

President's Newsletter

New Hymnal Produced by WELS

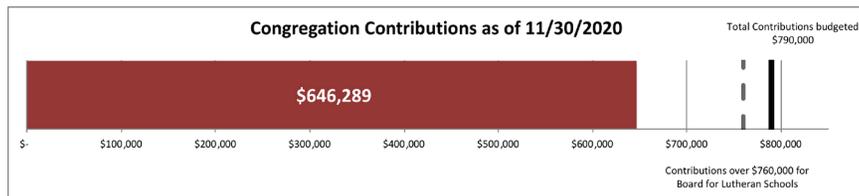


The new hymnal produced by our sister synod, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, is entitled *Christian Worship: Hymnal* (featuring over six hundred hymns, three setting options for the order of service—with and without communion, three- and one-year lectionaries, rites and devotions for congregations and schools, etc.). It is

available for pre-order at \$24.00+shipping hardcover. If you would like to order a copy, you may use this number for Northwestern Publishing House: 800-662-6022. Also *Christian Worship: Psalter* (featuring full text of all 150 psalms with musical settings) is available for pre-order at \$22.00+shipping hardcover.

Upcoming Events

- January 4 – Winkel conference in Iowa
- January 15 – Synod Review Committee
- January 19 – Board for Youth Outreach
- January 25–26 – Board for Lutheran Schools
- January 31 – Closing worship service in Escondido, CA
- February 8–9 – ELS Board of Regents
- February 9 – Board of Trustees
- February 10 – Planning & Coordinating Committee



Office of the President

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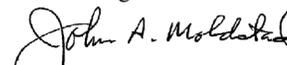
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January 2021

Dear Members and Friends of the ELS:

We do not shake hands like we did a year ago. But parents, of course, still guide their children by taking the hand. As we enter into the 2021 calendar, we too like little children want and need the *hands that count*—the hands of God that guide and bring us blessings even as so many challenges continue. In the year of 1890, Dr. U. V. Koren wrote: “The word and the sacraments are **the hands of God** (as has been said of old) by which He brings and offers to us the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. In these He reveals to us His divine thoughts and will, His wonderful counsel of salvation, which otherwise would be hidden from us. God’s thoughts and will are the eternal truth—eternal, mighty, and unchangeable as God Himself. His thoughts are not our thoughts, even as our ways are not His ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts. His word is spirit and life and brings with it spirit and life; for God’s word is a creative word and ‘it shall not return to Him void’” (*Faith of our Fathers*, pp. 72–73)... Looking for the **sure hands** in the unknown twists and turns of the days ahead? These “hands of God,” as Koren describes, are pure blessing! They give us personally all the benefits that Christ our Savior has secured for us. Freely take hold—these hands will never let you down!

Blessings in Christ,


John A. Moldstad

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Carolers in Oregon

On December 24, 2020, congregational members of Bethany Lutheran in Port Orchard, Washington, gathered outside to conduct “Carols by Candlelight” service led by Pastor Tony Pittenger. One of the members commented, “Even though it was a bit chilly out tonight, you could feel God’s grace upon us!”

Helping Hands

Soon our congregations will be receiving the Mission News/Helping Hands newsletter. Please read carefully the entire issue.



We especially wish to draw attention a “Special Appeal” that is being made to assist our seven mission fields with COVID-related relief. The Board for Christian Service and our Board for World Outreach are putting out this special plea for help. Gifts may be sent to: **ELS Board for World Outreach, 6 Browns Court, Mankato MN 56001.** Please designate your gift as “Special Covid and Flood Relief.”

Planning and Coordinating Committee

Our synod’s largest standing committee, the Planning and Coordinating Committee, is scheduled to meet in a Zoom conference on February 10. Chairmen of the ELS boards and threet elected laymen participate in bringing the proposed 2022 budget to the June convention. Also, the committee will be working on editing the strategic plan which originally was to be brought in for adoption at the 2020 convention. Please pray for the entire work that we as synod have agreed to undertake annually.

Apologetics Center

The BLC Center for Apologetics and Worldview Studies is pleased to provide free video archives and PDF handouts from the September 2020 conference, “The Christian Church amid Seismic Shifts” (<https://blc.edu/2020/08/the-christian-church-amid-seismic-shifts/>). Topics include cross-cultural evangelism, transgenderism, COVID-19 in relation to our concept of human nature, the church’s response to political tyranny, and practical advice for fortifying our youth with the Word of God.

Bethany Seminary Anniversary History

The president of Bethany Lutheran College also served as the president of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary until 1976. At that time, the first full-time president was installed for the seminary. In a practice still in existence today, professors often taught both in the college and the seminary. (Pictured are Professors Gaylin Schmeling, Dennis Marzolf, Nicholas Proksch, Brian Klebig, and Timothy Schmeling.)

