



The InSIDE Word

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A newsletter by and for Southern IL District-LCMS

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Presidential Activities October 2008

- 4 Individual Consultations
- 3 Days –Pastor's Conference
- 5 District Meetings
- 3 Meetings with Roger Sprengel
- 3 Congregational Meetings
- 2 Days Midwest DP Conference
- 2 Days LCFS Board Meeting
- 2 Days ILCC Meeting
- 1 Ordination
- 2 Installations
- 3 Preaching/Speaking engagements

Thanksgiving in Difficult Times

Yesterday the market was down. Today (October 28) it was up 900 points. We cannot tell from day to day what will happen next. Indeed, as I write this, we do not know who will be the new president, though by the time you are reading this, the election will be just about over.

Whoever is elected will have some daunting economic challenges before him. Our financial system runs on credit and we are now dealing with a mountain of debt. This is not intended to be a political statement because I do not profess to understand what the real causes are or who is really at fault. I suspect we all are, in some way. But all politics aside, I am quite convinced our present economic woes will have their effect on the church.

In fact, we are probably seeing some effects already. Mission offerings from the congregations to the Southern Illinois District are normally behind congregational commitments at this time of the year by about 80 or 90 thousand. And then, normally by the close of our fiscal year January 15, the congregations fulfill their pledges and everything is fine. However, this year, at the 9 month mark, we are \$162,000 behind, tens of thousands farther behind than we have ever been before.

We do pray for a great finish to the year, but I am sure the district's cash-flow problems are only a reflection of the situation in your church or school. You are facing the same problem and how it will turn out is anyone's guess. More than likely, our district Board of Directors will be faced with some very difficult decisions, even as your congregation and your school board will not have an easy time preparing your budget for 2009.

Facing this, what are we called to do? The Word of God is clear.

"Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no help... Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Psalm 146:3,5). That's why "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in princes" (Psalm 118:9). God allows trouble that we may the more clearly see our need for Him. "I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the Lord helped me. The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation" (Psalm 118:13-14). In our present difficulties, whether outwardly things get better or worse, we will see how God will be "our refuge and strength" (Psalm 46:1).

Having said that, trouble and difficulty always also call for repentance. In the face of great disaster, the prophet Joel cried out: *"The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it? 'Yet even now,' says the Lord, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.' Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (Joel 2:11b-13). Isaiah echoes the thought: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).*

For what do we need to repent? Each of us is called to examine his or her own heart, but the root sins, I believe, are pride and idolatry. At least they are for me. Pride in our own accomplishments. Idolatry in the sense that we put our confidence in things other than God. Yet God says, *“I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God... I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe, I am the Lord who do all these things.”* (Isaiah 45:5,7). God alone is the source of our life.

When we call each other to repent, we are simply urging one another to be Christians, for the essence of faith is to despair of our own works and place our whole confidence in the work of Jesus Christ for us. When we talk about repentance, we are not “beating up on” one another, but simply pointing to Jesus, as Peter proclaimed, *“Repent, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”* (Acts 3:19).

That’s right. Repentance brings refreshing from the Lord. I don’t mean the stock market will turn around if we repent – that’s inconsequential by comparison. But our *“confidence [is] in God, who raised [Jesus] from the dead and gave him glory so that your faith and hope are in God”* (1 Peter 1:21). In Jesus, the promise is true also for us: *“When the righteous cry for us, the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivers him out of them all”* (Psalm 34:17-19).

Knowing this, confident in Him, with His promise on our lips and in our hearts, we will give thanks to God. *“Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:6-7). With these familiar words God says, “you give me your worries and I’ll give you my peace, in Jesus.” That’s how it is possible *“whatever you do, in word or deed, [to] do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him”* (Colossians 3:17). A thankful heart seeks everything from God.

All of this shows how Christ will see us through whatever times are ahead, whether hard or easy, bad or good. In every circumstance, He calls us to be faithful with the resources He provides. So, looking to Him for guidance and trusting not ourselves, but His promise, we will make the difficult decisions necessary. And He will do His will, and His Word will *“prosper in the thing for which”* He sends it. (Isaiah 55:11).

With hearts opened by the Spirit, receive one more sure Word of God: *“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near”* (Hebrews 10: 22-25).

May God thereby grant each of you a grace-filled Thanksgiving Season!

CALLING CONGREGATIONS

ZION, FARMERSVILLE—(Rev. Walter Byerley is serving)

CHRIST, FAIRFIELD—(Served by seminary students, and profs)

TRINITY, GIRARD—Called Rev. Keith GeRue, Assist. Pastor Trinity, Worden and St. Paul, Hamel
(Received and Accepted)

TRINITY, HARVEL—entering call process

ST. PAUL, TROY—Working with Call list

SID PASTOR’S CALLS RECEIVED/ACCEPTED/RETURNED

Rev. Keith GeRue—Assist. Pastor, Trinity, Worden and St. Paul, Hamel to Trinity, Girard (Received and Accepted)

Rev. Cliff Adair—Pastor at Trinity, Harvel to St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pipestone, MN. (Received and Accepted)

PRAYER REQUESTS



For the **Mission Efforts** going on in Harrisburg, Illinois.

For health concerns for baby **Laura Braun**, infant daughter of Pastor Allen and Laura Braun, (formerly of SID).

For **Laurel Witte** and her husband, (Laurel is the granddaughter of the late Pastor Clarence Witte and wife, Fern) as they try to leave Georgia, Central Asia. The airports are closed and at times they can hear the bombs.

For **Marian Martens**, former SID Treasurer, who has been diagnosed with cancer and inclusive body myositis.

For **Cathy Bevirt and Melissa Combs**, teachers at Holy Cross, Collinsville, for strength and courage while both are fighting cancer.

Please keep our brothers and sisters serving our country in your prayers

Active duty Chaplains from the SID: **Major Gregory Jans**, **CDR Gregory N. Todd**, and **LT. COL. David Wilshek**.

For Khotsi Tswaedi, son of Bishop David and Lucy Tswaedi, Southern Africa, in the U.S. Army, deployed to Iraq.

Lt. Commander Craig Muehler (brother of Cindy Nebel) US Navy Chaplain now serving in San Diego.

Lt. Carl Muehler (brother of Cindy Nebel) US Navy Chaplain now serving at Norfolk, VA.

Capt. Joshua Henschen (son of Ron and Ellen Henschen, teachers in Edwardsville) at Ft. Hood, TX.

Capt. Drew Ponivas (son of Nancy Ponivas, teacher at Zion, Bethalto) is stationed at Ft. Benning, GA..

MM1 John Ponivas (son of Nancy Ponivas, teacher at Zion, Bethalto) will be deployed soon to 3 months at sea.

Lt. Col. Robin Schultze (daughter-in-law of Shirley Schwartzkopf) is now at Fort McNair, DC. as a National Defines University Nurse.

Sgt. Matthew Kasten (son of Steve and Marge Kasten, Hoyleton, IL.) U.S. Army has returned to Baghdad for 18 mp.

Capt. Anthony Skeesick (son of Pastor Dale and Kathy Skeesick, St. Peter, Prairietown) serving in the US Air Force has been deployed to Afghanistan.

Lt. Col. John Pepin (son-in-law of Pastor [Emeritus] and Lois Eckert) is now serving in Iraq.

Please call Donna at 618-234-4767 to add your prayer request, or update the information above, to our monthly newsletter.

PRAISE REPORTS:

Thank you to the volunteers, Deloris Bramdstedt, Shirley Cotton, and Donna Sprengel, for helping the district staff assemble the 2008/2009 District Databooks.

We also want to praise God for:

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Carbondale, IL.

Is celebrating **10 years of Chinese Ministry** at a 4:00 p.m. service on November 2nd. For 10 years they have had a Sunday afternoon service in Mandarin Chinese. Give thanks and praise to God for the spread of the Gospel in Chinese. SIU alumnus and former OSLC Vicar, Rev. Michael Paul, will preach at the anniversary service at 4:00 p.m. on November 2nd.

PASTORS' ANNIVERSARIES CELEBRATED

The following pastors celebrated anniversaries of their ordination into the Holy Ministry in **October** and received certificates. If you, or someone you know had an anniversary (20, 25, 30, 35, etc.) during the month of **October** and their name is not on this list, please call Donna at the District Office so this can be taken care of right away. Thank you.

Rev. Darwin Schrader

35 years

October 1, 2008

Carload Conference November 8, 2008

St. Mark Lutheran School In Steeleville, Il.

Brochures , Registration Forms and Workshop Information has been mailed to all congregations.

Topics of interest include:

- Evangelism
- School Ministry
- Finances
- Elders
- Stewardship
- Christian Educations
- Missions

You still need a registration form? Call the District Office and we will get one right out to you! But hurry, there isn't much time left.....618-234-4767

RULES FOR 403(B) PLANS ARE CHANGING !!!

If your church or school offers more than a 403(b) through Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (e.g. a plan through Thrivent or your local broker), the rules are changing January 1, 2009. Much more will be required of employers, especially if more than one choice is offered.

Consult a good tax advisor or attorney!!!!



Pastors present for the Ordination and Installation of Pastor Scott Niermann at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Ferrin, IL. on Oct. 5, 2008. Back row, from left: Pastor Tim Weiser, Trinity, Iuka; Pastor Tim Mueller, St. John and St. Luke, New Minden and Covington; Pastor Stephen Krenz, Trinity, Hoffman; Pastor Tom Kramer, Hope, Mt. Carmel. Middle row, from left: President Herbert Mueller, SID; Pastor Steve Sommerer, Messiah, Carlyle; Pastor Darwin Schrader, Interim Pastor at Bethlehem, Ferrin; Professor Robert Hoehner, Placement Director, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; Pastor Matthew Roeglin, Blessed Savior, Florissant, MO; Pastor Tom Krause, Lord of Life, Leawood, KS. Front row, from left: Pastor Jon Smithley, Zion and Trinity, Pinckneyville and Conant; Pastor Perry Schfelker, Trinity, Centralia; Pastor Steve Niermann, St. John, Napoleon, Ohio (Pastor Niermann's cousin and preacher for the service); Pastor Scott Niermann; Pastor Herman Kramer (emeritus), Lake View, IA; Pastor Ron Simmons, St. Paul, Ironton, St. Paul, Ironton, MO; Pastor

Present for the Installation of Rev. Todd Wilken as Assistant Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Millstadt, Illinois on October 5, 2008, were the following: Front Row (left to right) – Matthew Clark, Associate Pastor, Immanuel-Waterloo; Tony Troup, Senior Pastor, Immanuel-Waterloo; Dr. Frederic Baue, Pastor, Bethany-Fairview Heights; Steven Theiss, Pastor, St. Paul -Columbia; Michael Kumm, Senior Pastor, Trinity-Millstadt; Pastor Wilken; William Weedon, Pastor, St. Paul-Hamel (preacher for the service); Dennis Kastens, Pastor, Peace-LeMay, Missouri; Seminarian Bill Rhea (crucifer); Martin



Noland, Candidate, recently director of Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis; Back Row (left to right) – Randy Asbury, Senior Pastor, Hope-St. Louis; Jon Vieker, Assistant Executive Director, LCMS Commission on Worship, St. Louis; Charles Henrickson, Pastor, St. Matthew-Bonne Terre, Missouri; Bruce Keseman, Pastor, Christ Our Savior-Freeburg; Paul Philp, Candidate, Graduate Student, Concordia-St. Louis; William Gleason, Candidate, Bridgeman, Michigan; President Herbert Mueller, Southern Illinois District.

DOXOLOGY

The Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel is holding a training event in Illinois January 25-28, 2009. Dr. Harold Senkbeil directs this “recognized service organization” of the Synod.

Check them out at: www.DOXOLOGY.us

Several pastors have appreciated this workshop.

CAMP WARTBURG

Camp Wartburg has offered several items for sale. First they have four Armstrong SX Ultra 90 High Efficiency (Model #CSC48N-4) heating/cooling units, each with a 4-ton A/C compressor. They are 10 years old. Call the Camp for a price.

Second, Camp Warburg has three vehicles for sale, all minivans. They are upgrading and can sell at a reduced price: 1992 Chevy Lumina, V-6, 192,000 miles (no A/C-) \$700 or best offer; 1992 Plymouth Grand Voyager, V-6, 160,000 miles (burns some oil) \$700 or best offer; and 1997 Ford Windstar, V-6, 184,000 miles (needs stabilizer bar) \$1500 or best offer

MUSIC FESTIVAL

AT

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH IN RED BUD (Prairie)

Trinity Lutheran Church in Red Bud will be celebrating the 100 year old organ and the 140th anniversary of the church building on **December 6, 2008 at a 7:00p.m.** Special music is planned for this celebration along with a recorded CD of some of the favorite hymns from LW and LSB, which will be available for purchase. The CD is entitled “Trinity’s Favorite Hymns.” For more information or questions about this event please call Sarah Koester at 618-282-4265 or email at mkoester@htc.net.

The St. Louis Celebration of Valpo’s 150th Anniversary

Saturday, Nov. 15, 2008

6:00 p.m.

Sunset Country Club

9555 S. Geyer Road, St. Louis

Tickets are \$60 per person and includes a hosted cocktail hour. Register by calling the VU Office of Alumni Relations at 800-833-6792, ext. 23 Deadline is Nov. 5.

A group rate of \$109, plus taxes has been arranged at the Hampton Inn, 1580 Kirkwood Road, St. Louis. Call 314-984-8181 to make a reservation.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS & EVENTS IN AND FOR THE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT 2008

NOVEMBER

- 3 Board of Spiritual Care and Supervision, 9:00 a.m.
- 3 SID Convention Nominating Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 5 Older Adult Advisory Meeting 6:15 p.m.
- 6 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 8 "Carload" Conference, St. Mark, Steeleville
- 10 SID Convention Planning Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 13-14 Lutheran Older Adult Retreat at Pere Marquette
- 15 SID Mission Board, 9:00 a.m.
- 18 District LLL Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 27 Thanksgiving Day—District Office closed
- 28 District Office Closed

DECEMBER

- 4 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 25 Celebrate Jesus birth!

2009

JANUARY

- 8 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 8 Mission Staff Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 17 Mission Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
- 21 Finance Committee Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- 26 Convention Planning Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 31 SID Board of Directors, 9:00 a.m.

FEBRUARY

- 2 Board of Spiritual Care and Supervision, 9:00 a.m.
- 5 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 19-21 SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT CONVENTION

MARCH

- 5 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 21 Board of Directors and all Boards Day of Orientation