

2025 Bjarne W. Teigen Reformation Lectures
October 30–31, 2025

**Luther's Great Treatises of 1525:
Not by My Own Reason or Strength**

1. Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments — Rev. Bryan Wolfmuehler, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Austin, TX
2. How Christians Should Regard Moses — Prof. Mark DeGarmeaux, Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, MN
3. The Bondage of the Will — Dr. Keith Wessel, Martin Luther College, New Ulm, MN

Bethany Lutheran College | Sports and Fitness Center
Mankato, MN | October 30, 10:30 a.m.

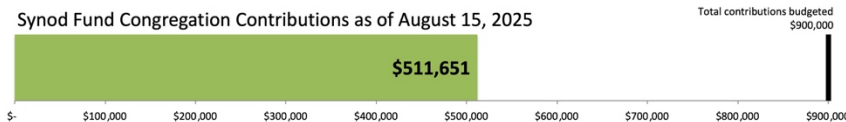
Deaths

Ruth Orvick, wife the late Rev. George Orvick (former ELS president), died the morning of August 8, 2025, following a stroke a few weeks previously. Blessed be her memory.

Rev. Richard Fyffe has been called home to be with His Lord. On the evening of August 16, after battling a relapse of the prostate cancer he had dealt with for many years, he fell asleep peacefully in Jesus with his wife Martha at his side.

Upcoming Events

September 11–12 – Circuit Visitors Conference
September 16 – Committee on Archives and History
September 29–30 – Board for Lutheran Schools
October 1–3 – General Pastoral Conference



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ELS Newsletter



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September 2025

I have recently read a book that might resonate with many of our ELS congregations and pastors. It's called "The Small Town Lutheran Church and Pastor," by Rev. Heath R. Curtis. He had a section on the opportunities we have today for evangelism, not just in our small towns, but in all our faithful confessional Lutheran parishes:

"Now is Our Time! For the first time in 400 years of history, fewer than half of Americans belong to a Christian church... Lutherans are uniquely equipped to face this challenge. While we are often humble to a fault or even the very caricature of the self-deprecating Midwesterner, the truth is we... are already an evangelism powerhouse! According to data used by Dr. George Hawley... fully 35% of Lutheran adults did not grow up in the Lutheran Church. That's an amazing number! In fact, it's about the same percentage of adult converts as is found among Mormons. Some people don't find this number impressive because most of those converts to Lutheranism grew up in other Christian churches. So, they say, that's not real evangelism. I couldn't disagree more. The Gospel is also for lapsed, misled, confused, and unchurched Christians... The Lutheran Church started out as a movement within Christianity to clarify and explain the truth of God's Word to Christians who had slipped into notions of works-righteousness or despair... From the very beginning we have been very good at explaining the faith to Christians who were lapsed or in despair. Today that is exactly what we have a lot of in America! So today is the hour for the Lutheran Church to step forth and boldly proclaim the truths of God's Word to a nation that is ready to hear it!" pp. 51-52

Be bold in your efforts to do as our Lord has commanded. We may be experiencing a time like unto the early part of the 1500s when Luther found a ready audience for the truth of the Gospel.

Glenn Obenberger

Commissioning of Home Missionary

The Rev. Patrick Ernst was commissioned as a missionary of the Board for Home Outreach on August 24, 2025 in Trinity Chapel at Bethany Lutheran College. Pastor Ernst will be serving the Peace daughter congregation in Eagle Lake, Minnesota. The BHO has recently approved the naming of the congregation as “Eagle Lake Lutheran Church.”



75th Anniversary

Bethany Lutheran Church in Luverne, Minnesota, celebrated the 75th anniversary of the congregation on Sunday, August 24.



Photo (L to R): Pastor Ken Mellon (vicar 1983–1984), Pastor Paul Fries (pastor 2000–2012), ELS President Rev. Glenn Obenberger, Pastor Andrew Palmquist (pastor 2012–present).

Bethany Lutheran College Opens Its 99th Academic Year

On Monday, August 18, the Bethany Lutheran College community gathered in Trinity Chapel for the Opening Service of the 99th academic year. Faculty, staff, students, and friends joined in worship, giving thanks to God for His continued blessings upon the school.

During the service, three new faculty and staff members were installed: Brandan Heinze, Assistant Professor of Mathematics; Dominic Santina, Head Coach of Track & Field / Cross Country; and Isaiah Koepsell, Assistant Professor of Business Administration. Seven students were recognized as the highest recipients of the Marvin G. Meyer and S.C. Ylvisaker Scholarships, a reminder of the strong academic tradition established at Bethany.

President Gene Pfeifer addressed the assembly, acknowledging the challenges facing colleges and universities nationwide, yet pointing to the Lord's gracious providence. He noted that, while official enrollment numbers are still pending, the incoming class appears to be large—contrary to trends at many other institutions in the Upper Midwest.

Bethany Lutheran College, owned and operated by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, gives thanks to God for the privilege of providing a Christ-centered education where His Word—the Holy Scriptures—remains the foundation for all teaching and learning.

Our Bethany Lutheran College

As we begin our 98th year at Bethany Lutheran College we look forward to hosting the **National Auxiliary Day** on **Monday, September 22, 2025**. During the event, attendees will have the opportunity to hear from Bethany faculty and students about the exciting things happening in their programs. The group will also take part in the annual business meeting where auxiliary members vote on projects to support. Lunch will include updates from ELS President Glenn Obenberger and Seminary President Timothy Hartwig. Looking forward to having our auxiliary members here!