

leaders urging consideration of the pastoral ministry a number may be led to pursue the course of study. At this present time only one man has applied for seminary this coming fall. Seminary President G. Schmeling is eager to visit with any potential students and discuss prerequisites for the seminary program. He may be contacted at 507-344-7855 (gschmeli@blc.edu).

Convention Items

Please remember that statistical reports are due on February 15. Items for the BORAM are due on April 1.

Thrivent Concerns

Thrivent Financial is a fraternal benefit society and is not in fellowship with any church body. However, a number of ELS members have investments and insurance policies with Thrivent. We feel the need to keep people informed of some recent developments so that policy-holders may express themselves as they see fit. Recent discussions on social media have centered on Thrivent allowing Planned Parenthood (a leading agency in our country promoting voluntary abortion) as a Thrivent Choice Dollars recipient. Our synod, along with the WELS and the LCMS, has been in contact with Thrivent expressing serious concern. We continue to remind our synod's membership that Thrivent is not a quasi-church related organization of the ELS but a non-profit business.

Prayers Requested

Tyler Crick, 16, son of Rev. Matthew and Rene Crick, will soon be undergoing surgery and treatments in San Antonio, Texas, for a thyroid lesion. Please pray for healing for Tyler and also for the Crick family as there is some delay for their move to Medford, Oregon, where Pastor Matt has accepted a call to serve Faith Lutheran.

President's Schedule

January 30-31 - Board for Home Outreach
February 1 - ELS Historical Society
February 10-11 - Board of Regents for Bethany Lutheran College/Seminary
February 11 - Board of Trustees
February 12 - Synod Review Committee
February 12 - Anniversary Thankoffering Committee
February 18 - Board for Christian Service
February 23 - Preach at Holy Trinity, Okauchee, Wisconsin
February 25 - Synod staff meeting

President's Newsletter



Office of the President

John A. Moldstad

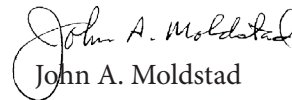
6 Browns Court Mankato, Minnesota 56001
507-344-7356 jamjr@blc.edu

February 2014

Dear Fellow Workers in Christ's Kingdom:

February is loaded with heart-talk. Love is expressed. Sentiments shared. Lots of chocolates eaten. An ample amount of the world's "hearty" lingo, however, is—from a spiritual and eternal perspective—superficial. The famous English preacher Charles Spurgeon once said, "Unless the heart be kept at peace, life will not be happy. The only way to keep our life peaceful and happy is to keep the heart at rest; for come poverty, come wealth, come honor, come shame, come plenty or come scarcity, if the heart be calm, there will be happiness anywhere." True rest for the heart of sinful humans is found only in the deep-yet-simple truth that God has given us full pardon and the certainty of heaven through faith in his Son—the world's one and only Redeemer. May this Epiphany message shine forth in the hearts of all who hear, for this is a divine love that far surpasses any we mortals could ever imagine! Our prayer is that of the apostle Paul's for the people in Ephesus: "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:16, 17).

Blessings to all in the saving love of our Lord Jesus Christ,


John A. Moldstad

News from India

Representatives from our Board for World Outreach (BWO) are currently traveling to congregations of our fellowship church in India (LMSI). Pastors Paul Fries, Brad Kerkow and Steven Petersen were on hand for the ordination of



14 men into the pastoral ministry of the LMSI. Pictured are six of those who were ordained on January 25, 2014. Serving as officiating pastors for the LMSI were Pastors G.J. Ananda Raju, Solomon Mamidi, Kalyan Gollapalli, and Pradeep Lingala. The men who were ordained have studied for about eleven years each to become pastors. The oldest of the men, Watson (kneeling, right) walked about thirty-five miles in order to catch a bus for seminary classes and to attend this service. Watson was ordained at the age of 74! We are truly blessed to have these six new pastors serving congregations in this rapidly expanding church body. God is showering blessings on our brothers and sisters in Christ in India!



The Wartburg Project

Some may be hearing of the “Wartburg Project.” This is an effort being made by interested members of WELS and ELS intended to lead toward a production of a new translation of the Bible. The project is only a volunteer effort, not under resolution from an ELS convention or receiving financing from synodical resources (either from WELS or ELS). President Schroeder of WELS reported in his January 21 newsletter: “Many volunteers have been working to produce sample translations of both Old and New Testament books. Members of the synod will be invited to provide reactions and suggestions for improvement.” At least three or more clergymen from the ELS have consented to be involvement in this worthy endeavor. For more information on the project, please contact Prof. John Brug (brugj@wls.wels.net).

Informal Meetings with LCMS

For the second time in recent years, a number of leaders from ELS and WELS and the LCMS gathered for some informal sessions intended to clarify doctrinal positions and gain a better understanding of current situations in each church body. Three days were set aside for this at the first part of December 2012 in Tucson, Arizona. It is important to note these meetings are not viewed as formal—no official declarations/documents adopted by theological commissions, etc. This time the topic was Church

and Ministry. The talks were cordial and beneficial, noting places of agreement and also acknowledging the need for better understanding of places where genuine differences remain. Next year a similar meeting is planned to discuss the major topic of Church Fellowship.

Installation in Green Bay, Wisconsin

Pastor Piet Van Kampen was installed on Saturday, December 21, 2013, as the new pastor at Christ the King Lutheran in the Green Bay suburb of Howard, Wisconsin. Pictured above are those who participated in the special service: (from left to right, starting in the back) Rev. Kurt Kluge, Rev. Paul Schleis (WELS), Rev. Bob Otto (Circuit Visitor), Rev. Jon Zabell (WELS), Rev. John Smith, Rev. Roy Rose (WELS, retired-helped with the vacancy), Rev. Piet Van Kampen, Rev. Tosten Skaaland, and Rev. Brad Snyder (WELS).



Recruitment for the Pastoral Ministry

Vacancies are beginning to appear in our Evangelical Lutheran Synod. This is healthy, provided these vacancies can be filled in due time either by seminary graduates or by experienced pastors willing to take on new challenges, etc. For a long time our synod had a scarcity of calls. In order to prepare for meeting future needs, keeping in mind also new mission starts that will occur in future years and especially thinking of our Lord’s comment, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few” (Matthew 9:37), we want to encourage pastors, teachers and members of our synod to identify young men as potential candidates for seminary enrollment. Even at a young age we can plant the seed of interest, and through respected