



# The Lutheran Beacon

*Let your light shine . . .*



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MAY 2013

## Happening Around Our SELC District

### SELC CALENDAR

[subject to change]

#### May

- 1** Call Service, St. Louis MO
- 7-8** Central Circuit Pastoral Conference, Calvary, Parma OH
- 8-9** SELC Board of Directors, Calvary, Parma OH
- 11** SELC Western Zone LWML Spring Rally, Pentecost Racine WI
- 13-15** Lutheran Haven Board of Trustees, Oviedo FL
- 17-20** LCMS Convention Committees, St. Louis MO

#### June

- 27-30** International LWML Convention, Pittsburgh PA

#### July

- 1-5** LCMS Youth Gathering, San Antonio TX
- 18-21** SELC Luther League Convention, Concordia University, Chicago IL
- 18-19** LCMS Convention Committees, St. Louis MO
- 19-25** LCMS Convention, St. Louis MO

#### August

- 21-23** Lutheran Haven Board of Trustees, Oviedo FL

For the latest news and updates  
(and to view the Beacon in full  
color), visit our SELC website:

[www.selc.lcms.org](http://www.selc.lcms.org)

### Rev. Michael Brondos Called to Glory



Rev. Michael Brondos began his ministry in the Slovak Evangelical Church. He served his vicarage at St. John the Baptist Lutheran Church in Emporia, Virginia where he met

and married Amelia Zalman. Graduating from Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois in 1946, he served SELC District congregations in Timmins and Chatham, Ontario, Canada and Detroit, Michigan. He also served congregations of the Michigan District in Detroit and Monroe Michigan.

The marriage of Michael Brondos and Amelia Zalman was blessed with a son, Michael David and a daughter, Dorothy Amelia.

In 1972, a Call from the Mission Board of Synod and the Australian Lutheran Mission Board took Pastor Brondos and his wife to Melbourne Australia where he served immigrants from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, in both the English and Slovak languages. Returning to the United States in 1977 he continued his ministry in Catawba, North Carolina in the Southeastern District.

Upon retirement, Pastor and Amelia Brondos moved to Richmond, Virginia. He was called to glory on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The funeral service took place at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Richmond, Virginia on March 11<sup>th</sup>. It was conducted by Pastor Matthew Bean and assisted by Pastor Seth Korte. Words of remembrance were offered by Rev. Andrew Brondos (his brother) and by Rev. George Plvan.



# HAPHAZARD VS. BIBLICAL GIVING

## Love vs. Need Motivation

by Rev. Thomas Soltis



### Sunday Morning Scenario

It's Sunday morning. Mom is scurrying to get herself and the children to church on time.

She can't find her church envelopes. Her husband, half asleep in bed, mumbles: "They're in the top drawer of the dresser." Fumbling with the envelopes, she hesitates. "What amount should I give? I haven't been to church for a couple of weeks, so I'd better give a little more than usual. Besides, I hear the church budget isn't being met and a special drive is on to repair the parking lot. Since my funds are tight, I'll increase just a little this time and divide the amount—half to the budget and half to the parking lot." Mom is a haphazard giver. To help meet church needs, she sometimes even "robs Peter to pay Paul."

### Meeting Needs

Needs should not be the motivating factor in giving. The needs of the Jerusalem Christians were not motivating factors for the Macedonian Christians when they generously responded with gifts beyond their ability. Their Christian faith and love for Jesus was. (2 Cor. 8:1-5) The needs in Jerusalem simply indicated where they could exercise their Christian love. Today, the needs of the church and people throughout the world are overwhelmingly immense. The annual budget of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod for the fiscal year (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013) is \$64,626,022. Is that amount enough to meet all the needs throughout the world? Of course not. The 2013 SELC District budget is \$588,150. Is that enough to accomplish all that could be done? Hardly. Multiple millions would not be enough for synod and districts to accomplish all that should be done. There is no end to need.

### Needs as Indicators, not Motivators

A frequent mistake among churches is to use needs to get members to give when Christian love should be the sole motivator. Needs are simply indicators of where to exert Christian generosity. Using needs as a motivating factor can actually end up counter productive. Some may minimize their perception of what is needed and end up giving less than they should and could. Again, those motivated by the

church budget, may donate only "their fair share" by making comparisons with the contributions of others. Church budgets as motivators can actually limit giving because they often reflect minimum needs of the church and therefore pull down the level of potential giving. Love motivated giving, on the other hand, focuses on the need of the giver to give (out of love to Christ) rather than on the need of the church to receive (to meet the budget).

### Biblical Giving

Haphazard givers, who sometimes end up giving "left-overs" for whatever-whenever, should heed the instructions of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Scriptures and engage in Biblical giving which essentially is:

- > **Love Motivated** - (2 Cor. 8:8)
- > **Proportionate** - Percentage of income (1 Cor. 16:2). A tithe (10%) is suggested (Matt. 23:23).
- > **Generous** - Beyond the tithe as a love offering. (2 Cor. 9:10-11)
- > **Regular** - Every Sunday (2 Cor. 16:2)
- > **Cheerful** - Exuberant generosity (2 Cor. 9:7)
- > **First-fruit** - A priority. God-giving is first on the list of expenditures (Prov. 3:9)

### A Dialog with Jesus

Christian: *Lord what do you need?*

Jesus: *I don't need a thing. I own everything.*

Christian: *What would you have me do?"*

Jesus: *If you wish to love me through giving, help meet the needs surrounding you."*

Christian (dejectedly): *If I gave away everything I have, it wouldn't make a dent in meeting the needs of the Church and the world.*

Jesus: *I don't expect you to give away everything. A loving, regular percentage and a little extra, if you're able, will do.*

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[www.selc.lcms.org](http://www.selc.lcms.org) - Stewardship

Poster: "Christ Centered Giving"

Personal: "Stimulate Stewardship with Love"

## FL/GA District Honors Former SELC District President, Rev. Dr. Albert Marcis

by Rev. Carl Krueger, SELC President



Rev. Dr. Albert Marcis, SELC District President 1971-1997, received the 2013 "Lloyd Behnken 'Good and Faithful Servant Medallion'" from the Florida-Georgia District's Veterans of the Cross organization at their annual retreat, March 4-6, held at the Life Enrichment Center, Fruitland Park FL. The award was presented on behalf of the Veterans of the Cross by SELC District President, Rev. Carl Krueger, and former FL/GA District President, Rev. Gerhard Michael (who presently serves as the FL/GA District representative on the SELC's Lutheran Haven Board of Trustees).

The Veterans of the Cross Retreat was organized in 1979 while Rev. Dr. Lloyd Behnken served as the FL/GA District President, with the purpose to "stimulate retired professional church workers with relevant ministry and senior presentations, while helping them to connect with friends from years past". The "Behnke Medallion" was created and is awarded annually to selected individuals who have served in exemplary ministries within one of four categories: Pastors, Teachers, Church-at-Large, and Lay Persons. Rev. Marcis received the 2013 Church-at-Large award.

The citation prepared submitted on Rev. Marcis behalf read (in part): Upon graduation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis MO, Rev. Albert Marcis was placed as Pastor and Mission Developer at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Blue Island IL, (1954-57). He was then Called as Pastor and Mission Developer to Calvary Lutheran Church, Parma OH, where by God's Grace and his faithful labor, Calvary Lutheran Church grew and increased into a spiritually healthy and vibrant Congregation, serving there until his retirement in 1994.

The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC), which became the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (SELC), removing the word "Slovak" so that it would not be a barrier to sharing the Gospel in the United States, very early recognized the intelligence and spiritual gifts of Rev. Marcis. As a member of the Synodical Conference, the SELC appointed Rev. Marcis as their representative to the Lutheran Children's Aid Society, the Lutheran Film Association, and the Public Relations Committee for LCUSA (the early "pan-Lutheran" cooperative organization). Rev. Marcis was elected as First Vice-president of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches; when the Synodical Conference began to disintegrate and new formal relationships among the members were being established, Rev. Marcis was involved in the Doctrinal Unity Committee and the Committee on the Function of Doctrine and Theology.

1971 brought the invitation, and the decision, for the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches to become a

non-geographic District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Rev. Albert Marcis was elected as the SELC District's first District President, and he served as District President until 1997, achieving one of the longest tenure on record of any LCMS District President. As a member of the Council of Presidents, his peers elected him to a number of positions, including Vice-chairman of the Council of Presidents.

During this amazing record of longevity in Office, the LCMS also recognized Rev. Marcis' many abilities, his depth of theological understanding, and his administrative skills. As the chosen representative of the Council of Presidents, Rev. Marcis served on: the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations (12 years, including 6 years as Chairman); the Task Force on Conflict Resolution (Chairman); the Commission on Constitutional Matters (12 years, including 4 years as Chairman); and in 2011, Rev. Marcis was appointed by the Synodical President to the Commission on the Synodical Handbook. Remarkably, Rev. Marcis has been intimately involved in the preparation and editing of the last four Synodical Handbooks. In addition to these formal elected and appointed offices, Rev. Marcis has often been called upon in many different areas of Synodical administration and inter-church relationships to assist, evaluate, recommend and implement policies and procedures.

In recognition for his faithful service to the Lord's Church, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis MO conferred upon Albert Marcis the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 1980. The Rev. Dr. Albert Marcis continues to serve as confidant, mentor, advisor, and friend to many in the LCMS, even as he continues to be active within the administrative structure of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.



## Observations on a Worthy Convention Theme

by Pastor K. M. Ballas, Em.

**In addition to such highly anticipated gatherings as the international convention of our ladies' Lutheran Women's Missionary League in Pittsburgh and the huge Youth Gathering in San Antonio, another triennial convention of our beloved Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod is scheduled to take place later this summer with the theme “Baptized for This Moment.”**

Experience teaches that God's gift of Holy Baptism as well as the countless references to “baptismal language” in the New Testament (including Christ as the Second Adam, “putting on Christ,” and our having been “crucified and raised with Christ”) are either sadly neglected or under-appreciated also by many baptized believing Christians. *Fuzzy thinking* regarding *original sin* also inevitably results in a woeful misunderstanding of a number of biblical passages that speak of regeneration or necessity of “a new birth” (see, e.g., John 3:5; Titus 3:7-9; 1 Peter 1:3ff.).

As if these elements alone were not potential for misunderstanding this Spirit-wrought means of grace as a highly comforting aspect of God's saving Gospel, some unfortunately add to possible confusion about Baptism by introducing vacuous, non-scriptural ideas of *free will*. While Satan may chortle, the Lord is surely saddened by well-intentioned yet misguided Christians who insist on placing much of what seems the least bit incomprehensible under the leaky umbrella of *free will*. (A growing number of Christian groups today seem reluctant even to use the biblical word Baptism in their otherwise noble attempts at describing of what the Spirit of God clearly chooses to use and accomplish in regenerating and also sustaining the *Una Sancta*, Christ's forever family, the Church).

To use a cooking analogy, imagine the finest chef in the world (other than your own spouse, mother or grandmother) preparing your favorite meal only to discover that someone has subversively entered the kitchen and utterly ruins an otherwise perfectly good dish by adding liberal quantities of conflicting spices or seasonings, none of which belong to the original recipe.

In cautioning against an improper use of reason, we are not for one moment justifying thinking of Christian teaching in terms of *blind faith* or *simple Gospel*.

Such closely related rationalistic distortions have no place in meaningful discussion of sound biblical theology as our most holy faith clearly rests on historic fact or detailed knowledge of Scripture.

As far as the *simplicity* of the Gospel is concerned, we are indeed to teach the faith in such a way that even a child may understand the story of Jesus without, however, ever implying that the mystery of the incarnation of God's eternal Son for our salvation is anything but sheer genius!

While an important gift on many fronts, God's gift of human reason dare never be allowed to become the determining factor in our becoming gracious recipients of the Gospel of our Sovereign Savior God. Dr. Martin Luther masterfully and realistically addresses these concerns already in his Small Catechism, namely, in his explanation to the Third Article of the Creed as well as in teaching his family and church family the sacramental mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ (e.g. *I believe that I cannot by own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him*, as when he also asks how water coupled with God's Gospel Word of promise can be one of the Spirit's tools for imparting salvation and forgiveness earned for us by Jesus Christ; whose clear command also encourages us obediently to engage in a sacramental bodily eating and drinking of His very body and blood with the bread and wine of our Lord's Supper in Holy Communion.)

God grant that in our felt need of being critical of what we may not like or fail to understand that we stop thinking of *synod* as some nebulous *they* when our beloved LC-MS is all of *us*!

As we pray for meetings of synod of which we are privileged members and participants in Christ's on-going mission, we also do well to pray for those Christian churches who “short-change” themselves by neglecting or denying clear scriptural teaching on Christ's own wonderful ongoing gift of Baptism!

# We Can't Help Getting Old-ER . . . But We Don't Have to Get Old!

By Rev. Ron Meyr

**When does it happen that someone gets old?** Of course there may be some physical limitations that set in—but the reality is that a person gets old when they:

- no longer see a future;
- no longer make any plans for “doing things”;
- don't think about what the possibilities are next month;
- don't get excited about what may be around the corner;
- have no reason to look in the paper to see if there are upcoming community activities going on;
- don't really care what is on the community calendar

**. . .then you are old!**

The Apostle Paul gives us by example the attitude of someone who never got “old”: Phil. 3: 10-12: “I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so somehow to attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me . . .” Vs. 13: “one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

*Do you hear that? Always something around the next corner—always a future—always some reason God still has you here—that is what, by faith, the Apostle Paul (and we) have going for us!*

Grow old along with me!  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life, for which the first was made:  
Our times are in His hand  
Who saith "A whole I planned,  
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

*Rabbi Ben Ezra is a poem (1<sup>st</sup> verse above) by Robert Browning about Rabbi ibn Ezra*

So . . . you've read this article and applied it to you own personal life. **But what about churches? When does it happen that churches get old?** Why don't you go ahead and read this article again, and instead of thinking about you personally, think about and “insert” your church's name?

**NOTE: It's that time of the year when our Beacon becomes a two month issue.**

June & July and August & September will be combined.

**This is your newsletter . . . Articles & Photos are welcome! Send submissions to:**

Email: gailpete37@yahoo.com

## **Deadlines**

June/July issue — **May 12<sup>th</sup>**

August/September issue — **July 12<sup>th</sup>**

October issue — **September 12<sup>th</sup>**

Balance of the year — **12<sup>th</sup> of each month**

**Please submit articles as separate attachments in the program you write in. [e.g. Word Perfect, Word, etc.], NOT as part of your e-mail.**

**Photos must be submitted as separate attachments [NOT as part of your article—.JPEG format preferred.] You may send multiple photos and corresponding article in one email.**

There are many major activities going on this summer . . . let's make our summer issues jam-packed full of news from all of our SELC churches!! Thanks for your cooperation . . . Gail Peterson

# News and Notes on the SELC LWML

submitted by Laura Bergmann, SELC LWML District President

**Beaded Bookmarks**—A big thank you to everyone in the SELC District LWML who has worked on beaded bookmarks for the 2013 National LWML Convention being held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on June 27-30. As you may know, our SELC LWML is one of the six Host Districts for the Pittsburgh Convention, and groups of our ladies have generously been working to support the Convention by making bookmarks and quilts. The goal of the Host Committee was to have more than 4,000 bookmarks made before the Convention started. Recently Barb Giger, the Chairman of the Decorations Committee for the Convention, excitedly thanked me on behalf of the SELC District for being so supportive of the convention. Barb reported that over 5,000 beaded bookmarks have been completed and received, and that the SELC District was one of two Districts making the most beaded bookmarks. She said that the SELC LWML has made over 1,000 beaded bookmarks!

**Host Committee Meeting at Convention Center**—The Host Committee for the 2013 National Convention met in Pittsburgh in March. Attending from the SELC District were Sharon Roegge as the Convention Prayer Chairman, and Laura Bergmann as the SELC LWML District President. The Host Committee toured the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, and parts of the Westin Convention Center Hotel. The Convention Center is a modern building located in downtown Pittsburgh on the banks of the Allegheny River. Its outer walls are comprised of floor to ceiling glass, and offer beautiful views of the river, the nearby mountains, and various parts of the city. Our Convention will utilize two of the three large exhibit halls on the main floor, as well as many rooms throughout the building, with abundant escalators connecting the floors. Wheelchairs will be available on the first floor, and elevators can accommodate those not taking the escalators. There is also a roof top observation area. The Convention Center offers over 300,000 sq. ft. of naturally lit and ventilated exhibition space. The David Lawrence Convention Center is also the first "green" convention center and the world's largest LEED-certified 'green' building. SINCE THE SPACE IS SO BIG, PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING COMFORTABLE WALKING SHOES.

**Workers Still Needed**—Registration is going well, and the pace of registration for the Pittsburgh Convention is ahead of the 2011 Peoria Convention. Let's try to encourage people who have never been to a National Convention to come to Pittsburgh. So far, the following people from the SELC District are attending: Lois and Rev. Kenneth Ballas, Alison Bergmann, Laura and Rev. Dr. Kevin Bergmann, Betty Cervantes, Celeste Crawford, Dehlia

DeLeon, Susan and Rev. Andrew Dzurovcik, Berta and Rich Fabrici, Cathy Friedman, Patricia Hageman, Courtney and Rev. Luke Jacob, Kelly Jansky, Verna Jurkovich, Ardyne Kirn, Karen Kowalczyk, Mickey Krnach, Dianne and Rev. Dr. Carl Krueger, Jr., Milly Kwiatkowski, Linda Liston, Martha McGlynn, Rev. Kevin McLeod, Martha and Dale Moyer, Sharon and Don Roegge, Cheryl Rusiecki, Sharron Schademann, Nona Schipull, Leah Socrates, Rose Soffa, Rev. John Telloni, Kathy Vollrath and Miriam Wilms. More workers are still needed to help with a variety of events. Airport greeters and hotel greeters are needed, as well as greeters who help people on and off the buses. The good news is that the \$65.00 worker discount for registration is still in effect.

**Worker T-Shirts**—As of March, only about one-third of all workers have ordered their worker t-shirts from Ruth Mueller. Each yellow shirt costs \$2.00. These shirts are required worker dress for both men and women for the entire Convention. Some people are ordering as many as four shirts so they can have a fresh one each day. The deadline for ordering worker t-shirts is May 1<sup>st</sup>. All workers will be given pins to wear each day. These pins show the six Host Districts for the Convention. Male workers will also receive a bandana and baseball cap as part of their worker uniform. These items do not need to be ordered, but will be supplied at the Convention.

**Worker Release Form** — ***please be advised that every worker is to bring two (2) acknowledgment and release forms to the convention, even if you have previously sent one in with your registration. You will give one when you register, and the second one at the mission pledge walk.***

**Bring Convention Bag**—Convention attendees are reminded to bring your own cloth Convention bags. Bring one for yourself, and one to donate at the Registration Table to others who forget theirs. The LWML is saving \$10,000.00 by not providing tote bags to Convention attendees. Only the Young Woman Representatives will be given 2013 Convention tote bags.

**Mission Pledge Walk**—Over 585 people have already registered for the Mission Pledge Walk. This walk will take place from 5:00-6:00 p.m. just outside the Convention Center on a scenic walkway along the Allegheny River. Are you registered to participate, and have you gotten your pledges?

**God's Convention**—This exciting Convention is coming fast. We all hope to be Quenched by the Water as we meet to celebrate Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and as we return refreshed and energized to speak about Him to the world.



## Zumbathon Promotes Fitness and Raises Funds for Racine Youth

by Tim Hasko

On Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, over 100 people put their sweat to the test for a “Zumbathon” at Racine Lutheran High School. The event raised over \$1,500 for the youth of Pentecost Lutheran Church to



attend the LCMS National Youth Gathering. Capitalizing on the popularity of the Latin aerobic exercise “Zumba”, eight instructors donated their time to lead the



group for two hours in series of fun and energetic routines. One of the highlights of the event included Ms. V. from Lutheran High teaching some of the teens a routine to “Country Girl” which the teens lead on stage. Even Tim Hasko zumba’d, which made it well worth the price of admission for everyone else! The youth appreciate the Zumba instructors dedicating their time, and Kathy McGregor for all her efforts planning and promoting the event.

### SELCDistrict “Luther League” Youth Gathering

July 18<sup>th</sup> — 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013

Concordia University Chicago, IL

Tentative Theme: “8”

Tentative Motto: “I am making everything new!” (taken from Rev. 21:5)

***What does the number “8” have to do with making everything new?*** Come to Chicago and find out! The youth groups of Racine, WI and Whiting IN are teaming up to host this year’s district “Luther League” youth gathering. Come for fun, fellowship, and learning about God with teenagers from around our district.

Tentative excursions to the Hancock Tower and Navy Pier are planned (schedule still being finalized and subject to change). *Questions?* Contact Tim Hasko at 262.497.0496.

**Last year’s SELCDistrict Youth Gathering left us with many fond memories . . . let’s make many more!**



## St. John LC (Massillon OH) Holds Annual Spiritual Fellowship Retreat by Colleen Pohlod



Thirty-five Lutherans from six different congregations gathered together in Sugarcreek, OH for a day-long retreat entitled: Living Daily In The Spirit, hosted by St. John LC. Pastor John Telloni and Pastor Chris Cahill of Christ the King, (Lodi, OH) led the group in three different sessions about the Holy Spirit (1) calling & gathering; (2) enlightening; and (3) sanctifying & keeping. After

an opening hymn, the third article of the Apostle's Creed from Luther's Small Catechism was reviewed. Some highlights of the day:

- ★Discussion of John 3:1-17, noting vs. 14 expresses the divine necessity of the cross.
- ★The Holy Spirit is holy because of the work that God does. He is our comforter, our teacher.
- ★Review of third article explanation.
- ★1 Cor. 2:14 - the natural person thinks the Spirit is foolishness.
- ★Eph. 2:1 - our spiritual situation before faith is dead.
- ★Rom. 1:16 - the Gospel is the power of God; the Good News of salvation.
- ★Eph. 2:8-9 - this passage proves that St. Paul was a Lutheran!!!
- ★When living in darkness, we are locked in guilt, shame, fear, sin. When living in the light, we are free and can clearly see Him and the cross. We move toward Him, and day by day, become more like Jesus.
- ★Other gifts the Holy Spirit gives to us: vocation, mutual conversation & consolation of the brethren, Holy Christian church, Sabbath day, sacraments, spiritual gifts.
- ★The Holy Spirit gives us enough of the gifts to do what we're doing right now, whatever that may be, so that the work He wants to do among us will get done with His blessing and power ... and to move us closer to Jesus, to become more like him!
- ★The Holy Spirit keeps us in the one true faith ... that's a promise! Phil. 1:6; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 Thes. 2:13.
- ★Hymns of the day: LSB #913, 689, 687, 922, "O Christ of the Cross" and "Holy Spirit, Bless" (both by John L. Telloni).
- ★Ended the day with a closing service of Word and Sacrament.

