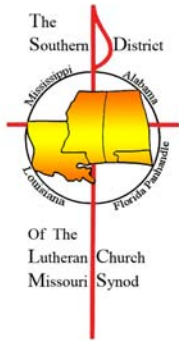


THIS MINISTRY THAT WE SHARE



MARCH, 2008

Dear Pastors and Pastors' Wives, Pastors' Widows, Vicars and Wives, DCEs and Spouses, Principals and Spouses, and DCOs and Spouses and Deaconesses and Spouses,

THIS IS LIVING

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die." (John 11:25-26)

We get confused about the word life. "That's life" often means, "Too bad, that's the way it is." Or we might say, "What a life," meaning, "This is wonderful." We all value life. We hold onto it as long as we can, and we mourn its loss. Sometimes we are under the mistaken idea that life consists of who we are, what we have, what we do, and whom we know. If those are our thoughts, then these words of Jesus make no sense. Earlier in this Gospel He told His disciples, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10). He was speaking to people who were full of physical life. So, obviously, He meant something else when He used the word.

Jesus, in claiming to be the source of life, is talking about another kind of life. It is not limited to tangible or physical things, but rather to those defined by the spirit. There is an eternal or spiritual life that we can live while we are continuing to live in this present world. That kind of life comes from a close relationship with the source of life - Jesus. It can be described by its qualities - inner peace, honesty, hope and expectancy, a sense of the constant presence of God, direction and purpose, fulfillment, contentment, joy.

While telling Mary and Martha that their brother would physically rise from the dead, even more important than this miracle, He was offering spiritual life to them.

Lent is a time for Christians to see how sin has made our earthly life empty and shallow. Holy Week reveals the depth of God's love as He ransoms us from our lives to give us His life. Easter is our celebration of God's gift of new life.

As we near the end of Lent may it lead us through the awe of Holy Week to the shout of Easter "THIS IS LIVING!"

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, I receive your offer of life.
Fill me with your life today. Amen.*



LET US PRAY...

IN MEMORIAM

✘ **Margaret “Peg” Bleeke** ✘

September 15, 1934 – February 11, 2008

Peg leaves to cherish her memory her husband of forty-seven years, Ralph; four children: Debra Anne, Lisa Lynne, Jonathan Mark and Steven Paul.

Birthplace: Springfield, Illinois

Graduated: Concordia Teachers College (now Concordia University-Chicago) – River Forest, IL / 1960

Commissioned:

Ministries:

- Trinity Lutheran Church – Springfield, IL / 1954-57
- Martin Luther – Buffalo, NY / 1957-1959
- New Guinea Mission Field / 1960-1974
- Atonement – Metairie, LA / 1975-78
- Bethlehem Children’s Home – New Orleans, LA / 1978-79
- Atonement – Metairie, LA / 1979-87
- Redeemer – Pensacola, FL / 1988-97

Retired October 1, 1997

Memorial Service: Redeemer – Pensacola, FL; February 23, 2008

Officiant: Rev. Robert G. Rupp

BEREAVEMENTS

✘ **Mrs. Margaret (Massey) Bunn**, Widow of **Rev. Frank Bunn**, claimed her Crown of Life on March 6th in Southaven, MS. She was a long-time member of **Prince of Peace – Southaven**. Pastor Bunn served Peace – Oxford, MS and Zion – Holly Springs, MS, when they were a Dual Parish, 1988-1993. He claimed his Crown of Life in 1994. Rev. Warren R. Pellom of Prince of Peace was Margaret’s Pastor.

We pray that God grant comfort and the Resurrection that is ours gracious God give strength and



special peace in the confident hope of through faith in Jesus! May our healing to those who mourn.

ILLNESSES AND INJURIES

- **Bob Aumann (Good Shepherd – Slidell, LA)** had a stent put in his heart February 26. He had triple bypass surgery in 2000. When riding a float for a Slidell Mardi Gras parade in early February, he fainted and it wasn’t from all the frivolity! After numerous tests, doctors decided a stent would be the best course of action.
- **Adrian Bacarisse** (Retired – **Shreveport, LA**) continues his fight against prostate cancer. His wife, Molly, struggles with diabetes related health issues.
- **Kristin Breaux** (Second Grade teacher – **Baton Rouge Lutheran School**) continues to battle cancer.

- **LaJewel Davis** (Wife of **Pastor Warren Davis** at **Jehovah – Pensacola, FL**) continues to struggle towards complete recovery from heart surgery of April, 2007.
- **David Doroh** (**Our Redeemer – Florence, AL**) is suffering from eye problems.
- **Harlan Heiserman** (**Shepherd of the Bay – Lillian, AL**) was hospitalized in Pensacola because of blood clots in his lungs. Apparently, the clots formed in the legs and moved to the lungs.
- **Mary Ramsey** was hospitalized in Birmingham with pregnancy issues. She is the daughter of **Rev. Dr. Tony Ramsey**. Tony serves **Immanuel – Vredenburgh, AL, and Concordia College – Selma, AL**.
- **Mindy Schrader** (Wife of **Pastor Steve Schrader** at **Prince of Peace – Fort Payne, AL**) continues to undergo radiation and chemo treatment.
- **Dick Thompson** (Emeritus – **Diamondhead, MS**) fell about 6 weeks ago and broke his right ulna in half. He underwent surgery January 29. Dick reports that the surgery went well, but was extremely extensive.
- **Chuck Wagner** (**Hope – Birmingham, AL**) had surgery for stomach cancer. His stomach was removed. He is slowly recovering and will start chemotherapy treatments soon.
- **Brandy Watson** (daughter of **Pastor Aubrey Watson** serving **Holy Cross – New Orleans**) has been diagnosed with Tetinitis Pegmendoza- an eye condition that can lead to blindness. Brandy is 29 years old

May these friends be led by the Spirit to know they are held in nail pierced hands and are being lifted up in prayer by their fellow saints throughout the District.

SIGNIFICANT DISTRICT & CHURCH OCCASIONS / EVENTS

EXPECTING

- **Adam** and **Melanie Sorenson** are expecting their second child in May. Jonathan serves **St. Mark's – Elberta, AL**, as their vicar.
- **Daniel** and **Evie Theiss** are expecting their fourth child the end of June. Daniel serves **Eternal Trinity – Milton, FL**. The new baby will join brothers, Nathaniel and Simeon, and sister, Lydia.
- **Monique** and **Philip Miller** are expecting their fifth child the beginning of July. The Millers will have a houseful with five children under the age of five in tow!
- **Brandon** and **Trisha Simoneaux** are expecting their second child mid-July. Brandon serves Christ Our Savior – Harvey, LA.

MORE GRANDPARENTS!

- **David** and **Dorie Doroh** (**Our Redeemer – Florence, AL**) are now grandparents. Their first grandchild, a grandson, Carson Henry Archer, was born on February 17th in Memphis, TN, to their daughter, Rachel, and her husband, Kyle. Both mother and child are doing well, and we thank God for his safe arrival.
- **Rod** and **Karen Pasch** (**Bethany – Slidell, LA**) welcomed their first grandchild, a granddaughter, Jaidyn Mei Pasch on March 4th in Houston. She weighed 8.25 pounds and was 19 inches long. Rod was blessed to be present at the birth. Son Andrew and wife, Katy, are thrilled, as are the grandparents!

SYNOD PRESIDENT PREACHES IN SO. DIST CONGREGATION

The **Rev. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick**, President of the 2.5 million member Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod denomination, preached at **Trinity – Baton Rouge, LA**, on March 9th. The theme of his message was: “Christ’s Mission: Yesterday, Today and Forever” based on Hebrews 13:7-8. President Kieschnick also led a special presentation in the sanctuary. Kieschnick’s appearance was part of the 50th Anniversary celebration of Trinity Lutheran Church and Baton Rouge Lutheran School.

INSTALLATIONS

- ❖ **Rev. Floyd Smithey** was installed as pastor of **Our Savior – Columbus, MS**, on March 9th.
- ❖ **Rev. Henry Malone** will be installed as pastor of **Ascension – Marianna, FL**, on April 6th.

LMTI GRADUATION

The following three Lay Ministry Training Institute students will graduate on March 15th, at Trinity – Meridian, MS.

- ❖ **J. Michael Grund** - Solid Rock, Trussville, AL
- ❖ **Bradley Steven Burns** - Trinity, Baton Rouge, LA
- ❖ **Gary Duane Henke** - Zion, Bogalusa, LA

RETIREMENT CELEBRATION ANNOUNCED

The **Rev. Robert G. Rupp** will retire from **Redeemer – Pensacola, FL**, on March 30th. The congregation will unite in one service of worship and praise on that day. Former Southern District President, **Rev. Orv Mueller**, will preach. The service will be followed by a celebratory luncheon. Bob has served Redeemer for 38 years! What a remarkable milestone for the ministry of pastor and people to the Pensacola community! Bob also served as Southern District Secretary for nine years. He assisted the district in convention serving as chair of the Nominations Committee.

REDEDICATION SERVICE

CHRIST – CHALMETTE, LA, will celebrate their rededication on April 13th in a special worship service at 2 PM.

ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

GRACE – MANY, LA, will celebrate ten years as a LCMS congregation on September 7th in an afternoon service. President Schultz will be one of the participating pastors.

OUR STEWARDSHIP OF HIS RESOURCES

DISTRICT/SYNOD MISSION SUPPORT

BUDGET	2007 (1,080,000)	2008
Budget through February 15 th	\$90,000	Budget to be approved at
Income through February 15 th	\$107,907	March Board of Directors Meeting

PLACEMENT 2008

Congregations applying for a Vicar as of March 10, 2008:

St. Mark's – Elberta, AL / Holy Cross – Mobile, AL / Immanuel – Pensacola, FL / Trinity – Baton Rouge, LA / Immanuel – Bossier City, LA / Grace – Many, LA / Recovery Assistance, Inc – New Orleans, LA

Congregation applying for a DELTO Vicar as of March 10, 2008

Faith – Greenville, MS, for Mr. Martin Conway

Congregation applying for a Candidate as of March 10, 2008:

Trinity – Baton Rouge, LA for Associate Pastor
Holy Trinity – Covington, LA for Assistant Pastor
Trinity – Sulphur, LA for Deferred Vicar Ken Buth
Prince of Peace – Oxford, MS for DELTO Vicar John Cantele

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN! TAXES AND STATISTICS!

Please submit your **2007 CONGREGATION STATISTICS REPORT** to Synod with a copy to District. We were recently informed by LCMS Rosters and Statistics Office that District annual totals (summary) are **sums of only the congregations that reported in the given year.** Prior to year 2000, Rosters & Statistics included the figures for congregations that had **not** reported, but whose records from the previous year had rolled forward.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS-2008!

2008 SOUTHERN DISTRICT PASTORS' CONFERENCE

Conference Theme: "Faithful Pastors, Missional Churches"

March 30 – April 3, 2008 – Orange Beach, AL

Monday Evening through Thursday Noon

PASTORS' WIVES RETREAT – OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 2

SODWOP! SOuthern District Wives Of Pastors!

Dear Pastor & Vicar Wives, Widows of Pastors, Wives of Retired Pastors,

Please check your mailbox for a letter inviting you to our Southern District Wives of Pastors Retreat in 2008! Put these dates on your calendar now: October 31, Nov. 1 & 2, 2008, and plan to travel to Blue Springs Baptist Conference Center in Marianna, Florida. You won't want to miss our time together and be inspired with the words of our First Lady, Terry Kieschnick. The theme of this retreat is ***In His Keeping***.

See you this fall!

If you don't get this letter at your home address, please send an email to Marion Kennedy at marion.kennedy@southernlcms.org giving her your email address and mailing address.

BUILDING NOTES

SOUTHERN DISTRICT BUILDING PROJECTS

The Village Church – Lacombe, LA is building a 2400 square foot Christian Education Center. The framing is complete and the building is enclosed. It will have a large meeting room with an addition to the kitchen, three classrooms and an office. Completion is expected this summer.

Lamb of God – Slidell, LA, is progressing “fantastically” reports Pastor Wismar. It’s true! Check out their Web Site! http://www.lambofgodslidell.com/slideshow_flash.html

SOUTHERN DISTRICT LABORERS FOR CHRIST PROJECTS

Christ – Chalmette, LA	Construction Start Date	October, 2006
Rev. Phillip Miller	Rebuilding	

- Rededication Service is scheduled for April 13th at 2 PM.

Holy Cross – New Orleans	Construction Start Date	November, 2006
Rev. Aubrey Watson	Rebuilding	

Good Shepherd – Slidell, LA	Construction Start Date	September, 2007
Rev. Bob Aumann	Sanctuary	

- Barbara Crozier, Treasurer of Good Shepherd, shared that the congregation is seeing progress – at last! When the lot was cleared, a tree was in the way – right where the altar was to be built. The tree had to be evaluated as to whether or not it could be taken down. The congregation was able to take down the tree and one of the members is making a cross to hang over the altar where the tree once stood.

The introductory prices for *Lutheran Service Book* and its companion editions will continue to be in effect until May 12, 2008! On this date the pew edition will be priced at \$23.00, and there will be a modest price increase on many of the companion editions.

JUST SO YOU KNOW

All LCMS congregations are "autonomous" as far as their internal governance is concerned. Constitutions are submitted to the District, (as opposed to Synod), because each congregation pledges (when they become LCMS) to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the LCMS (external governance). The District Constitution Committee oversees that each constitution abides and falls within those guidelines. Without such oversight and continuity in Constitutions, there may well be differences causing difficulties (either in being too general or more specific than needed) between congregations and District/Synod. It is a part of the walking together process of Synodical congregations and a part of our obligations to one another.

Rev. Tom Noon, Chair – Constitutions Committee/St. Paul – Birmingham, AL

The Spirit of Southern Is On The Move!

The Spirit of Southern has a new e-mail address. Make sure we're getting all of your congregation's great news by sending it to: sosstuff@yahoo.com. The old "@usinternet" address will be deactivated shortly, so please pass this information to all in your congregation who submit material.

Specific Ministry Pastor Program

The Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Program Committee has published foundational documents for the program, paving the way for SMP students to begin their studies as early as this fall.

The SMP documents may be viewed and downloaded on the Web sites of the Synod's Board for Pastoral Education (www.lcms.org/pastoraleducation); Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (www.csl.edu); and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (www.ctsfw.edu). Or, [click here](#).

A prospective SMP student does not initiate the application process himself but leaders at a site that has a pastoral ministry need -- together with the LCMS district in which that need exists -- nominate the candidate for admission. The candidate is expected to serve at that site throughout the duration of his SMP formation program and beyond its completion.

THIS HOPE THAT WE SHARE – DISASTER RECOVERY



To see RAI's (Recovery Assistance Incorporated) web site for their most recent news, go to - www.lcmsrelief.org - and choose Newsletter from the menu options.

LINCNewOrleans Web Site Available for Connections

LINCNewOrleans hopes to be a connecting force in the greater New Orleans area. If your church/community has an ongoing event, resource, or link that you would like us to list on the LINCNewOrleans web site – www.lincneworleans.com – please send us that information at kieschnick@hotmail.com.



Ablaze!® began as a vision of LCMS World Mission to involve every member of the LCMS, its partner church bodies, and partner mission agencies in one focused and concentrated effort to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with those who do not yet know Him. By joining together in this effort, not only would those who hear and receive the message of salvation in Christ be transformed by it and brought into the body of Christ, but our own church bodies, mission organizations and congregations would be strengthened as members grow in discipleship through mission involvement. Additionally, all our Lutheran resources would be strategically coordinated, so that more can be accomplished in mission to the glory and honor of our one, true God. It was the desire of LCMS World Mission to give this vision away—to ignite a spark that would become a mission movement of individuals, groups, congregations, etc., all committed to the goal of reaching 100 million unreached and uncommitted people with the Gospel by 2017. The **Ablaze!** initiative also involves the revitalization of 2,000 LCMS congregations in the U.S. along with the planting of 2,000 new congregations. All of this is to happen by Reformation 2017!

These are aggressive actions on the part of our Synod and reflect a growing movement. We know that for these initiatives to be accomplished it calls for the involvement of many along with a need for increasing dollars available for mission support. The Synod in the 2004 Synod convention passed a resolution establishing **Fan into Flame** as a funding effort throughout the Synod in support of the **Ablaze!** **Fan into Flame** was initially piloted in the Texas and South Wisconsin Districts and now has spread to more than 10 other districts being involved. The Southern District committed to participate in the **Fan into Flame** effort in 2008. The major part of **Fan into Flame** will be conducted between late summer and Thanksgiving 2008. Pilot congregations in the District will initiate the **Fan into Flame** effort in their congregation in the Easter – June 2008 time frame.

The Steering Committee helps to endorse the **Fan into Flame** plan, refine the District case statement, nominate major gift prospects, suggest pilot congregations and lead by example. We appreciate the enthusiastic support of the **Fan into Flame** steering team.

LAST NAME	FIRST	CONGREGATION	NOTES
RICHTER	TED	AL, DOTHAN - TRINITY	Chairperson
SCHULTZ	KURTIS	DISTRICT PRESIDENT	
DAVIS	WARREN	FL, PENSACOLA - JEHOVAH	
FAITH	GARY	MS, WAVELAND – PINES / DIST. STAFF	
HELLMERS	CLIFF	AL, VESTAVIA HILLS - VESTAVIA HILLS	
HENNINGS	DON	FL, PANAMA CITY - GOOD SHEPHERD	
KARLE	JOHN	LA, NATCHITOCHEES - CHRIST THE KING	
LINCK	STEVE	FL, PENSACOLA - GRACE	
MENZEL	GENE	DISTRICT STAFF	Communications
PASCH	ROD	LA, SLIDELL - BETHANY	
SCHELER	EDDIE	AL, DECATUR - ST. PAUL'S	

Years ago, the Board for Mission Services was planning “a quantum leap forward” in LCMS mission outreach around the world. That plan came to fruition in the vision of ***Ablaze!*** and the campaign to support that vision, ***Fan into Flame***. Your congregation is part of that great surge in mission activity that leads to saving souls as it builds capacity for Gospel outreach in our congregations, districts, and partners around the world. The Lord has blessed the ***Fan into Flame*** efforts over the last 18 months as already more than \$27 million in gifts and pledges has been received toward the \$100 million goal by July 2010. May God continue to move people across our Synod to respond generously to reach the unreached and uncommitted with the Gospel.

Join us in prayer as the Southern District congregations participate in Fan into Flame as part of the mission initiative:

Lord Jesus Christ, You have made us a missionary people by calling us out of darkness into Your marvelous light and declaring us to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Strengthen us in our resolve to use every opportunity to share the Gospel. Bless the gifts we offer and use them to carry the Good News to places we cannot go. Use us and our gifts in Your service that Your Kingdom may grow and many may be saved. In Your precious and powerful name we pray. **Amen.**

PARISH SERVICES



Restore!

Southern District 2008 Senior High Youth Gathering

We invite you to an awesome event this Summer for you and your Senior High Youth, providing an opportunity for youth to explore and hear about the centrality of what God wants for us as His children. This Gathering will share with them how much God loves them and His work of restoration along with His ongoing work to **restore** them to relationship with Him.

REGISTER NOW! ONLY 250 SPOTS AVAILABLE!

Registration is open NOW and closes April 30th or when all spots are taken.

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. **And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.** To Him be the power for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 5:6-11)

Click on the **Restore** link to learn more about this special Gathering experience:

<http://www.lcmsdistricts.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=7502>

NATIONAL 2008 LCMS Lutheran Youth Worker Conference

The Westin, Indianapolis, IN – July 10 -13, 2008

At NATIONAL you will ...

- Be **affirmed** in the service your work provides the Church through encouragement, celebration, and recognition of your calling to be a youth worker.
- **Discover** practical skills and relevant theory for effective youth ministry.
- **Network** with volunteer and professional youth workers through fellowship and community building.
- Be **challenged** and **equipped** to develop youth ministry programs that focus youth to Christ in mission, program, and outreach.
- Leave **enriched** by content that is timely for your ministry and applies your understanding of that ministry in your day to day vocation.

For more information, go to: <http://www.nlywc.com/>

VACANCIES/CALLS AS OF March 10, 2008

CONGREGATIONS IN THE CALLING PROCESS FOR PASTOR

Daphne, AL - Ascension	Shreveport, LA – Our Savior
Hartselle, AL – Christ Our Redeemer	Corinth, MS – Prince of Peace
Pensacola, FL - Redeemer	

KATRINA CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION

New Orleans, LA – Bethel / Our Savior / Gloria Dei / Prince of Peace

ORDAINED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

Henry Malone to Ascension – Marianna, FL
Floyd Smithey to Our Savior – Columbus, MS

CALLS DECLINED

Gary Faith, Luth Ch of the Pines – Waveland, MS, and Southern District Deployed Executive to Ascension - Daphne
Tracy Nelson, Trinity (Algiers) – New Orleans, to Pentecost – Racine, WI (SELC)
Tracy Nelson, Trinity (Algiers) – New Orleans, to St. Paul – Sadorus, IL

PAX (sleeping peaceful in Christ),

Kurt