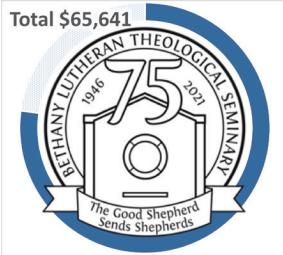


Seminary Anniversary Fund

Many gifts already have been received for the seminary anniversary fund. The current total is \$65,641, which will assist the seminary with funds for scholarships, books, and facilities. Will you give \$75 for the 75th anniversary to increase the total? Contributions can be sent directly to Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, 6 Browns Ct, Mankato MN 56001.



Military Monument

Our Military Monument Committee writes: "When you consider the enemies our veterans have been called upon to face over our recent history, it has been against cultures of death. Although in our country we have seen a shift since 1973 when abortion has been legalized in our land, more and more voices in our midst are sounding foreign to our culture of life. In this month when many of us pause in humility and prayer remembering the day of that shameful SCOTUS ruling, calling upon our merciful Lord, it would be good to show our commitment to the protection of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness by honoring those who have bravely served to preserve it for us all. One such way would be by giving to the ELS Military Monument. Until May 31, your gifts to this project will be matched dollar for dollar. Please see the graph of donations for this project thus far and prayerfully consider contributing to this way of honoring life among us. For more information also check out: www.els.org/monument."



Upcoming Events

- February 8–9 – ELS Board of Regents (online)
- February 9 – Board of Trustees (online)
- February 10 – Planning & Coordinating Committee (online)
- March 4–5 – Board for Home Outreach
- March 15–16 – Doctrine Committee

To receive this newsletter directly to your email visit els.org/subscribe

President's Newsletter



Office of the President

John A. Moldstad

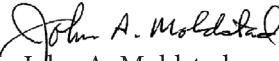
6 Browns Court Mankato, Minnesota 56001
507-344-7356 jamjr@blc.edu

February 2021

Dear Members and Friends of the ELS:

Fifty years ago, the sainted Prof. Milton Otto, Dean of our seminary, wrote in his convention report: "There is just one more thing we would ask of our people—continue to be on the lookout for gifted young men who might be persuaded to devote their lives to serving their Lord and their Church as pastors and missionaries. Encourage, and, if necessary, assist them, in attaining that goal. 'The Lord has need of them.'" Our planned synod convention for 2021 is highlighting the 75th anniversary of our Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. As we take note of this milestone, the words of Dean Otto are still so true—and now more than ever! Please pray for and encourage any potential seminarians and those already enrolled. May God bless the feet of those who bring forth the good news of Christ the Savior (Romans 10:15).

Blessings in Christ,


John A. Moldstad



Conference in Mason City

Pastors from Circuit 7 gathered at Prince of Peace in Mason City, Iowa, for a January Winkel Conference. Rev. Michael Lilienthal of Albert Lea, Minnesota, preached and presided for the special Communion service. Topics for the day included: exegetical study in 1 Corinthians; discussion of Thesis 12 in Walther's Law & Gospel; review of an essay on the Christian response to transgenderism; casuistry items; and an update on synodical matters by Pres. Moldstad.

News from our Bethany Lutheran College

In the month of January, the master's program in clinical mental health counseling at Bethany Lutheran College was officially approved by the Higher Learning Commission of Minnesota. Special thanks is owed to Dr. Ben Kohl's for designing the program and also to Dr. Jason Lowrey for his leadership in academic affairs. This is the first master's program being offered at our synod's college.



Church Closure in California

On January 31, 2021, the final worship service was conducted at St. Paul Lutheran in Escondido, California. Rev. Robert Lawson, Jr., former pastor of the congregation (2002–19) preached for the occasion; Rev. David Frey (WELS), who has served the vacancy in the past, was liturgist; and Pres. Moldstad performed the order of decommissioning. While it is sad to note the closing, we also are grateful to God for the many years that His saving grace in Christ was proclaimed at the Bear Valley Parkway location. The congregation originally came into the ELS in the year of 1974 under Rev. Arthur Schmitt. Prior to joining our synod St Paul had been a member of the former church body known as FAL. Other ELS pastors who served St. Paul in the past are: Rev. J. Burkhardt (1982–85), Rev. A. Harstad (1986–91), Rev. T. Gullixson (1991–2000), Rev. D. McQuality (2000–02), and Rev. A. Burmeister (2019–20).

Holy Scripture's Restoration

We give thanks to God that the sanctuary at Holy Scripture Lutheran in Midland, Michigan, has begun to return to normalcy (and even more so!). As most know, it was last May when the congregation suffered major flooding after two dams broke. Since that time, many have worked to restore the beautiful building. One of the last items was the pews. The congregation truly is appreciative of all the prayers, donations and efforts that have come from fellow Christians!

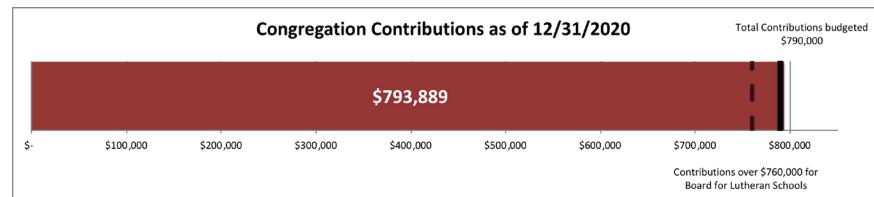


Retirement Announcement

Rev. Martin Hoesch, who has served at Bethany Lutheran in Ames, Iowa, since 1997, has indicated his retirement from the pastoral ministry will be effective on February 14, 2021. We express our sincere thanks to Marty and his wife Cathy for the many years of service in the kingdom work of our Lord.

Appreciation for our Congregations' Support

Our synod's business administrator, Mr. Keith Wiederhoeft, has reported happily that we exceeded our congregational contribution portion of the overall budget for 2020. Thanks to God and thanks to our people for responding with gifts to uphold the financial commitments for our wide range of mission activities in the ELS. This also is noteworthy in light of the many challenges for our churches locally in the year of the pandemic. The congregational giving portion of the budget in 2020 was \$790,000; the gifts from our churches totaled \$793,889. Since there was a challenge in effect on any amount over \$760,000, the Board for Lutheran Schools will be receiving an extra \$33,000 for its programs. (The overall synod budget for the year was \$3,058,000, of which much is covered by other special gifts and income from endowments.)



Statistical Reporting

Statistical Reports for 2020 are due February 15. You can complete the reporting form online: els.org/statistics. There are several special items to note for the calendar year 2020: 1) When reporting attendances at Divine Services, report *only the number of individuals who were physically present at that time*. 2) The statistics form also includes a special box where, if you wish, you may write a paragraph about how you and your congregation(s) have dealt with the pandemic. Such information will be archived.

Board and committee secretaries also are reminded that any corrections or additions to the "Addresses of Board and Committee Members" as it is printed in the *Synod Report* also should be submitted at this time.