessica Harrison Donald Kaufman
Board of Directors/Region 3 Pastor Vice President	Rev. Brian Kneser** Rev. Clarence Reinke
Layperson	John Brazee* Sonia Tellez
Board of Directors/Region 4 Pastor Vice President	Rev. James Guelzow** Rev. Michael Thurau Rev. Paul Burtzlaff
Layperson	Maggie Bowles* Jeff Richards*
Board of Directors/Region 5 Pastor Vice President	Rev. Steve Wiperman**
Layperson	Diana Geiger* Nancy Volz* Karen Smith*
Commissioned Minister of Religion	Bill Patrick Nick Moss Robert Ziegler* Lois Ford Jerry Bispring Jon Wareham John Westol James Webb Tamara Worthington
District Nominating Committee Pastor	Rev. Jeffrey Jordan Rev. Gregory Michael Rev. Dana Brones
Minister of Religion, Commissioned	Jerry Bispring Soraya Tujillo
Layperson	Dennis Cerny Jim Ingersoll Ellen Jugar Chuck Moss

* Incumbent returning to same position on board though region may have shifted.
** Currently on the District Board; nominated for new position

Realignment Vote Will Determine Slate for District Leaders



With a regional realignment possibly one of the first confirmed actions at the District Convention, the nominating committee had double the usual work load. Two slates were prepared – one for the current structure, a second for the proposed structure.

Common to each slate are the President, Secretary and three at-large Commissioned Ministers of Religion.

Under the current structure, each of the four geographic regions is served by one pastor and two lay representatives. Two vice presidents are chosen, one from Florida and one from Georgia.

If the realignment passes, the recommendation is to adjust the Board composition to include a pastor/vice president and two lay representatives from each of the five regions.

All Convention delegates vote on President, Secretary and the Commissioned Ministers of Religion candidates. Regional elections determine

the area representatives. The District Treasurer is selected by the Board of Directors.

Both slates include incumbent and new candidates for various positions. Among the incumbents are President Greg Walton and several of the nominees for regional representatives. Just one candidate for Commissioned Minister of Religion Board representative – Bob Ziegler of Saint Michael Lutheran School-Fort Myers, FL – is an incumbent. Other candidates for the at-large positions include teachers and Directors of Christian Education. Both candidates for the Office of Secretary are running for the first time – Rev. Jay Winters of University Lutheran Church & Student Center-Tallahassee, FL, and Rev. Randy Winkel of Lakeside Lutheran Church-Venice, FL.

Nominations will not be accepted from the floor.

Newly elected officers and Board members will be installed on June 24 at the end of the Convention. ■

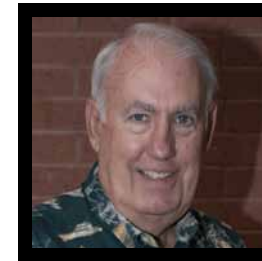
District Departing Board Members Thanked for Service

Several members of the Florida-Georgia Board of Directors will not be returning after the 31st Regular Convention. For some, term limits prevented them to run for re-election, while others chose not to let their names be included on the slate. Speaking on behalf of the District, President Greg Walton thanked all for their service.

Rev. Dennis Glick: During his decade-plus of service to the Board of Directors, Glick has served as Region 4 pastor representative and as Vice President from Florida. He is the Pastor Emeritus of St. Paul Church & School-Boca Raton, FL.



Jim Ingersoll: Term limits will prevent the Board from returning Ingersoll to the treasurer's seat. A member of Prince of Peace-Orlando, he retired from Darden Restaurants as Vice President of Internal Audit.



Jean Gillis: During her time on the Board, Gillis served first as a lay representative for Region 4 and then as one of three at-large Commissioned Ministers of Religion. She is on the staff of St. Paul-Weston, FL, as Associate in Ministry.



Roger Walker: A long-time member of the Board as one of three at-large Commissioned Ministers of Religion, Walker retired from the teaching ministry after a long career that concluded with service as Principal of Grace School-Winter Haven, FL.



Jean Weinrich: Weinrich served as a Region 1 lay representative. She and her late husband, Rev. Ralph Weinrich, spent their ministry in the District, serving at Good Shepherd-Gainesville, GA; Christ-Cape Canaveral, FL; Marietta-GA; and All Saints-Blairsville, GA, where she is still a member.



LWML's Kay Kreklau Shares Vision

Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) President Kay Kreklau revealed her vision for the organization at the 2012 LWML Board of Directors meeting. While commenting on the challenges of today, President Kreklau emphasized the rich history of the organization.

We are the Women of the LWML – Serving the Lord with Gladness!

This year, the LWML celebrates its 70th anniversary. Looking back at the organization's rich history, it is clear that God has given wisdom and success to the women who have faithfully sought His Word for guidance and direction. The vision of ordinary women, who wanted to learn from and live for Jesus, began this sisterhood dedicated to *Serving the Lord with Gladness* (referencing Psalm 100:2). What a legacy God has given us through the efforts of these women!

We are women who will learn from and live for Jesus!

LWML women seek the Lord's wisdom for the work He has set before us. We know Bible study provides the opportunity to learn about Jesus and grow in our knowledge of Him. Prayer allows us to intimately talk to our Lord. We continue to seek His will in all that we do and invite others to join us as we learn from Jesus in His Word. We joyfully live for Jesus.

The venues where women can meet for Bible study have changed and expanded, allowing us to share Scripture and prayers through social media, in coffee houses, as well as in our own kitchens and churches. However, in a world where change is the norm, we are

blessed with the assurance of our never-changing Lord and Savior.

Take joy in being His voice, hands and feet!

Our service shows the love of Jesus in our actions. Each woman has a role in the LWML of today. The tools are simple, the skills provided freely by our Lord. Each woman has the ability to be a friend, be a listener, be available, be a reflection of Jesus' love, be flexible, be in prayer, be a learner, be a story teller, be a giver, be an inviter, be intentional, be faithful, be ready, be confident – all in service to Christ Jesus. Each action will build us up as individual women and as an organization, helping to make us the open door that invites all to know Jesus.

Focus on missions, not meetings - Jesus' focus was His mission, not the often traditional meetings or events He attended. That is where our focus should be as well! We must look beyond the traditional, looking to Jesus as our example. The LWML was founded by women who challenged the traditional and changed the way things were done because they knew they could serve God better, never straying from Word and doctrine, but always looking for ways to increase the spread of the Gospel and their commitment to serving Him.

Like the women before us, we will embrace change when it is needed. Many women today are not looking for ways to fill the hours in their days, but they are looking for opportunities to make a difference. We will offer meeting-free formats and short-term service events as well as opportunities to women who can find satisfaction in serving Christ without feeling they are committing themselves to a never-ending duty.



Just like those courageous women who founded this League, LWML women of today will hold fast to the commitment of our Mites to fund Mission Grants, remembering that we are but guardians of our earthly treasures. The Mission Grants funded will continue to extend His Kingdom and to share His story.

We look back to where we have been, drawing from every good thing. We look forward to the future with joyful anticipation of how far we will go and what we will accomplish with the Lord's guidance always before us.

— Kay Kreklau

**September 28-30
Convention Deadline
Early Registration
Closes June 30th!**

Early registration of \$135 for the 2012 LWML Florida-Georgia District Convention closes June 30. After that date, the regular \$150 registration fee will be in effect through August 16th. Convention information and registration form are available at flgalwml.com

Thrivent Named One of "The World's Most Ethical Companies"

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has been selected as one of the "World's Most Ethical Companies" for 2012 by the Ethisphere Institute. Thrivent Financial was named to the prestigious list as a result of its leadership in promoting ethical business standards as well as for introducing innovative ideas to benefit the public.

"This is a great honor for our organization," said Teresa Rasmussen, Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary for Thrivent Financial. "As a membership-owned, faith-based financial organization, we strive to maintain the highest standards of ethics and integrity in everything we do and this recognition helps validate our efforts."

The Ethisphere Institute is a leading international think-tank dedicated to the creation, advancement and sharing of best practices in business ethics, corporate social responsibility, anti-corruption and sustainability. It announced its sixth annual selection of the World's Most Ethical Companies on March 15.

Through in-depth research and a multi-step analysis, Ethisphere reviewed nominations from companies in more than 100 countries and 36 industries. The methodology for the World's Most Ethical Companies includes reviewing codes of ethics, litigation and regulatory infraction histories; evaluating the investment in innovation and sustainable business practices; looking at activities designed to improve corporate citizenship; and studying nominations from senior executives, industry peers, suppliers and customers.

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a not-for-profit, Fortune 500 financial services membership organization helping approximately 2.5 million members achieve financial security and give back to their communities. Thrivent Financial and its affiliates offer a broad range of financial products and services. As a not-for-profit organization, Thrivent Financial creates and supports national outreach programs and activities for its membership that help congregations, schools, charitable organizations and individuals in need. For more information, visit www.thrivent.com. Thrivent is also on Facebook and Twitter. ■



Teresa Rasmussen,
Senior Vice President,
General Counsel and
Secretary

Thrivent Financial
for Lutherans



Let's thrive.  **Thrivent Financial for Lutherans®**



Have faith in your future

You can have faith in a career with us. As a Thrivent Financial for Lutherans representative, you'll develop relationships, offer solutions and protect family legacies while following your own career path. We call it **Work with Purpose®**.

Positions are now available in Jacksonville, Tallahassee and Miami.

For more information, contact:

Shep Griffith
Recruiting Manager
407-942-1332
Fax: 407-942-1025
shep.griffith@thrivent.com

Being part of this organization allows you to know many movers and shakers in our Lutheran community. If this is not for you please let me know if you know others that this might be a good opportunity for.

Thrivent.com/careers

26233CC N1-11

©2011 Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

Volunteers Help Young Congregation Build First Church in Perry, Georgia

Bill Terrill says each time he works for a congregation, it's special. Still, the Laborers For Christ veteran calls helping Lutherans in Perry, GA, build their first permanent church "extra special."

"The people here are excited [about having their own building]," said Terrill, who serves Christ Lutheran Church-Perry as project manager. "This already is a growing congregation, but it's really going to grow when they have their own facility!"

After several years of renting and worshipping in storefronts, the young congregation is

participating in the Laborers For Christ program to build on a nine-acre site in a growing area.

The new facility, which is expected to be completed in June, includes a sanctuary with 200-plus seating and a fellowship/dining area that the congregation will use to continue hosting "The Lord's Table," a popular community lunch program.

Christ Lutheran members and volunteers serve from 75 to as many as 150 meals every Friday. The free lunches are made possible by the generosity of the community, including local farmers, grocers and restaurants, "and what the Lord



The steeple is lowered into place on the new Christ Lutheran-Perry building.

provides," said Rev. John Lehenbauer, Christ Lutheran's pastor. The facility also will enable new outreach to children. A summer camp program and preschool are two possibilities Christ Lutheran members may explore.

"We're looking forward to doing more children's ministries now that we're going to have the space," said Lehenbauer, who praised the design work of Bob Day, a fellow Lutheran and local architect.

"It was wonderful to work with someone who really understands Lutheran worship and Lutheran [ministry] life," Lehenbauer said of Day, a member of Christ Lutheran's mother congregation, Mount Calvary-Warner Robins. Mount Calvary members started the Perry congregation about five years ago. "It's been a wonderful partnership with Mount Calvary," Lehenbauer said.

Another important partner, Lehenbauer says, is Laborers For Christ. A ministry of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF), the

Laborers for Christ program provides congregations the opportunity to select a team for employment that assists members tackle their church-related construction and witness to the community. While cost savings originally prompted Christ Lutheran to contact the organization, the congregation is especially enjoying the "great blessing of having Laborers be part of the building process as well as part of the life of our congregation," said Lehenbauer, who discovered Laborers For Christ when his former congregation in Minnesota participated in the program.

In addition to working alongside congregation volunteers, Laborers worship with Christ Lutheran members and sing in the choir. Laborers' spouses lend a hand with the church's community lunches. These dedicated Christians help build churches "on the inside as well as on the outside," Lehenbauer said.

Christ Lutheran also turned to LCEF for loan support to purchase the land and get the ball rolling on phase one of this multi-phase building project. "The Florida-Georgia LCEF District Office was wonderful to work with, to help make what we're doing now a reality," Lehenbauer said. To learn more about Christ Lutheran, visit the church web site at www.christlutheranmidga.org. For more information about Laborers For Christ, contact the ministry at 1-800-854-4004, ex. 6446, or visit www.lcef.org/LFC. ■



Christ Lutheran-Perry, GA, is participating in the Laborers For Christ program as it builds its first permanent facility. Shown above raising the building's first wall are (left-to-right) Laborers For Christ members Jim Adams, Bill Terrill and Larry Tewes with Christ Lutheran member David Hutchinson.

Thousands of investors know we're different

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is more than your typical financial institution.

When you invest in LCEF, we will help you reach your financial goals—no matter the purpose—with competitive rates and no unnecessary fees. Your investment provides loan dollars ministries need to buy, construct and remodel buildings used to share the message of Christ and serve others!

Learn more.

Now it's your turn to be a part of this special community of LCMS investors and ministries!

www.facebook.com/MyLCEF

www.lcef.org



Lutheran Church Extension Fund
10733 Sunset Office Drive, Suite 300
St. Louis, MO 63127-1020
1-800-843-5233



LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks.



LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND



Daniel J. Reichard
Florida-Georgia District
Vice President, LCEF
(877) 457-5556
dreichard@flga-icms.org

Kathy Keene, Administrative Services Consultant • kkeene@flga-icms.org
Mary Byrd, Loan Consultant • Byrd7980@bellsouth.net

LCEF is a non-profit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks.

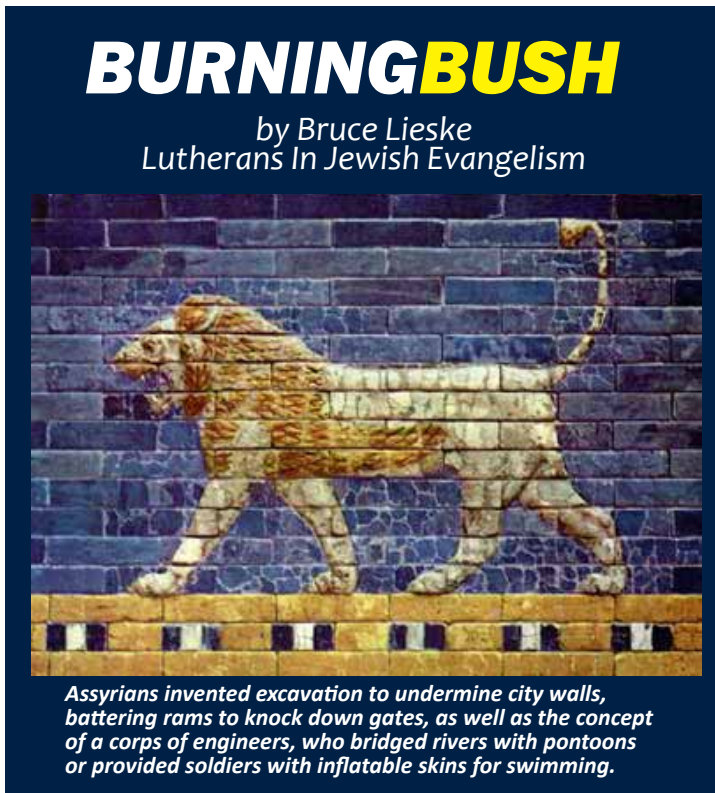
Nahum and Evil Empires

The book of Nahum, short and not exactly cheerful, expresses God's judgment upon the savage and brutal empire of the Assyrians – and gives hope to Israel. Written in the 7th Century BC, it predicts in graphic, emotive words the collapse of the Assyrian capital, Nineveh. The ruins of ancient Nineveh are located just across the Tigris River from modern Mosul, Iraq – a place where some of our American soldiers fought and died while ending Saddam Hussein's evil empire.

My wife and I recently saw the popular film "The Hunger Games." The setting of the film is a futuristic utopian America, which like many utopian governmental systems, is divided into the elite people, the workers and the peasants. The country is divided into 12 regions, and in order to remember the historical rebellion of one of the regions and to exert intimidating control, each year the government sponsors The Hunger Games. Each region must give up a boy and a girl, ages 13-18, to fight for its region. The 24 children kill each other while the populace watches on television. Only one child is supposed to survive, and that region is rewarded with special honors.

Although there were some "redeeming" scenes, the film disturbed me in an odd way. It wasn't just the personal violence, but the reality of what governments have done to their people. History has seen many "hunger games" lest we forget: Sennacherib's Assyria, Mao Tse Tung's China, Stalin's

Soviet Union, Hitler's Third Reich, Saddam Hussein's Iraq, and Kim Jong Un's "Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea" (which is neither democratic, nor does it belong to "the people" but to the elite rulers).



Kim Jong Un is the 29-year-old grandson of Kim Il Sung (who proclaimed himself to be god). A portion of the 10 principles of



the state religion includes the statement: "I Kim Il Sung, am the lord your god. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself any image in likeness of heaven or earth. You shall not bow down to any idol, for I am your god, Kim Il Sung." North Koreans are required to worship the dead Kim Il Sung, and the current "dear leader" is imbued with divine knowledge of the state religion.

One of our notable LCMS theologians, Dr. Martin Franzmann, once said that government is a special domain and focus of the devil.

Voice of the Martyrs estimates that there are 30,000 Christians detained in slave labor camps throughout North Korea. They provide covert help to persecuted Christians, and send Gospel balloons over the DMZ into North Korea. What would God have us to do? Based on

Hebrews 13:8, we must pray for, and help whenever possible, persecuted Christians – be they in Iran, Egypt, North Korea or elsewhere. And we do well if we are involved in our own government: staying informed, discussing issues with one another, voting, communicating with our representatives, praying for our government and working to keep our freedoms.

Some may say that Nahum was "too political." But his words did make it into the Bible. ■

Want to share the Gospel with your Jewish or Muslim friends? Send us an email at revkevy@aol.com or go to our website at www.lije.org.

God Implements Extreme Spiritual Makeover at Immanuel-Tavernier

On a visit to the Keys, my wife Desiree and I stopped at Immanuel-Tavernier. You, our District, have supported Immanuel with a small two-year mission grant. I stopped by to see how they were doing now that the grant had ended.

The worship was packed despite the fact that many snow birds had left. Only a few spaces were left in the entire church.

As we approached the front door, we were greeted by three people: one for a handshake and welcome, another to give us a palm branch (for Palm Sunday) and the third to give us a small wooden cross. They did this for everyone!

As we walked into the small sanctuary we were repeatedly

a visitor, I witnessed Immanuel's worship, fellowship, a people who love their pastor and his wife and each other. The congregation sent two members away that day due to relocation and health issues. Those



members became part of the after-church greeting line. It was a sad but also happy time as they shared memories at the fellowship held to honor them.

MISSION MOMENTS

by Doug Kallesenn, District Executive Director Mission & Outreach

greeted and welcomed. I finally made it to Pastor Don Stier's office, robed up and prepared to preach. I thought, "What a welcoming place. If I were looking for a church this one would be on my list."

The pre-service music began; a hand-crafted pipe organ filled the sanctuary with heavenly sounds played by Pastor Stier's wife, Elaine, the church organist and soloist. I began to sink into my seat preparing to worship, knowing God had come to Immanuel today! I mentally rehearsed my sermon, all the while thinking, "I am glad that we invested a few mission dollars here, and I am most certainly glad to be here today."

As the service continued it was apparent that God had done an extreme spiritual makeover here. Looking through the eyes of

set before them. Elaine said, "I call it bicycle evangelism: if someone is out by the road or in their front yard, we just pull in for a conversation."

This spirit of faith sharing seems to be contagious — one of their members has a cross ministry. George gives everyone at church a cross. If someone asks or says something about it, he instructs you to give it away and tell them to do the same. He will replace your cross over and over again, as many times as you give it away!

I met a woman who is a certified chef; she is thinking of offering

a cooking class to the community and using it as an opportunity to share her faith and invite people to Immanuel. She and her husband stopped by Immanuel for a visit while on vacation one Sunday and decided to move to the Keys because of their Immanuel experience. Now permanent year-around residents, they are active at Immanuel. The congregation is also heavily involved in community activities throughout the year.

Thank you Florida-Georgia District congregations for your support of our mission work. Your tithes and offerings helped encourage this small congregation do some big things in calling a retired pastor to serve.

Together, as a District, we have seen more than 63 new ministries launched since 2000 and nearly one dozen churches, such as Immanuel have been helped and strengthened by God's grace. We have more, much more, to do because it's all about "Connecting People to Jesus, equipping, empowering and engaging them to go and make disciples." ■

There are congregations that are truly blessed with a wonderful marriage between a pastor and people. Immanuel is one such place, but I must add there is also a love for the "Pastor Director," Elaine Stier. This is the title bestowed on her by the congregation. Don and Elaine, in retirement, received this call and for them it is the highlight of a ministry which has surely had a few other gems.

The Stiers invited us to stay at their home, where we heard and shared ministry stories. They said, "It's getting harder to leave for even a couple of months now and go back to Minnesota... We love these people and we miss them!"

The Stiers are a ministry team that effectively carries out the Lord's work in Tavernier. They both are good at sharing their faith and making the most of opportunities

Help Us Go Through This Open Door!

Convention delegates will consider a resolution "To Endorse the Work of the Luther Institute of Southeast Asia (LISA)."

The Ministry Vision of LISA is to serve as a theological education program to train and equip indigenous pastors, evangelists, deaconesses and teachers to lead the church in Southeast Asia.

Our Ministry Purpose is to provide a quality Lutheran curriculum to prepare these students.

The first cycle of courses in 2006 were taught by visiting professors and pastors from Canada, the USA and Germany and were interpreted into the students' languages. Five annual weeklong seminars were planned in Cambodia and Thailand.

The LISA Program Now

With the start of the second cycle of classes in 2011, the LISA Board expanded from three members to seven: Rev. Dr. Jeff Ehlers, chairman for LISA and the Garuna Foundation, which provides LISA funding; Rev. Dr. Leonard Harms, secretary, retired mission executive for the Lutheran Church - Canada; Rev. Ted NaThalang, president of the Thailand Concordia Lutheran Church; Rev. Vanarith Chhim, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cambodia; Rev. Carl Hanson, LCMS missionary in Hong Kong and theological education facilitator of Asia; Rev. Dr. Jacob Preus III, vice president of development for Bethesda Lutheran Communities; and me, the new Executive Director.

We decided to optimize use of national pastors to teach in the students' languages. Offered would be weekly three-hour classes in local settings; six-hour classes every other weekend; and seminar settings. Each standard course includes eight modules of three hours each, 24 hours total.

Students who finish the program can be certified for ordination as a pastor or commissioning as an evangelist, deaconess or teacher.

About 35 students from 14 congregations in central and southern Cambodia now attend weeklong seminars in Phnom Penh. In Thailand, eight students gather at the LISA office in Bangkok; six students meet in Sikhio in a home; five students in Takuapa meet on Sunday afternoons at their church; two in Chiang Mai are tutored at the LISA office; and 15 students in Chiang Saen from northern Thailand and Laos stay and study in a small conference center.

You Can Help

Pray. The door is open in Thailand and Cambodia, where fewer than 2% of the people are Christian. Pray for us to equip and empower laborers for the harvest.



Pastor Niran Tamsakun (center) teaches four students at Chiang Mai as they prepare to serve as pastors and deaconesses.

Secondly we need funds. Many churches in SE Asia are young, rich in faith, but without financial means.

Support comes from congregations and individuals giving to the Garuna Foundation; designated gifts to LCMS World Mission; and the Lutheran Church - Canada. LISA's annual budget is about \$140,000, including

MISSIONLISA

by Gerhard C. Michael, Jr. Executive Director, Luther Institute of Southeast Asia (LISA)

salary support for national pastors. Visiting pastors and professors serve on a volunteer basis.



LISA Executive Director Gerhard Michael Jr. (2nd from left) with national teachers (l-r) Rev. Niran Tamsakun, Rev. Suchat Srikakarn, Rev. Suchat Chujit, Rev. Vanarith Chhim, Phanna "Peter" Bun and Rev. Taweeep Oiwan.

Volunteer. Help us tell the story, to our congregations. If you are open to a personal involvement, or desire more information, please email me at gmjrflga@aol.com; call 407-856-2485; or write me at 1800 Wind Harbor Road, Orlando, FL 32809-6847.

Witnessing Tip 1- Listen & Learn

You Shall be My Witnesses . . .

by Rev. Doug Kallesen, Florida-Georgia Executive Director of Outreach

Do you cringe when you hear this phrase or read this Bible passage in Acts 1:8? Does it enter your ears as Law or as Gospel?

For many people witnessing their faith in Jesus is more difficult than public speaking and less enjoyable than going to the dentist. I plan on writing a series on witnessing tips that have worked for me and others. It is my hope that this will improve your witness and also that I will hear back from members around our District on their witnessing tips.

Let us hear your story of HIS Story in your daily life!

Tip One: Listen and Learn

Does it seem strange for me to begin this tip on witnessing by telling you to keep your mouth shut . . . at least for a while! Before you speak, what can you observe from what someone else is saying

or doing? I look for what their body language is saying. Are they happy or angry? Exhausted or exuberant? Often the situation provides much information that can lead to witnessing opportunities.

Once I had a seat mate on a flight who was disturbed about a rough travel day. I listened and observed that she was put out, stressed out and that I needed only to reach out to her in conversation. I established my concern for her and soon engaged in further talk. I asked a couple of open ended questions, and God provided the opportunity for us to talk deeper.

She was thinking of ending a relationship with her husband, a doctor, and had only an acquaintance with the church. She asked what I thought she should do and then without pausing for me to answer, she said, "I don't know why I am telling you my whole life . . ."

I told her, "It's because I will pray for you. In fact, could we pray right here, right now!"

Tearfully she thanked me and bowed her head. We then talked about possible steps for strengthening her relationships with two of the most important men in her life, her husband and Jesus. She thanked me profusely, and I received a huge blessing from God in just knowing that He had used me on this flight as His vessel. I was His Witness!

You, too, shall be His Witness - but it begins with keeping your mouth shut and your ears and eyes open. Listen and learn and keep asking and praying, "How can I be YOUR witness here?"

Share your witnessing stories with Rev. Kallesen at dkallesen@flga-lcms.org 407.857.5556 ext. 2

Where Are They Now?



The Florida-Georgia District Educators Conference will celebrate its 60TH ANNIVERSARY next year. Shown here are the participants of the first Conference in 1953 — the 25 pastors and teachers serving in the District. We're asking for your help in identifying these pioneers and sharing an update on them. Please forward any information to Mark Brink, Florida-Georgia District Executive Director for School Ministries, at MBrink@flga-lcms.org or to the Lutheran Ministries Center, 7207 Monetary Drive, Orlando FL 32809.

St. Peter Welcomes Aaron Simms as First Pastor

Aaron Simms, a very recent Concordia Seminary-St. Louis graduate, has been called to be the first full-time pastor of St. Peter-Dahlonega.

Simms was one of 11 graduates of the Specific Ministry Pastor Program (SMP) who received their calls on April 20. Since March of 2010 Simms has been serving as an SMP vicar at Living Faith-Cumming with responsibilities at St. Peter since 2011. He will be ordained on Sunday, June 17, during a 4pm service at Living Faith.

A former member of Rivercliff-Atlanta, Simms joined Living Faith in 2008. That year the congregation started St. Peter as a mission plant in Dahlonega, which is about 45 minutes north of Cumming.

"For 2010, my vicarage duties included preaching and leading service at Living Faith once a month and some of the mid-week services during Lent and Advent," Simms said. "I also preached and led services at St. Peter.

"St. Peter was served by elders and retired pastors from 2008 through 2010. Beginning in January 2011, though, I began leading service and preaching at St. Peter every Sunday. So, I've been the vicar serving there for a little more than a year."



Following his ordination in June, Simms will continue serving at St. Peter as pastor.

"I will also be starting a new mission plant in Gwinnett County in the fall of 2012," he continued. "The new mission will be called St.

John the Apostle Lutheran Church. So, I'll serve at both St. Peter and St. John the Apostle as a dual parish pastor . . . I also work full time outside of the parish, so I'm considered a worker-priest.

"I'll also be continuing in the SMP program for the majority of the next two years."

Simms and his wife, Amy, were married in May of 2003. They have two children Molly (7) and William (4) — with a baby due in December.

Simms holds a B.S. in International Affairs from the Georgia Institute of Technology and an M.S. in International Relations from Troy University, Alabama. He was in Army ROTC at Georgia Tech, where he studied Russian. ■

REGION 1 NEWS

Amazing Grace Dedicates New Land

Members of Amazing Grace-Oxford on May 6 dedicated the 10-acre site that was purchased this year for construction of the congregation's first permanent facilities.

Plans for the mission congregation that is Amazing Grace began in 2005. Rev. James Rockey was installed as Amazing Grace's first pastor in July of 2007. The first worship service was held on November 11, 2007.

The congregation has experienced steady growth, and in the fall of 2010 added a second, more traditional Lutheran style of worship for the fall, winter and spring seasons. Amazing Grace is using the Educational Annex of the First Baptist Church-Oxford as its temporary worship facility.

"AGLC hit an all-time high in worship for Easter of 169," Rockey reported. "We praise our Risen Lord."

Rockey also shared that the congregation's Strategic Planning Process got off to "a great start" in March with "almost 60% of the congregation present/involved." ■



Amazing Grace-Oxford Pastor James Rockey and members shown at the dedication of the congregation's new property.



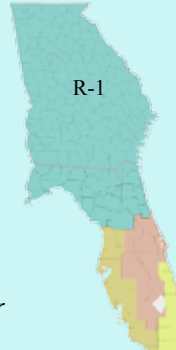
YOUTH FROM TIMOTHY/Woodstock raised more than \$1500 for Hunger Walk 2012 earlier this year. The 49 walkers raised \$1,235; Thrivent Financial for Lutherans provided \$292 in matching funds for a total of \$1,527. Hunger Walk is sponsored by the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Lutheran Services Georgia was one of the recipients of proceeds.



TRINITY LUTHERAN-SAVANNAH is teaming with Habitat for Humanity to build a new four-bedroom home for a local family. The house is scheduled to be completed by the end of July of this year. Among those participating in the March 21 groundbreaking were (far left) Trinity Pastor John Hopkins, (second from left) local Thrivent Financial for Lutherans representative Adam Hess with son Jordan and (far right) Trinity member Rick Mizell.

REGION 1 NEWS

The largest geographic sector of the District, Region 1 encompasses all of the State of Georgia and approximately the upper third of the State of Florida. Representing Region 1 on the District Board of Directors are Rev. Frank Marshall of Jacksonville, FL, who recently retired as pastor of St. Paul-Jacksonville; Jean Weinrich, a member of All Saints-Blairsville, GA; and Bill Gaik, a member of Trinity Lutheran-Toccoa, GA.



Central Florida Hmong Outreach Flourishes



Two years ago, Rev. Zong Yang — head of the Hmong ministry of St. Paul-Lakeland — made contact with the Vang family of Dunedin and began a Bible study at their home. When Yang asked for any special prayer requests for their family, Choua Vang requested that God would open the door for her four children, who were living with their father in Laos, to someday join her in the United States. A year ago their father passed away leaving no one to take care of them.

"Earlier this year, God answered her prayers when she became a U. S. citizen," said Yang. "The U. S. government allowed her daughters to immigrate to the U.S."

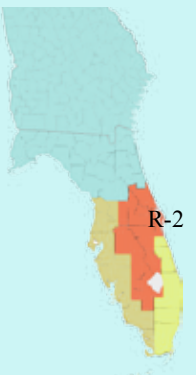
After the Vang daughters arrived in Dunedin, Yang began Baptism classes with them. Though they knew little English and little Hmong, he was able to communicate to them in Laotian.

"Mrs. Vang praises God for answering her prayer that her children were able to join their

family once again," Yang said. "The three daughters were baptized on Sunday, April 22, with other Hmong new members. We are thankful that these new members were added to the family of God here at St. Paul."

REGION 2 NEWS

Region 2 is the only one to share borders with the District's other three regions as well as with the Atlantic Ocean. Representing Region 2 on the District Board of Directors are Rev. Brian Kneser, pastor of Woodlands Lutheran Church, Montverde, FL; Karen Smith, a member of Peace-Okeechobee, FL; and Jon Brazee, a member of Christ Lutheran-Cape Canaveral, FL.



REGION 2 NEWS



PEACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL
Okeechobee students are enjoying new playground equipment — including the sandbox and sand toys shown at right. School staff reported that National Lutheran Schools Week in March was a huge success. Students thanked their parents; performed service projects around the campus and in the community; learned how important prayer is to daily life; had an awesome time their dads; and a fun field day playing Bible games. Part of the field day events included dressing up as favorite Bible characters, as illustrated by the two students shown at left.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH –
Volunteers from Christ The King-Orlando prepare and serve dinners at the Ronald McDonald House in Orlando, a place where families can stay while their children are in the hospital. Shown here at the Ronald McDonald House kitchen is team leader Oddny Brun (front, center) with the volunteers.



REGION 3 NEWS
Mission 40: Celebrating Four Decades of Ministry at Zion

Members of Zion Lutheran-Fort Myers commemorated the congregation's 40th anniversary with a spring celebration and mission fundraising.

The goal to raise \$40,000 with 40 registered projects and fill 40 disaster buckets was exceeded. Participating members brought in \$40,018.55 through 48 registered projects for South Fort Myers Food Pantry, Estero Mission Project and the "Holy Buckets" disaster relief buckets. Matching funds from of \$20,000

from a generous Zion member brought the total to \$60,018.55. Other anniversary events included:

- Mission Fair
- Lenten Dinners
- Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing
- Ice Cream Social.

Coordinating the special events were Mission 40 Committee members Delores Dorsett, Larry Hughes, Charlotte Landgrebe, Gerry Poppe and Becky Poppe.

Zion is served by Interim Pastor James Eggert and Assistant Pastor Peter Weeks. ■



EASTER CELEBRATIONS at various Amigos en Cristo churches reached hundreds of adults and children. In Immokalee, the ministry was able to bless many of children and families with Easter baskets to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Some of those children are shown here.



The Women's Guild of Concordia Lutheran-Sarasota hosted its annual "Mothers and Others" Luncheon and Fashion Show on March 31.

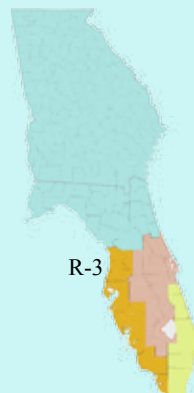
In attendance were 73 women, who were treated to a catered lunch and a Spring Fashion Show from Janet Carr of Accessories & More. Models were volunteers from Concordia.

"Men of Concordia" served as waiters and busboys for the day. The \$775 raised at the event will benefit the Women's Guild mission causes.

REGION 3 NEWS

REGION 3 NEWS

Region 3 covers the lower southwestern sector of Florida, with much of its area bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Representing Region 3 on the District Board of Directors are Rev. Jim Guelzow, pastor of Messiah-Tampa, FL; Jeff Richards, a member of Hope Lutheran-Bradenton, FL; and Maggie Bowles, a member of Peace-Naples, FL.



THE WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD – April 22-28 – was a time of special activities for students at Lakeside Lutheran Preschool-Venice. Shown here are some of the children enjoying special activities outside. During the week, the entire school participated in raising money to sponsor the Back Pack Kids Program. "Because of a generous donation we met our goal of 50 backpacks," reported Preschool Director Dorothy Bays. "The cost of the back pack is \$86 and will feed one child for nine months."



Trinity-Delray Welcomes Outreach Pastor

Trinity-Delray Beach was filled to capacity on April 15 when long-time member Tony Durante was ordained and installed as Pastor of Outreach.

He previously served as Minister

of Discipleship and Vicar.

Florida-Georgia District President Greg Walton was the preacher and officiant. Trinity Senior Pastor Vince Putnam led the worship.

A dinner reception followed the service. Durante was presented with a pectoral cross and stoles from late Trinity Pastor Ed Gross, who had asked that these items be given to Durante upon his ordination.

A former missionary to Japan, Durante has a B.A. in anthropology. He and his wife, Junko, have three daughters: Mika, Aya and Tae.



Pictured (front, l-r) Revs. John Frerking (retired), Gene Johnson (Grace-Port St. Lucie), Ken Larson (Trinity-Delray Beach), President Greg Walton, Tony & Junko Durant (Trinity-Delray Beach), Andrew Schroeder (Epiphany-Lake Worth), Daniel Bartley (Emmanuel Haitian-Delray Beach), Dennis Glick (retired); (back, l-r) Alan Koch (Faith-Clewiston), Dan McPherson (Faith-North Palm Beach), Robert Klemm (retired), Darrell Stuehrenberg (Bethlehem-Fort Myers), Vince Putnam (Trinity-Delray Beach)

Schrader Installed as Shepherd of the Coast Principal

Stephen Schraeder was installed as principal of Shepherd of the Coast School-Fort Lauderdale on April 15.

Florida-Georgia District President Greg Walton was the officiant. District Executive Director-School Ministries Mark Brink was at the service.

Shepherd of the Coast Pastor Dan emphasizing “the church at its best” and working as a team.

A 1972 graduate of Concordia-Seward, Schrader holds an MA in education. His 35-plus-year career includes two decades in administration.

“I’ve seen a lot of the country, and I look forward to seeing what God has in mind for my wife Jan and me here at Shepherd of the Coast,” Schrader said.

He and his wife have been married for “nearly 39 years, and we have three grown children and five grandchildren, one of whom is still waiting to be born!”

Shepherd of the Coast serves students from pre-kindergarten four through grade eight. The Early Childhood Center serves infants through pre-kindergarten. ■



Participants in the installation services included (front, l-r) Shepherd of the Coast’s School Ministry Team Diana Annis, Linda McMurtrie, Brenda Sorren (Early Childhood Director), Diana Nickel (Chairperson) and Joyce King, (back, l-r) District Executive Director – School Ministries Mark Brink, Shepherd of the Coast Pastor Dan Czaplewski Principal Stephen Schraeder, District President Greg Walton and Shepherd of the Coast Assisting Minister Darrell Stuehrenberg.



Discover Lutheran Haven Retirement Center.

Where more than half the residents hail from Florida-Georgia District Congregations. You might meet some old friends there, and for sure, will make some new ones!



- ✓ Independent Living Cottages
- ✓ Assisted Living Facility
- ✓ Skilled Nursing Facility
- ✓ Home Healthcare



A ministry of the SELC District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Lutheran Haven has been a provider of retirement services for more than 60 years.

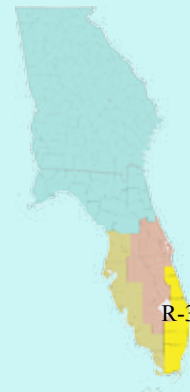
For more information, please call or write:
Mrs. P.J. Summersgill • Lutheran Haven
 2041 West State Road 426 • Oviedo, FL 32765
 Oviedo is a suburb of Orlando, FL.
 Visit us on the web at www.LutheranHaven.org
(407) 365-2224 Toll Free (800) 272-5676

ASK US ABOUT OUR SHORT TERM
 GUEST HOUSE RENTAL PROGRAM

This 4’x8’ stained glass image of Jesus is in the lobby of Lutheran Haven’s nursing home.

REGION 4 NEWS

Region 4 covers the lower southeastern sector of Florida, with much of its area stretching along the Atlantic Ocean and down into the Keys. Representing Region 4 on the District Board of Directors are Rev. Stephen Wipperman, pastor of Our Savior-Lake Worth; Diana Geiger, a member of Trinity Lutheran-Delray Beach; and Nancy Volz, a member of Our Savior-Plantation, FL.





Lutheran Life
2840 NW Boca Raton Blvd. Suite #205
Boca Raton, FL 33431-6634

Grace-Atlanta Celebrates 90th Anniversary

Grace Lutheran, the first Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregation in Georgia, celebrated its 90th anniversary on May 6 with a special service and luncheon. Dr. Gerhard Michael, President Emeritus of the Florida-Georgia District, was the guest preacher.

Founded in 1922, Grace was originally located on the corner of Manira and Cherokee Avenues. In 1949 the congregation moved to its current location at 1155 N. Highland Avenue NE. in midtown.

“Grace is considered the mother church of Missouri Synod Lutherans in Atlanta,” said Rev. Andrews Fields, pastor at Grace since 2002. “Fourteen of the area congregations were born out of Grace’s commitment to the mission of Jesus Christ to make disciples of all nations.”

A cornerstone of the Virginia-Highland neighborhood of Atlanta, Grace continues to live its motto, *Following Jesus Together, Leading Others To Him*, according to Fields. “Not only has Grace touched the lives of its hundreds of members past and

present, but the congregation has remained dedicated to helping the needy residents of Atlanta and Georgia,” he noted.

Among its outreach efforts is the annual Christmas tree sale, which since 1987 has raised tens of thousands of dollars for local charities.

“I am deeply grateful for the

institution that for 90 years has helped so many to experience in Jesus Christ the unmerited, redeeming love of God for sinful, broken people like me,” said Rev. Andrew Fields, pastor at Grace since 2002. ■

Photo above left: Members and guests gather for worship at Grace, located in the Virginia Highlands and Morningside neighborhoods, east of downtown Atlanta.



Organist Karl Albrecht at the Grace cornerstone laying ceremony on February 27, 1949.