



## Camp Omega's second annual Appreciation Dinner

Camp Omega's second annual Appreciation Dinner attracted 250 guests for a free turkey-and-all-the-trimmings meal and a program in which appreciation was shown for all those who support Camp Omega's ministry and those who have served and are serving our country.

The program included an address by former Minnesota Senator and now District Court Judge Tom Neuville, who shared thoughts focused on the theme "Patriotism—for God and Country."

Retired Pastor Victor Roth also shared some of the history of Camp Omega. Shown in the photo below are Camp Omega Board members Will Bartley and Don Olson, along with Minnesota South District staff member Pastor Tim Kinne and soon-to-be seminarian Jon Niebuhr.

Pastor Kinne and fellow tablemates had the honor of being the first of the 36 tables dismissed for the meal by virtue of their purchasing the first of nine auctioned pies. The average purchase price was \$282 per pie.



### K.I.D.S. stamp program in Mayer

Located in Mayer, Minn., Zion Lutheran School is blessed by the volunteer service of K.I.D.S. coordinator Ken Olson. Zion has also been blessed by increased enrollment this year. As an effective program advocate, Ken is passionate about giving students the opportunity to invest and support the church, and Zion students are responding! Ken recently celebrated a

record stamp-sales day.

Ken uses tools like the K.I.D.S. DVD and current rate information included in the school newsletter.

Too many children are growing up without a value placed on investing for future needs. Consider offering K.I.D.S.

Stamps at your church or school to help the next generation practice fiscal responsibility and good stewardship.



For information, contact Maria Hendrickson at 612-802-9731 or [Maria.Hendrickson@MNSDistrict.org](mailto:Maria.Hendrickson@MNSDistrict.org).

### April deadline is Feb. 16

Send information two months in advance for the district portion of *The Lutheran Witness* to **Rev. David Anderson, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1200 N. North Ave., Fairmont, MN 56031**, or e-mail [pastoranderson@yahoo.com](mailto:pastoranderson@yahoo.com).

**DEADLINE is the third Monday of each month.** If you submit photos and wish to have the photos returned to you, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

# COMMENTS/FINANCES

## **His sacrifice—once, for all**

The American Heritage College Dictionary offers a number of definitions for the word “sacrifice.” The word can be either a noun or a verb. With Lent beginning this month (Feb. 25), I’d like to focus your attention on the word “sacrifice” when it is used as a verb. One of the definitions of the verb “sacrifice” is “to forfeit (one thing) for another thing considered to be of greater value.”

When I think of that word “sacrifice,” one of the first things that comes to mind is Abraham’s sacrificing of his son, Isaac. That story is recorded in Genesis 22. In verse 2, God said to Abraham, “Take your son, you only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. *Sacrifice* him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.”

What’s your reaction to hearing those words? I know what my reaction would have been: “Are you crazy? That’s my son you’re talking about!” In verses 9-10 we read, “When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.” Verse 12 then states that the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven and said, “Do not lay a hand on the boy. Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.” In other words, by his faithfulness, Abraham showed that he feared God more than he loved his son Isaac.

When we think of the word “sacrifice,” however, we can find another even better example than Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son, Isaac. The supreme example of what it means to sacrifice is our heavenly Father’s willingness to send His own Son, Jesus, to the cross of Calvary. Think of our definition of the word “sacrifice” again at this point—“to forfeit (one thing) for another thing considered to be of greater value.” WOW! What meaning and power is attached to Christ’s suffering and death on the cross of Calvary when we think of it in that way! It means that our heavenly Father considered the cost of freeing us from our sins and eternal condemnation in hell more valuable to Him than the life of His one and only Son! John 3:16 says it all: “God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Romans 8:32 likewise reminds us that He did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us *all*. So, what does this mean for us?

On occasion, we might question, “Does God love me?” The answer to that question is “Yes.” The proof is that He willingly sacrificed His own Son for us since we are included in the word “all” in Rom. 8:32. In other words, He forfeited Him for someone that He considered to be more valuable—YOU and ME!

On occasion, we might wonder “How could God love me or forgive me after what I have done?” To spend time pondering that question robs us of the comfort and assurance that the Gospel seeks to give us. The appropriate response is simply to take God at His word and believe what the Scriptures tell us: He does love us! His love for us is simply greater than what we can comprehend in this life. May that be our joy and our comfort this Lenten season!

*Dr. Lane R. Seitz  
Minnesota South District President*

## **District congregation mission receipts**

*for the period ending Dec. 31, 2008\**

### **For the month ending Dec. 31, 2008**

Anticipated amount (9.47% of budget\*\*) ..... \$269,895  
Actual receipts ..... \$401,274  
**Over (under) amount ..... \$131,379**

### **Year-to-Date Receipts**

Anticipated amount (100% of budget\*\*) ..... \$2,850,000  
Actual receipts ..... \$2,767,536  
**Over (under) anticipated amount ..... (\$82,464)**

### **Use of Mission Receipts**

50% remitted to Synod (year-to-date/YTD) ..... \$1,383,768  
50% for district operations (YTD) ..... \$1,383,768  
**Total receipts ..... \$2,767,536**

### **Mission Receipts—Compared with Last Year**

Mission receipts—YTD 2008 ..... \$2,767,536  
Mission receipts—YTD 2007 ..... \$2,734,590  
**Over (under) last year ..... \$ 32,946**

Mission receipts—YTD 2008 ..... \$2,767,536  
Mission receipts—YTD 1998 (10 years ago) ..... \$3,089,773  
Mission receipts—YTD 1988 (20 years ago) ..... \$3,288,081

\* Fiscal Year End (FYE) is now Dec. 31

\*\* Based on average receipts for the past five years, 2008 congregational receipts budgeted at \$2.85 million

*Minnesota South District  
Lutheran Church Extension Fund*

### **Month of November 2008:**

New investments ..... \$ 743,643  
Withdrawals ..... \$ 980,124  
**Net increase (decrease) ..... (\$ 236,481)**

### **Year-to-Date July 1-Nov. 30, 2008:**

New investments ..... \$3,806,030  
Withdrawals ..... \$5,429,492  
**Net increase (decrease) ..... (\$1,623,462)**



## 50 new churches—Ablaze! —through church multiplication!

The Minnesota South District mission vision is to start 50 new churches by 2017 (the 500th anniversary of the Reformation). This is a part of the LCMS *Ablaze!* goal of 2,000 new churches in North America and 5,000 more new churches worldwide.

Church multiplication is God's natural means for church growth. God has designed all healthy living things to grow and reproduce. The true fruit of a healthy church is not just adding new members but, rather, giving birth to new congregations. Is your congregation or circuit thinking or talking about church multiplication (church planting)?

Contact Mission Executive Peter Meier at [peter.meier@mnsdistrict.org](mailto:peter.meier@mnsdistrict.org) or 952-223-2151.

## 10 tips for mission praying

Here are 10 ideas to consider as you bring your prayers for missions to the Lord:

1) Set Prayer Goals. Pray for 30 minutes five days a week. While that may sound like "punching the clock," it's a great way to develop a habit.

2) Keep a prayer journal. This spiritual discipline will help you track your prayers and God's answers to them.

3) Make a prayer list. Many people don't pray because they don't know what to pray for. Make your list of missionaries, people, issues, and add to it over time. Like the journal, it helps you remember what to pray for. Use the monthly Minnesota South prayer page and the LCMS World



Mission "Pray for Us" page.

4) Pray through the newspaper. Instead of reading the news, pray the news!

5) Pray through your calendar. Don't just go to a meeting, pray about it beforehand. Start each day by praying through your calendar.

6) Set your alarm 30 minutes earlier. Jesus rose early to spend time with His Father in prayer. Why not try it yourself?

7) Turn your commute into a prayer walk or prayer ride. Turn off the radio and tune in to God.

8) Pray with your spouse. Pray for family, neighbors, friends—especially those who are unchurched.

9) Pray through the Bible. Listen to God's voice as you read. Let your reading lead into prayer.

10) Pray the Lord's Prayer as a mission prayer. Use each petition to focus on an aspect of God's mission and your partnership in that mission.

### Study makes it clear: 'Spirituality is in, religion is not'

Search Institute issued the first report from its massive global study of adolescent spirituality. While most young people are spiritual, it appears that they are not very comfortable with a systematic faith or belief.

What do we do with that? How do we share any kind of witness to what we believe as Lutherans when most teens seem to disdain the "organized" church? It's not as easy as giving teens a catechism, and it's not about doing it like we always have.

It certainly is not about telling them what to believe and expecting that they will believe it. In an age of "spiritual diversity" where everyone's "religion" is accepted and tolerated, how do Lutherans respond and provide appropriate "catechesis" to our youth and young adults?

*Youth Ministry 2009*, which took place Jan. 9-11, explored ways in which to open youth to Lutheran teachings and expressions of spirituality. Participants explored answers to the question of how to communicate to youth concerning spirituality and a biblical view on life. To learn the results of these discussions, visit [www.lcms.org/youth](http://www.lcms.org/youth).

# EDUCATION

## First 'Reaching Out Together' conference

ST. LOUIS—Concordia Seminary will hold an evangelism conference titled "Reaching Out Together" on Feb. 14 on the seminary campus. The conference is sponsored by the partnership of Concordia Seminary, the LCMS Missouri District, and LCMS North American Missions *Ablaze!* This event is designed for pastors, evangelism boards, church leaders, and laypeople in the Missouri District and adjacent LCMS districts.

"For years, a group of St. Louis-area congregations have been emphasizing the importance of evangelism with their 'Saturday Outreach School,'" commented Rev. Rick Marrs, director of continuing education and parish services. "We are very pleased to be able to reach out together with them and with Synod's *Ablaze!* program to encourage even more congregations and Christians to creatively reach out to their communities with the blessed Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dr. Dale A. Meyer, president of Concordia Seminary, will serve as keynote speaker. Other presenters will include Rev. Scott Snow, director of national outreach with LCMS World Mission; Rev. Joseph Sullivan, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Louis; and Dr. Yohannes Mengsteab, national director of new mission fields development with LCMS World Mission.

Registration is required. The cost is \$20 per participant for the first four from a single congregation; \$12.50 per participant for each additional participant. Fees include all materials and lunch. Registration is due by Feb. 6.

For more information or to register for "Reaching Out Together," call 314-505-7486 or e-mail [ce@csl.edu](mailto:ce@csl.edu).

## Liturgical banners donated

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, received a generous donation of five liturgical banners that were placed in The Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus on the seminary campus. The banners were created by Jeanette Paulson, a liturgical fabric artist from Duluth, Minn., and were donated by Marcia Hoemann in memory of her husband Victor H. Hoemann from Florissant, Mo.

"It was our goal to commission a strong Christological design and our artist, Jeanette Paulson, has achieved this," commented Dr. James Brauer, former dean of the chapel. "An additional aspect of the design has been identified in the comments of many students and colleagues, who after first seeing the banners, say, 'They fit so well, it seems like they

have always been there.'"

The five banners over the altar form a single rich and symbolic impression. The primary element is the circle representing the Light of God, Jesus Christ, and His life and teachings. Background colors of purple, red, blue, and green contrast with the white of the circle, the silver and gold of the rays, and the silver and gray of the pathways.

The circle image contains small squares, suggesting light for the "corners" of the world.

Some of the textured fabrics absorb light and some reflect light. Together, they create a rich repetition of colors and shapes found elsewhere in the Chapel.



For more information, contact Communications, Concordia Seminary, 801 Seminary Place, St. Louis, MO 63105; 314-505-7374; [communications@csl.edu](mailto:communications@csl.edu).

## Hmong Academy's second high-school class graduates

Students of the St. Paul-based Hmong Academy, a charter high school sponsored by Concordia University, graduated on June 12, 2008. They comprised the school's second graduating class.

Concordia alumna Christianna Hang (MA '04) founded Hmong Academy in 2004 to provide rigorous college preparation while strengthening connections to Hmong heritage.

Fox 9 News covered the graduation and did an excellent story about the school's focus on serving students who would otherwise have slipped through the cracks at public schools.

Hmong Academy, which is moving toward becoming a K-12 institution, celebrated a 90 percent graduation rate—a notable accomplishment for students:

- who must overcome a cultural tradition that has not emphasized formal education; and
- whose families predominantly speak little or no English and who are living at or below the poverty level.



**Look!**

**Look at the year!** It is time to plan to attend the LWML 33rd biennial convention, set for June 25-28 in Portland, Ore., where you can gather with your LWML sisters and “Look to the Hills ... God Reigns.” Come join this activity-filled and action-packed weekend, complete with worship, Bible study, and fellowship with other sisters and brothers in Christ.

Registration opens March 2. Registration information is now available in the winter issue of the *Lutheran Woman’s Quarterly* and at [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org).

Take “A Closer Look” at the Saturday luncheons listed in the registration information. These luncheons give attendees an opportunity to look into the lives and work of our convention speakers. Luncheon topics include:

- Heidi Floyd—God Reigns ... when breast cancer strikes.
- Dr. Mary Hilgendorf—God Reigns ... with biblical women of influence.
- LCMS President Jerry and Terry Kieschnick—God Reigns ... in our church body.
- Ruth Koch—God Reigns ... in my grief.
- Missionaries Michelle Hoepfner and Danelle Putnam—God Reigns ... in the mission field.
- Jan Struck—God Reigns ... in my life story.

Look for more information about Camp Hood (child/youth care), Servant Connections (servant activities), Gifts from the Heart (ingathering), and “Mission in Motion” (pledge walk/exercise) at [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) and sign up for LWML eNews to receive the latest news about convention in your e-mail inbox.



**‘A Time to Lead—Your Passport Through Change’**

That’s the theme for our District Assembly of Leaders to be held on Saturday, Feb. 14, at Good Shepherd Lutheran, 2101 LorRay Drive, North Mankato. Registration with coffee and rolls begins at 9 a.m. The program begins at 9:30 a.m. and closes at 2:30 p.m. The cost is \$12 and includes lunch.



It will be a time of inspiration through Bible study and a time of insight through sessions on practical LWML leadership. It also will be a time to talk about the transition to the new zone alignment. All zone officers are asked to attend. Societies are encouraged to send two members.

Registration is due **Feb. 7**. Registration forms are available in the winter *WOM* and on the Minnesota South District LWML Web site: [www.mnslwml.org](http://www.mnslwml.org).

**2008 convention servant events recap**

More than 200 women signed up and participated in servant events at our district convention.

All the organizations—Mayo Blood Bank, Bethesda Resale Shop, Ronald McDonald House, Hope Lodge, Seasons Hospice, IHN, Orphan Grain Train, and the various nursing homes—have expressed their thanks for your interest and time in their various ministries.

The time allotted barely gave you time to see what goes on, but hopefully many of you will seek out those that interest you and “show your purple” by volunteering.

Unfortunately, there was some difficulty in scheduling women who were delegates or were also in choir. We appreciate all your feedback and, hopefully at the next convention, we will be able to take all these things into consideration and also have some on-site servant events.

Thank you to all the local women who volunteered to drive and to those organizations that provided their own transportation.

# DISTRICT SONSHINE



Individual Ministry Award winner Sharon Haberkamp (center) with (from left) LCEF Board Chair Rev. David Belasic, Minnesota South District Vice President Kurt Fuhr, District Promotion Director Maria Hendrickson, and LCEF President Merle Freitag at the national conference last month.

## **District teacher receives volunteer award**

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) honored Sharon Haberkamp, Hutchinson, with its prestigious Fred. E. Lietz Individual Ministry Award on Nov. 23, 2008, during LCEF's annual leadership conference.

Sharon is the second award-winner from the Minnesota South District to be honored in this way. Ernie Knutson from Trinity Lutheran Church and School in St. Francis received recognition in 2004.

"The Fred E. Lietz Individual Ministry Award honors a volunteer of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who puts forth exceptional, untiring efforts in the work of Church Extension," said Merle Freitag, LCEF president.

"Sharon is a caring and dedicated servant who works on many fronts to make a difference in her school, community, congregation, and especially within the Lutheran Church Extension Fund through the Kids Into Discipleship and Stewardship (K.I.D.S.) program."

The K.I.D.S. program is offered in LCMS schools and Sunday schools, and allows children to purchase stamps that can be exchanged for investments in an LCEF account upon completion of a stamp book.

Haberkamp is a teacher at Our Savior's Lutheran in Hutchinson. She earned the award for her volunteer work



as the K.I.D.S. coordinator for the school and congregation, and as a new region representative for the Minnesota South District, in addition to her other volunteer activity.

Haberkamp has been an LCEF volunteer for more than six years and a Lutheran school teacher for 39 years, mostly teaching first and second grade.

"A true partner in mission, Sharon effectively promotes the LCEF ministry in her congregation through relationships that can only be built through a lifetime of service... By recognizing Sharon, we are also recognizing the faithful service of all those across this family of believers, as together we support the Church in fulfilling its mission of sharing the Gospel and being a Christ-centered servant partner of the LCMS," said Maria Hendrickson, LCEF promotion director in the Minnesota South District.

The Fred E. Lietz Ministry Award is named in honor of Fred Lietz who was the first executive secretary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Church Extension Fund (CEF). When CEF incorporated in 1978, Lietz then became the first president of LCEF.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund is a not-for-profit organization that provides low-cost loans and facility-planning services to churches, schools, and rostered church workers of the LCMS through the investment support of church members. Visit [www.lcef.org](http://www.lcef.org) or call 800-843-5233 for more information.



Chaplain Siess

## **Chaplain SONshine**

The members of the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), a national organization of professional pastoral care providers, elected Chaplain Kenneth Siess as chair of the Commission on Professional Ethics. Siess is a "retired" chaplain, having last served full-time as director of chaplaincy and clinical pastoral education at University of Minnesota Hospital in Minneapolis, Minn.

Siess was certified in 1978 and is endorsed by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. As commission chair and board member of the APC, Siess helps govern the APC for professional chaplains.

A national, not-for-profit professional association, the APC advocates for quality spiritual care of all persons as an essential dimension of total care and services provided by public and private institutions and organizations. Congratulations, Chaplain Siess!



## LEA National DCE Conference

DALLAS—The LEA National DCE Conference will be held April 16-18 in Dallas, Texas. “Faithful God—Faith-Filled Servants” is the theme, based on 1 Tim. 1:12: **“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.”**

This event is provided with leaders from a north Texas-based organization called LINC. The dynamic vision for LINC North Texas is to reach the cities for Christ. We see all six people groups in North Texas as primary targets of the Gospel of salvation, love, and compassion. We see 60 new faith communities launched in North Texas by the year 2017.



LINC North Texas is the bridge that will bring this vision through a new LINC Bible Institute in North Texas that prepares men and women to start new community centers that reach people with the love of Jesus. We see a partnership with many churches in initiating missions and eventually congregations in various ethnic and cultural groups.

Participants in the pre-conference event will participate in a “hands-on” site in the Dallas area that features the work of LINC. Early bird pre-conference fee for the Missional Leadership Event is \$65 if registration is received on or before Feb. 15. Registration received after Feb. 15 will be \$115.



2010 National LCMS Youth Gathering  
New Orleans, La. • July 17-21, 2010

## Plan now to attend 2010 LCMS National Youth Gathering

Check out the latest development for the 2010 Youth Gathering by going to the Web site: [www.lcmsgathering.com](http://www.lcmsgathering.com). Among other things, you can find links to information about how New Orleans fared through Hurricane Gustav.

## 2009 Servant Events

### 100 Servant Events on board for summer

The LCMS Youth Ministry department has a record number of sites for Servant Events, and you can find their locations online. Check the youth ministry Web site. [www.lcms.org/ca/dcs/SERVEevents/sehome.asp](http://www.lcms.org/ca/dcs/SERVEevents/sehome.asp). This year, you can search by date, region, or event type.

Check out the latest information about:

- construction events;
- human-care events;
- environmental events;
- outreach events;
- multicultural events;
- crisis events; and
- family events.

## District Youth Gatherings

The one-day Senior High Youth Gathering hosted by Concordia University (CSP), St. Paul, is planned for Saturday, April 4, under the theme “Got Attitude?” based on the scriptural reference in Philippians of having an attitude like Christ. For more information about the Senior High Youth Gathering, contact Amy Scholz.

Concordia also will host the Junior High Youth Gathering, now in its 26th year, April 24-25. For more information about the Junior High Youth Gathering, contact Dr. Jeff Burkart.

By hosting the events at CSP, organizers can better involve Concordia students in the planning and execution of the gathering, providing valuable experience to students on developing programming, marketing, marshaling volunteers, and more.

More importantly, it provides an opportunity to give Lutheran high school students exposure to the Concordia campus and grow their interest in potentially choosing Concordia when it comes time to make their college selection.



“Transformed for  
His Mission”  
(Rom. 12:2)

MINNESOTA SOUTH  
DISTRICT CONVENTION  
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY,  
ST. PAUL, MINN.  
JUNE 11-13, 2009

# MILESTONES



Honored by the Minnesota South District for their years of service are (from left) Evan Schiller, Peter Meier, Lu Clemmensen, Glenn Thiel, and Kurt Fuhr.

## ***District Board shows appreciation for long years of service***

To thank the Lord of the Church for Lu Clemmensen, Peter Meier, Evan Schiller, Glenn Thiel, and Kurt Fuhr and for their dedicated service in the Minnesota South District—

WHEREAS, the Lord of the Church has gathered and appointed ministers to serve Him as they serve His people in the life and work of His Church in the Minnesota South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and

WHEREAS, it is good, right, and proper to give thanks and praise to the Lord of the Church for that service and to give thanks and express appreciation to His people as they mark anniversaries of their service; and

WHEREAS, Lu Clemmensen has served the congregations and members of the district efficiently and effectively for 35 years, since July 1, 1973, by managing and coordinating the district's business and financial operations; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Peter Meier has served as a parish pastor, an officer of the district, and now as the assistant to the president for Missions during the 25 years since he was ordained as a pastor of the church; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Evan Schiller has served as a teacher, an officer of the district, the district's development director, and is now celebrating the 49th anniversary of his commissioning as a teacher and the 25th anniversary of his ordination as a pastor of the church; and

WHEREAS, Glenn Thiel has served The LCMS Foun-

ation for 30 years, many of them on the staff of the Minnesota South District, faithfully linking Christians with giving opportunities in our district, the Synod, and worldwide; and

WHEREAS, Kurt Fuhr has served the district for 10 years as the LCEF vice president and in that role has assisted congregations and schools as they seek to provide space and place for effective mission and ministry; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Board of Directors of the Minnesota South District gives thanks and praise to the Lord of the Church for the dedicated service of Lu Clemmensen, Peter Meier, Evan Schiller, Glenn Thiel, and Kurt Fuhr to His Church in southern Minnesota by rising to sing the Common Doxology; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Board of Directors express the appreciation and thanks of the board and of the congregations and members of the district to Lu Clemmensen, Peter Meier, Evan Schiller, Glenn Thiel, and Kurt Fuhr by rising to applaud their work and service in the district.



Members of Bethel Lutheran Church, St. Paul, recently sponsored financial literacy classes to improve the lives of Liberian immigrants. The congregation not only assisted participants with money management issues, but they also served a meal and provided child care. During this time with the participants' children, volunteers shared a Bible lesson, played games, watched Christian videos, and befriended the children. "The classes are fun and inviting," says Benjamin Woto, a Liberian who serves in the U.S. Naval Reserve. "We share many ideas and views about the things affecting our lives, whether the issue is retirement, investments, college savings, or what to buy and what to spend."