



Church Simple: The Church is ever in motion

“For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him” (Matt. 2:2).

We continue the discussion of what it is to be God’s Church in America. We have called it “Church Simple” because it is not really all that complicated. Oh, don’t get me wrong in this sense: Being God’s Church is a mystery. To be chosen and elected by God in Christ and for the Triune God to initiate and complete the salvation work in His Son, now *that* is beyond comprehension. It is only accessible by faith through the Spirit’s prompting.

And yet we must say that because we are God’s Church—the holy, Christian and apostolic Church—and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as a confessional fellowship within the one Church, this Church is ever on the move. The Church is on the move because her Lord never sat around and did nothing.

Quickly recall the Lord’s mannerisms in the Garden, in the leading of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in His Law and Gospel ways with the people of Israel, in His drawing-out of Rahab, Tamar, Ruth and so many others. The Triune God is like the mother hen brooding over her chicks, through His preachers and laity clucking the Gospel throughout the whole world, calling and keeping all people unto Himself through the Son. God continually pulls “all-nighters” as He works His Gospel ways to save sinners.

Could we really believe that the Wise Men came to Jerusalem of their own will? Could we really believe that the star in the heavens just happened to be some juxtapositioning of two planets? “Oh, what a coincidence!” No, the star was God’s star (“His star,” Matt. 2:2). He owned and positioned it as a kind of “Bible in the sky,” preaching, pointing and drawing the Wise Men to God’s Baby.

God has not changed His mannerisms. He uses each local congregation as a “star in the sky” to preach and proclaim. The intended audience is the “all nations”

(Matt. 28:19) geographically located around every individual congregation. Each church is to be like a mother hen fussing over those within its community.

And, please, understand this: The “all nations” fundamentally does not refer to various ethnic groups *per se* but to unbelievers, no matter their race. The mission boundary that needs to be crossed is that from unbelief to faith in Christ.



The Church—universal and local—owns a holy restlessness and a Spirit-prompted inertia to seek the lost. Luther wrote, “For the church is in constant use (by God) to convert others to faith and to call them to repentance” (Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism*, p. 388). And Werner Elert himself

writes, “Here there is no trace (in Luther’s writings) of a satiated resting from the Christianizing of the world. The Gospel always appears above the horizon, is always under way, is always on the attack. It must come to all nations” (Ibid.).

The Church won’t be at rest until Judgment Day. Until then, she is moving out into every nook and cranny of the world. She can do no other; the Lord won’t let her.

*Rev. Randall Golter
District President*

Thank you, Thrivent!

The Rocky Mountain District thanks Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for sponsoring the 2010 Professional Workers Conference reception in Breckenridge.

Thrivent also gave away a couple of great prizes. Congratulations to Adam Winterhof and Jennifer Finley, winners of the drawing sponsored by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Adam won a \$65 gift certificate to Massage Envy, and Jennifer won a six-CD set of classic Lutheran music.



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March issue deadline: Jan. 14

*When possible, send photos digitally,
in JPEG format, 300 dpi.*

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Lifetree Café provides comfortable place to discuss real-life issues

“Outreach” isn’t always about getting new people to join a congregation—it is more about sharing the love of Christ with the community.

That is the mission of “Lifetree Café,” a new weekly coffeehouse-style discussion opportunity at Concordia Lutheran Church, Lakewood, Colo. Topics offered at Lifetree include personal and community issues, such as prayer, border wars, dealing with autism, witchcraft, people who are hard to get along with, cutting, dreams, media bias and the like.



Lifetree looks and feels like the kind of place you’d typically meet a friend for food, drink and fun, where the atmosphere encourages conversations, questions and personal stories.

opportunities to serve in the local community.

Opening last May, Concordia had the privilege of being the first franchise for Lifetree, which has rapidly grown and is now in 12 states. Information about the current week’s topic can always be found by clicking on the Lifetree Café icon on the front page of Concordia’s website, www.concordialcms.org.

Our Saviour welcomes Rev. Westby

Our Saviour Lutheran Church of Commerce City, Colo., welcomed its new pastor, Rev. Charles Westby, at his installation service on Sunday, Oct. 31, 2010.

Rev. Roger Schlechte, third vice-president of the Rocky Mountain District, installed Rev. Westby.

Rev. Jeffrey Shearier, senior pastor of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Aurora, Colo., was guest preacher and brought the message from God’s Word.

Pastor Charles Westby was born in Compinas, Brazil, in November 1963. His father was a missionary with

Lifetree Café is a comfortable place and time for people to gather on Thursday evenings at seven o’clock to explore life and faith. The hourlong Lifetree Café experiences feature real stories of real people, friendly conversation, time to build relationships with new and old friends, laughter, fun, spiritual insights and oppor-



Participating in Rev. Westby’s installation service were, from left, Rev. Gary Timm, Rev. Joel Dieterichs, Rev. Shearier, Rev. Westby, Rev. Dean Boernke and Rev. Schlechte.

the then American Lutheran Church. In the summer of 1968, the Westby family returned to the United States.

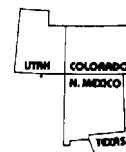
Pastor Westby began his collegiate career at St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minn. When he was a junior, he moved with his parents and younger sister to Redmond, Wash., in the Seattle area. He transferred to the University of Washington, from which he graduated in 1986 with an undergraduate degree in philosophy. He met his beloved wife, Tawnya, in Seattle.

After graduating from the University of Washington, Westby attended a seminary of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren in Fergus Falls, Minn. He earned a master of divinity degree there in June 1990. He then attended Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind., in the Master of Sacred Theology program. Through the coursework of that program, Westby satisfied the requirements for colloquy to be eligible for call and ordination in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

In 1992, he received his first call to St. Paul Lutheran Church, a rural congregation near Waverly, Iowa. In 1997, Westby began law school at the University of Kansas School of Law. He graduated from law school in May 2000 and passed the Colorado Bar Exam and was admitted to the bar of Colorado in February 2001. Pastor Westby then held positions as an associate attorney at two different law firms in the Denver area until the end of October 2010.

The Lord has, however, been patiently leading Pastor Westby to realize that his true calling is to serve Christ’s church as a pastor. He is grateful that the Lord has called him to the pastorate through Christ’s people at Our Saviour.

Soli Deo Gloria!



Ascension, El Paso, celebrates 50 years of service to the Lord

On May 13, 1960, the Rocky Mountain District extended a call to Rev. Henry Walter “Pat” Brill to organize a congregation on the west side of El Paso, Texas. Pastor Brill’s wife, Ethie, reports that she and her husband did their homework. They looked up El Paso on the map and began studying the information about the area and the potential for ministry there. The Holy Spirit led Pastor Brill to accept the call to serve Him there.

Ethie Brill, who celebrated her 100th birthday with the congregation she loves, reports that back in 1960 she and her husband walked up and down the streets, knocking on doors, telling people that they were starting a new Lutheran church in their neighborhood. The first worship service and Sunday school were held on Oct. 9, 1960, in the league room of Thunderbird Lanes, with 63 people in attendance at the service and 17 in Sunday school. Thus were the humble beginnings of Ascension Lutheran Church.



Members and friends of Ascension celebrated its 50th anniversary in its beautiful facility on the west side of El Paso.

Under the loving care and guidance of Pastors Pat Brill, Jerry Harms, Dave Ahlman, Jim Dunn and now Dr. Vernon Schindler, Ascension has grown into a strong congregation whose mission statement is *“Connecting the Community to Christ.”*

Ascension celebrated its 50th anniversary on Nov. 20, 2010. The daughters of Pastor Richard Schlak (son of the congregation and the director of the Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute in El Paso) provided musical entertainment for the celebration event. Former Ascension Pastor Dave Ahlman preached at a special 10 a.m. service on Sunday, Nov. 21.

God has certainly blessed Ascension’s ministry in El Paso. As Pastor Schindler reminds us, “Anniversaries are wonderful opportunities to remember. Indeed, the memory of God’s help in the past is also our hope for the future.”



Pictured are, from left (front row), South Dakota District President Rev. Dale Sattgast, Rev. Feldt, Rev. Brown, Rev. Troester, Rev. Samuel Needham; (center row) Rev. Mark Mischnick, Rev. Marty Reed, Rev. Gene Haug, Rev. Nabil Nour; (back row) Rev. Richard Milbrandt, Rev. David Otten, Rev. Kenneth Soyk, Rev. Michael Schwermann and Rev. Richard Weeman.

Brown ordained, installed in South Dakota parish

Rev. Thomas Brown was ordained and installed as associate pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Mitchell, S.D., on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 31, 2010. Rev. Brown is the son of Floyd and Carol Brown, who are members of Calvary Lutheran Church in Wray, Colo. Thomas is a 2010 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind. His “delayed vicarage” also was served at Zion with Pastor Jerome Troester.

Brown and his wife, Lucy, both attended Concordia University in Seward, Neb., where he graduated in 2001 with a degree in computer science. Prior to attending seminary, he worked as a software engineer. The Browns have four children: Thomas, Jackson, Olivia and Lydia.

Many family members and friends from Calvary Lutheran Church in Wray attended the ordination and installation service. Rev. Larry Feldt, Brown’s former pastor from Poplar Bluff, Mo., served as the preacher for the service.

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LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL PARKER

A fall sports season for the record books

The Lutheran High School Parker (LHSP) athletic department has been blessed and honored to see all five of its fall sports programs represent the school at the state level. The cross country, football, volleyball, boys golf and boys soccer programs all qualified in their respective state events sponsored by the Colorado



High School Activities Association (CHSAA).

The Lions autumn of excellence began when LHSP's golf foursome, coached by Rob Goldhammer, finished seventh in the state tournament. Three of the four varsity golfers are freshmen this year.

The Lutheran Parker Lions football team completed their regular season with a convincing 42-7 victory over Denver Christian. The following day, they were reward-



ed with a 1A wild-card playoff berth. This marked the first state football playoff appearance for LHSP in just its third year as an 11-man program. Unfortunately, the Lions fell in the first round to number two seed Hotchkiss High School.

Other highlights of the season under Head Coach Daryl Moe included playing in front of a crowd of approximately 2,000 at Sports Authority Stadium while defeating Denver Lutheran High School for the first time in the program's history. That game, along with one other, was televised.



Coach Jason Hubbard's girls cross country team, making their fourth straight appearance at state, finished seventh at the state meet. Calder Marriott also competed for the second straight year as an individual on the boys side.

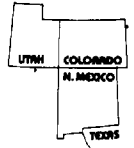
The boys soccer team's win over 2009 state runner-up Denver Christian clinched the Mile High League championship for Lutheran Parker and earned them an automatic bid to the 3A state soccer tournament. Coach



John Amschel's Lions went through Mile High League play undefeated and received the number nine seed in the state playoffs. The team advanced to the round of 16 before falling to perennial power Kent Denver in the second round.

Lutheran High School Parker

- Nurturing Academic Excellence •
- Encouraging Growth in Christ •



Finally, the Lions volleyball team qualified for their first trip to state tournament, held at Denver Coliseum. The Lady Lions, led by Coach Jane Winters, were eliminated just before reaching the medal rounds.



In addition to the excellence on the field this fall, four of these five programs were nominated for the CHSAA Academic All-State Team, each having a cumulative grade point average above 3.5. In addition, 24



junior and senior scholar athletes won individual Academic All-State First Team honors this fall, with an additional eight being awarded Honorable Mention.

“We are proud of and thankful for our athletes’ suc-

cess this fall,” said Athletic Director Jason Block. “They have represented our school and our Lord extremely well both in competition and in the classroom.”

Congratulations to all the athletes and coaches at Lutheran High School Parker!

Music director honored at Zion, Brighton

A celebration dinner was held on Sunday, Nov. 7, 2010, at Zion Lutheran in Brighton, Colo., to honor Music Director Marlys Harp for her 50 years in the music ministry. About 300 guests gathered in the gym for a noon dinner and program featuring Jubilation, a men’s quartet started by Marlys, and Heavenly Sound, Zion’s adult handbell choir.

Special guests were members of Marlys’ family and, as a surprise, 13 members of the first class she ever taught—her first-grade class from 1960. Marlys

received an award for her many years of service, and her husband, Bob, received an award for his many years of sitting alone in church while she played organ and directed choirs.

Marlys has served at Zion for all but the eight years that she was music director at Mount Zion, Denver, Colo. Under her able direction, Zion has enjoyed adult



Marlys directs her beloved bell choir at the celebration marking her 50 years in the music ministry.

choir, adult and youth handbell choirs, children’s choirs and various vocal and instrumental ensembles. She has enhanced worship services as a gifted organist and provided much entertainment with her creatively directed coffee-house programs, school musicals, concerts and many other activities through the years.

The Brighton community also has benefitted from her talents as she participated in the Euterpean Music Club and was co-director of Brightonmusic Community Choir, among other activities. On Nov. 2, the Brighton City Council presented her with an award for her years of service and declared it “Marlys Harp Day.” Marlys also has served several times on the music committee for the Denver Area Reformation Service.

The Brighton City Council presents a special award to Marlys for her many years of musical service to the community and declares Nov. 2 “Marlys Harp Day.”



Marlys is a great blessing to Zion. They are so very grateful to her for sharing her God-given talents with this congregation.

IGNITING CHURCH AND CULTURE FOR CHRIST

‘Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal’



This hymn has been a favorite of mine for a number of years. In *Lutheran Worship*, it's located in the Epiphany section, while in *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)* it's found in the Redeemer section of the hymnal (#533), which indicates a broader application of the hymn.

The last lines of v. 1 (*“Ponder His love! Take the crown He has for you! Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal!”*) reminds us of the essence of the Epiphany season, that of “making known the saving love of the Lord Jesus Christ.” However, it's not only the message of Epiphany; it's the continual message of the Christian Church and God's people.

The last verse has a definite mission emphasis:

*Jesus has come as the King of all glory!
Heaven and earth, O declare His great power,
Capturing hearts with the heavenly story,
Welcome Him now in this fast-fleeting hour!
Ponder His Love! Take the crown He has for you!
Jesus has come! He, the King of all glory!*

That's what **Igniting Church and Culture for Christ** is about—declaring the great power and the saving message of the King of glory! There's urgency as the time clock of this world continues to tick! We have the message of Jesus who has come for all people, to give them pleasure eternal!

The world desperately needs the King of glory. Noteworthy opportunities to share the message of the Savior are through the Hong Kong International School (one of the leading international schools in the world) which was established in 1966, and Concordia International School Shanghai, which was founded in 1998.

The Hong Kong school has 2,648 students from 40 different countries. The 4,500 alumni serve in leadership positions around the world. Just imagine the potential ripple effects of the Gospel from that ministry! Additionally, the Shanghai school has grown from 22 students to 1,160 in 12 years!

In July 2010, at the LCMS Convention in Houston, it was announced that a third school, Concordia International School Hanoi will open in the fall of 2011. We praise God for yet another venture to share the Gospel internationally!

Igniting Church and Culture for Christ provides you with the opportunity to make known the love of Christ internationally, nationally and locally. You are invited to be personally involved in sharing the Gospel. Some of the funds from **Igniting Church and Culture for Christ** will be used for the school in Hanoi.

Checks may be made payable to the LCMS Rocky Mountain District. Indicate **“Igniting Church and Culture for Christ”** on the memo line.

For more information, visit the district website at www.ignitingchurchandcultureforchrist.org, or call the district office at 303-695-8001.

“Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal! He, the King of all glory!”

*Pastor Roger Schlechte
Chair, Igniting Church and Culture for Christ
Steering Committee*

Spring Confirmation Retreat to study Genesis

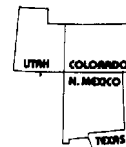
The Spring Confirmation Retreat at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., will take place March 18-20 with a theme of “In the Beginning.”

Pastors David Stecker and Scott Zeckzer from Emanuel Lutheran Church, New Haven, Ind., will delve into Genesis 1-11 with discussion on Creation vs. Evolution, God's design for marriage, the Trees in the Garden, Noah's ark and how to respond to those who do not believe in the historical authenticity of Genesis 1-11.

This confirmation retreat is for youth who are currently receiving confirmation instruction in their home parish. It will be a time for learning, rejoicing, worship in Kramer Chapel, recreation in the gym and other fun activities.

The retreat fee is \$100 (includes on-campus housing and meals). For additional information or to register, please e-mail Retreats@ctsfw.edu or phone 260-452-2172.





Rocky Mountain District calendar

January

- 14 LEAD meeting, Denver, Colo.
- 24-25 RMD Board of Directors meeting

February

- 28 Nurturing the Faith, Immanuel, Albuquerque, N.M.

March

- 6-12 National Lutheran Schools Week
- 11 LEAD meeting, Denver, Colo.
- 15 Nurturing the Faith, Zion, Brighton, Colo.
- 17 Nurturing the Faith, St. John, Denver, Colo.
- 18 Nurturing the Faith, Utah

May

- 6 LEAD meeting, Denver, Colo.

August

- 1-2 RMD Board of Directors meeting

November

- 5-6 "Conversations of Grace at the ROC!" conference, Crowne Plaza, Colorado Springs, Colo.
- 7-8 RMD Board of Directors meeting

Calls in the district

REINSTATEMENTS

- Lori Losser, Murray, Utah, to candidate status.

CALLS EXTENDED

- St. John, Yuma, Colo., to Rev. Terrence Beuthe, St. John, Wakefield, Neb.

CANDIDATES

- Stephen Weems, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, to St. John, Denver, Colo.
- Scott Coerber, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, to Redeemer, Fort Collins, Colo.
- Ryan Meyer, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, to Redeemer, Fort Collins, Colo.
- Gerald Harrow, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, to Redeemer, Fort Collins, Colo.

CALLS ACCEPTED

- Jeremy Hetzel, Hollister, Mo., to Family of Christ, Colorado Springs, Colo.
- Rev. Andrew Byars, candidate, of Belen, N.M., to Prince of Peace, Cedar Crest, N.M.
- Rev. Joseph Burnham, candidate status, Denver, Colo., to Faith, Bentonville, Ark.
- Rev. Hans Fiene, Mount Calvary, Denver, Colo., to River of Life, Channahon, Ill.

Walk where Jesus walked on tour of the Holy Land and Egypt

You are invited to join Pastor Tom and Chris Mroch and Pastor Tom and Jeanette Teske on a unique 13-day tour to the Holy Land and Egypt in October.

In addition to all of the usual Holy Land sites, the tour will include a visit to Christmas Lutheran

Church in Bethlehem and dinner with its pastor, the Rev. Mitri Raheb. A brief tour of Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives, operated by the Lutheran World Federation, will be another highlight of the tour.

The tour concludes with three nights in Cairo and visits to the Egyptian Museum, the pyramids, the Sphinx and other sites in the area.

For information or a brochure, please contact the Mrochs at tcnmroch@yahoo.com (720-379-6376) or the Teskes at tom@teskes.net (303-877-8038).



Reformation carnival fun for all



Adults and children had fun last fall at the Reformation carnival sponsored by St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Rocky Ford, Colo. With the help of "Martin Luther," children hung 95 theses on the door (at left) and "pied" the devil when he tried to tempt them with candy.



In photo at right, Luther forbids the devil (with pie on his face) to come any closer to the door.

CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS

The Next Phase

From 1946 to 1964, the Baby Boom Generation was born—all 78 million of us. That means the boomers begin turning 65 this month.

Baby boomers changed the world, ended a war, created a new culture of values and morphed our style, politics and practice of religion. Growing up in a prosperous time relative to their parents and grandparents, the boomers have made a real impact in and on the world.

Many point to the 1960s as the “signature decade” of the boomers. When you take a look at the significant changes that either happened or were begun during this decade, there are many important success stories—and many failures. Consistently across their lives, boomers have wanted to make a difference, building on the legacy of their parents.

Today, 50 years later, the boomers begin entering the next phase of their collective lives—retirement. What is going to happen as the boomers enter retirement with money, time and a quest for leaving a lasting legacy? How will the boomers’ lust for “all that life has to offer” deal with the reality and inevitability of death?

John Zogby, writing in a July 2009 *Forbes Magazine* article, comments: “We identified ourselves as ‘youth’ and aren’t letting go. So boomers will find new careers and hobbies and volunteer. They are a big part of what I call secular spiritualism, a growing rejection of materialism. People are embracing the notion that the American dream is measured in spiritual, not material, fulfillment.” Interesting.

If that is true, how can we respond to this unique opportunity? Can we be clay in the Master’s hands to be molded as a pathway whereby the boomers can be engaged in their “rejection of materialism” while being drawn to the Father through the Son and away from their “secular spiritualism”? Consider the possibilities.

The Church Without Walls is exploring the options by working with and within a local retirement community. We want to be positioned where we can be shaped by the Lord to serve those whom He loves. I wonder what we’ll discover as we follow him into the next phase in the legacy of the Baby Boom Generation? More to come ...

Craig W. Henningfield
Church Without Walls missionary/coach
303-725-6760

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For information, contact an LCEF Information Representative at 1-800-843-5233 or visit us at www.lcef.org.



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