

THE MESSENGER

JANUARY 2010

The Urgency of St. Paul

by
President Randall Golter

“For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Cor. 9:16).

Paul had a mission. He had the smarts, he was on the cutting edge of Pharisaism at one time (Gal. 1:14); no one surpassed him. But when the Lord got ahold of him, he knew only one thing: He had to preach the Gospel.



His restlessness was not due to a restless soul. He had that while under the misleading dream of Pharisaism. Any system that grounds eternal existence to a person’s performance is nothing other than the Devil’s lie.

The Lord, though, captured Paul, claimed him as His own, and had him baptized by Ananias (Acts 9:18). From that grounding in our merciful Lord, Paul had a quiet and peaceful conscience. He no longer had to work to earn God’s favor; God’s favor had been given to him as a gift.

Paul’s urgency came because of two reasons: God had laid upon him the necessity to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. God called him. God chose him to be an “instrument of mine” (Acts 9:15). Secondly, Paul’s urgency came about as a natural result of faith. Faith in Christ creates an urgency to tell others of the great and good news of a Savior who forgives.

Friedrich Pfotenhauer, the Missouri Synod’s sixth synodical president, in his 1932 address to the Synodical Convention, quoted Luther: “The Christian is a restless spirit while serenely at rest” (*At Home in the House of My Fathers: Presidential Sermons, Essays, Letters, and Addresses from the Missouri Synod’s Great Era of Unity and Growth*, translated by Matthew Harrison).

Restless and yet at rest perfectly describes the Lord's church, Paul the apostle, and the people of the Rocky Mountain District. I saw this restless spirit when I visited the Ysleta Lutheran Mission in El Paso in November. Dr. Karl Heimer and his son Steven told me of the horrific violence across the border in Juarez, Mexico. Even so, they said there is an even greater urgency to get the Gospel to those people who are shaken.

The Gospel of Christ does that to His people, who risk life and limb to get the message out. We follow in the footsteps of St. Paul. We, too, have an urgency to go and tell.

January Mission of the Month: New Ministries

The spotlight this month is on "New Ministries," those mission congregations recently launched (or re-launched) within our District.

The January *Peaks and Valleys* (insert in *The Lutheran Witness*) will feature Light of the Valley Lutheran Church in Riverton (suburban Salt Lake City), Utah, launched in December 2008 and Cross of Christ Lutheran Church in Aurora, Colorado, re-launched in October 2009.

A more extensive PowerPoint presentation on our new ministries will appear on our District website, www.ignitingchurchandcultureforchrist.org.

For use in your congregation are a bulletin/newsletter insert, a prayer for corporate worship, and a PowerPoint presentation, all sent to your congregation via email. (Please notify our District office if you are not receiving this monthly emailing.)

As a District, we seek to support new ministries through the identification of church planters and their training, through demographic studies, and through financial grants to new ministry efforts.

The financial support comes through our District's Revolving Mission Fund (special gifts to this fund are always needed and appreciated).



If you see a need for a new ministry in your local area and would like to take leadership in developing such a ministry, please contact our District office to begin a conversation.

A New Year's Resolution for Churches

So many congregations (and their schools) struggle to fulfill their annual budget. Pastors know that the Lord has entrusted their members with the needed financial resources to do His work,

but it is a constant battle to encourage them to exercise solid stewardship of those gifts in the service of His kingdom.

A suggestion for a new year's resolution for your church or school: Identify a specific mission cause (or two or three) completely outside your congregation for special support from your members. Set a goal and organize a "prayer and giving" plan to reach that goal. Use the promotion and support of this cause to help focus the congregation on why it exists by God's will.

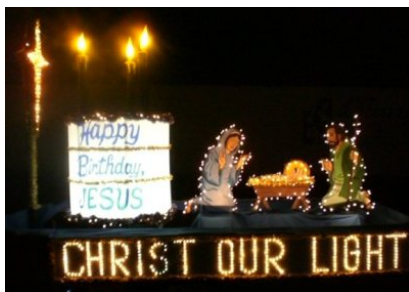
Won't this adversely affect your general Sunday morning giving? Probably not. People give out of "different pockets" for different causes. Actually, what is more likely to happen is that your members will view your local ministry more positively as well, which will lead them to be more generous in their support.

But what if your church is entering a capital campaign for building expansion? No problem. Simply determine that you will devote a tithe of the funds you raise for your designated mission cause. It is quite likely that overall people will respond in their campaign giving in a way that more than makes up the difference. Your folks will be pleased that others, in addition to your own congregation, will benefit from the campaign.

If you need help in identifying a specific cause to support, our Rocky Mountain District has any number of mission endeavors that are worthy of special support. A simple phone call to our District's Development Director, Pastor Tom Schoech, will get you moving in the right direction.

Matthew 9:37-38 served as the theme for our District convention this past summer: *(Jesus) said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field"* (NIV). May 2010 be a year in which we both pray and work to multiply the number of workers in the Lord's harvest field!

Christmas Float



Volunteers from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Clovis, New Mexico, gathered to construct a float for the annual Christmas parade of lights held in Clovis on December 5, 2009.



Volunteers are left to right: Mitch Weber, Chris Weber, Don Boes, Sylvia Bean, Narcie Tucker, Frank Tucker, and Bill Lincoln. Shirley Boes.

Lutheran Hour Ministries Names New Director of United States Ministries



The Rev. Dr. Mark Larson of Aurora, Colorado, has been named Director of the United States Ministries division at Lutheran Hour Ministries. He will begin his new position on Jan. 4, 2010, and will oversee the production of **The Lutheran Hour, Para el Camino,** and **Woman to Woman** radio programs, the ministry's print outreach materials, ministry fulfillment and referral services, and the **LHM Men's NetWork**, an online program launched in January 2009 to help congregations reconnect with men and build local men's ministries.

"We are most pleased to add someone with Mark's extensive skills into this important leadership position here at Lutheran Hour Ministries," said LHM Executive Director Bruce Wurdeman. "Our staff looks forward to working with this gifted man of God."

Larson currently serves as District Executive—Missions for the Rocky Mountain District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, a position he has held since 2000. He oversees the mission and evangelism programs for the District, which includes Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and El Paso, Texas.

Under his leadership, the Rocky Mountain District received the 2008 Executive Director's *Ablaze!* Award from LCMS World Mission for a series of evangelism conferences called *Conversations of Grace*. These conferences equipped the body of Christ for outreach through many partners, including Lutheran Hour Ministries.

Larson's other ministry service includes appointment by LCMS President Dr. Gerald Kieschnick to serve on the President's Blue Ribbon Task Force for Hispanic Ministry, as well as service on the National Advisory Group for Missions, the Executive Committee of North American Mission Enablers, and Frontera Ministries. He has played a key role in the founding of the Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute in El Paso and serves on the Board of Directors of this institute that has a vision to raise Hispanic church planters for the LCMS.

Larson served as Associate Pastor (1988-1994) and then Senior Pastor (1994-2000) of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and School in Beecher, Illinois. While there he served on the Mission Board of the Northern Illinois District from 1991 to 2000. He served as the Board Chair from 1997-2000.

Raised near Grand Island, Nebraska, he received a bachelor's degree in Speech Communications from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. He graduated with a Master of Divinity degree from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and earned a Doctor of Ministry degree from Trinity International University in Deerfield, Illinois in 2004. He and his wife Lisa have two elementary school-aged children.

Lutheran Hour Ministries is a Christian outreach ministry supporting churches worldwide in its mission of *Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church*. LHM produces Christian radio and TV programming for broadcast, as well as Internet and print communications, dramas, music, and outreach materials, to reach the unchurched in more than 30 countries. LHM's flagship program, **The Lutheran Hour**, is the world's longest-running Christian outreach radio program. It airs weekly on more than 900 stations. For more information about LHM, visit www.lhm.org.

DOXOLOGY Is Coming to the Rocky Mountains!

DOXOLOGY offers an innovative program of advanced study retreats to strengthen pastors for the task of faithfully shepherding the souls entrusted to their care. DOXOLOGY provides pastors with a unique study and renewal experience, rooted in the classic art of spiritual care and informed by the insights of contemporary Christian psychology. DOXOLOGY training retreats will be held in 2010, beginning April 25-28 at St. Malo's Retreat Center. For more information, please visit www.doxology.us.



Table Talk Radio 990 AM Denver 2:05 pm Sundays

Listen. Laugh. Learn.

Pastor Bryan Wolfmueller

Hope Lutheran Church, Aurora, CO

www.hope-aurora.org



Theological Conference for the Laity

The fifth-annual Our Lutheran Faith Lay Theological Conference will be held Saturday, February 6, 2010, at Peace With Christ Lutheran Church in Fort Collins, Colorado. This year's topic is "**Christian Apologetics: You Can Give an Answer.**"

The speaker is the Rev. Dr. Steven Hein, Director of The Concordia Institute for Christian Studies and Associate Pastor of Shepherd of the Springs Lutheran Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado. This conference is designed for the thinking Christian who is looking for answers and strategies by which the Christian faith can be successfully defended in the face of the reasoned arguments of unbelief, specifically as they relate to who is/was Jesus of Nazareth. Matins and vespers services will begin and end the day. All laity, pastors, and church leaders are welcome!

Our Lutheran Faith: Christian Apologetics:

You Can Give an Answer.

Saturday, February 6, 2010

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Hosted by:

Peace With Christ Lutheran Church

1412 W. Swallow Rd.

Fort Collins, Colorado

(970) 226-4721

No registration fee, but please RSVP. (for lunch count) with Micah Lile at (970) 356-2206 or micahlile@yahoo.com

DAP Awards \$12,000 in Gifts...

The Debt Assistance Program of the Rocky Mountain District makes annual gifts to pastors serving within our District who carry educational debt. Dozens of pastors within our District annually have some of their debt reduced because of the generosity of others. This reduction of debt is a blessing to them and their families.



Grant payments for the 2009 Debt Assistance Program totaled \$12,000 this year compared to more than \$15,000 in years past, the difference being attributed to the decline in the financial market. Even during these tough economic times, 27 pastors in the Rocky Mountain District benefited from the generous gifts donated by many individuals and congregations in our District.

Investments in the Endowment Fund increased \$17,000 this year. Our sincere thanks goes out to all who made this year a success.

The Debt Assistance Committee is in need of volunteers. The committee membership is made up of both pastors and lay people. If God has blessed you with good communication, administration, or marketing skills or if you know someone with these skills, we sure could use your help. Contact either Pastor John Larson 303-794-4636 or Ed Kilgore 303-695-8631.

Attention All St. John's College Alumni Parents & Grandparents!



Scholarship guidelines and Scholarship application forms for the academic year 2010-2011 are available on the St. John's College Alumni Association's web page (www.stjohnsalumni.org). This financial aid is available to all students who are or will be attending one of the colleges, universities or seminaries of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Additionally the student must be a direct descendant of an alumnus of St. John's College, Winfield, KS, i.e. their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents must have attended St. John's. Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2010 and students will be notified by May 1, 2010 of being a recipient of financial aid from the Alumni Association. Students who are currently enrolled in college must re-apply each year.

So parents and grandparents here is where you come in. Please encourage your son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter to attend a college, university or seminary of the LCMS. And since you are an alumnus of SJC, please tell them to go on-line to get the application, fill it out and return it to the Alumni Association Office by April 1, 2010. If there are any questions they may call 620.221.1572 or e-mail the Association office at sjcaal@cox.net (that's sjcaa numeral one, not the small letter L). The Alumni Association will assist them in getting their Christian College education.

Roster Reports

CALLS ACCEPTED

Candidate Brian Horning, Concordia, Ann Arbor, MI to Grace, Sandy, UT
Rev. Thomas Lock, Huntertown, IN, to Trinity, Denver, CO as Assistant Pastor
Rev. Earnest Hengst, Immanuel/Immanuel, Las Vegas/Springer, NM to Immanuel, Paonia, CO
Rev. Mark Nierman, Faith in Christ, Albuquerque, NM to Mt. Olive, Loveland, CO

CHANGE OF STATUS

Hilary Morse, Immanuel, Colorado Springs, CO to Candidate Status
Rev. Robert Harmon, Faith, Las Cruces, NM to Non-Candidate Status

TRANSFERS

Kristin Schroeder, Candidate Status, to Florida Georgia District



Upcoming Events – Rocky Mountain District

January 2010

7 Evangelism Meeting
25-26 RMD Board of Directors Meeting

February

11 L'achaim Quarterly gathering, St. John's, Denver, CO
18-20 District Stewardship Leaders Conference in Tempe, AZ
20 Older Adults Seminar, Bethlehem, Lakewood, CO

March

1 Nurturing the Faith at Christ Lutheran, Albuquerque, NM
7 -13 Lutheran Schools Week

Nurturing the Faith Week

1 Christ Lutheran, Albuquerque, NM
16 Immanuel Lutheran Church, Loveland, CO
18 Lutheran High School Parker, CO
19 St. Paul Lutheran Church – Ogden, UT

April

13-15 NM Area Spring Pastors' Conference, Bonita Park Camp and Conference Center

13-15 Southern Spring Pastors' Conference

May

17 RMD Board of Directors Meeting

August

9-10 RMD Board of Directors Meeting

September

14-16 Older Adult Gathering at Ram's Horn Mtn Lodge at the YMCA in Estes Park, CO

October

6- 8 Professional Worker's Conference – Breckenridge, CO

November

1-2 RMD Board of Directors Meeting

We Encourage your Prayers

O Holy Spirit, teach us to receive every blessing as a gift from God's gracious hands. Thank You for so graciously hearing and answering our prayers on behalf of **Rev. Allen Anderson, Gary Johnson, and Rev. Gary Trickey**. Your blessing them with improved health enables these men to return to their work with renewed strength. Grant them the grace to trust that You will be with them in all things. Amen.

Rev. Allen Anderson, the 1st vice president of the Rocky Mountain District and pastor of Mt. Zion, Boulder, CO, suffered a heart attack in late November. He had quintuple bypass surgery and is recovering.

Gary Johnson, LCEF vice president of the RMD, has returned to work after a medical leave of absence.

Rev. Gary Trickey, 4th vice president of the RMD, and pastor of St. Paul, Ogden, UT, is recovering from pneumonia and related problems.

O Lord our Strength, You walk with Your children in their sojourn through life. We now ask You to walk with **Rev. Dr. Mark Larson** as he begins his duties with the Lutheran Hour Ministries in early January. May the Larson family see Your hand of blessing in their lives as Rev. Larson assumes his new

duties in St. Louis. Amen. (Rev. Larson served as the mission executive of the RMD since 2000. His new duties will include the supervision of LH programs and publications).

Gracious Father, we stand at the threshold of a new year. We thank You for the countless blessings that You have bestowed on us, our schools, and our churches throughout 2009. We have been given new mercy, new kindnesses, and new life in Your Son's name. As a sign of Your goodness to us, You have given us this new year and its beginnings. Teach us anew that You have made us Your own, not because we have been diligent in our resolve, but because of Your love for us. Grant us to see each day of this New Year that You are with us in Your holy Word and Sacraments so that we, freed from the bondage of sin, are enabled to glorify You here in time and hereafter in eternity. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

Holy Jesus, we thank You for the gift of pastors, those men You have called to serve as Your undershepherds to nourish Your people with Your Word and to remind them of the many promises You have bestowed on them. Bless their efforts of touching the lives of those who have either strayed from Your ways or who do not know of Your love for them. Use these men and their congregations to witness to these people and thus spread the Good News of Your birth, death, and resurrection. Amen.